C. Crouch has collected evidence to demonstrate how current democratic societies, with a new wave of economic liberalism in the past four decades, have entered a "post-democratic" era. He uses the formula of a parable to highlight the structure of this long-term transformation. According to him, in the "post-democratic" period the democratic institutions still remain formally intact, but the political class has increasingly become more dependent on big corporations and financial institutions and less dependent on ordinary citizens. I integrate this concept of democracy in a process-sociological concept of democratization and de-democratization. It is discussed why the second concept is more reality congruent than the less differentiated and static concept of "post-democracy". With the aid of this new process or figuration sociological concept of democratization and de-democratization, I will try to deduce the conditions for the new order of a greater claim to political influence and power. To conclude the paper, this new concept is briefly applied to the ongoing political and social processes in the U.S. [R]

Recent decades have seen a proliferation of global multistakeholder initiatives that address “problems without cure” (Manners 1985). The effectiveness of these initiatives is debatable. This article discusses Better Work, an initiative that improves labor standards in the garment industry. It provides an overview of the program and discusses five lessons from Better Work that can be applied to other initiatives. These are: cooperation can be more effective than coercion; training complements the application of incentives; local ownership is critical for global initiatives; international organizations can anchor initiatives to prevent capture by powerful stakeholders; and multinational corporations can be responsible partners, but should not play a leading role. [R]

We propose a generalization of simple games to partition function form games based on a monotonicity property that we define in this context. This property allows us to properly speak about minimal winning embedded coalitions. We propose and characterize two power indices based on such coalitions. Finally, the new indices are used to study the distribution of power in the Parliament of Andalusia that emerged after the elections of March 22, 2015. [R]

The concept of responsibility is a crucial term in the field of ethics, even though it is quite new in this context. Before the 19th c., the concept of guilt (retrospectively) and duty ( prospectively) were used to analyze problems of “responsibility”. The emerging idea of responsibility was supposed to guarantee more flexibility and openness in a changing and more complex world. Today, the diffusion of responsibility challenges its meaning and meaningfulness. The effort to uphold this idea often results in precise, manageable and role-specific systems of responsibility, comparable to (older) systems of “guilt” and “duty”. The article traces forms and effects of specific moral responsibility by referring to two novels by Heinrich von Kleist and Cormac McCarthy. The analysis demonstrates that moral responsibility cannot be captured in closed systems of rules with limited scope. [R, abr.] [See Abstr. 68.1697]

The social sciences disagree on how democracy should be defined and measured. This study approaches the conceptualization of democracy from the demos side. Using Q-methodology, we pin down the way ordinary Estonians live and understand democracy. The analysis reveals three distinct discourses: a libertarian democracy as freedom; a participatory democracy as empowerment; and a populist democracy as the utopia of good policies. It also points to strong consensus on what it means to live together in society. The study tests the correspondence between defined democracy and lived democracy; it demonstrates how