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978-1-107-10304-7 - Coalitions of the Well-being: How Electoral Rules and Ethnic Politics Shape Health Policy in Developing Countries

Joel Sawat Selway

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Coalitions of the Well-being

Why do some developing countries perform better on health outcomes? This book argues that the design of electoral rules and a country's social structure shapes politicians' strategies in allocating government resources. Where this combination leads to the rise of broad, national, and multiethnic parties, universal health care becomes a central tool to reward voters. Parties transform, creating mechanisms to independently formulate detailed, highly differentiable national health policies, which feature heavily in campaigning. Which electoral rules encourage such parties differs across social structures: in low ethnic-salience countries, *proportional representation* improves health outcomes; where ethnicity is salient and ethnic groups are geographically intermixed, *majoritarian* rules are better; and where ethnic groups are isolated, neither rule is superior. The rich set of cases includes Thailand, Mauritius, Malaysia, Botswana, Burma, and Indonesia. The book has important implications for electoral rule design and helps establish a middle ground between the Consociational and Centripetal schools of thought.

Joel Sawat Selway is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and director of the Political and Economic Development Labs at Brigham Young University. He has published in several of the field's top journals, including *World Politics*, *Political Analysis*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Support for his research has come from the Center for Global Health and the Center for International Business Education and Research (University of Michigan), the Fulbright Association, and the BYU Kennedy Center for International Studies.

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JOEL SAWAT SELWAY

Brigham Young University



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To Som, for her continual love, patience, and support

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The general proposition that I wish to put to you is that the solution to many of today's medical problems will not be found in the research laboratories of our hospitals, but in our Parliaments. For the prospective patient, the answer may not be cure by incision at the operating table, but prevention by decision at the Cabinet table.

Sir George Young, British Minister of Health

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