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Cohen (Fordham Univ.) is concerned about the state of scholarly understanding and definitions of leadership generally, and presidential leadership in particular. Often poorly defined and measured, the study of leadership can be a mix of different approaches and understandings. The author sets out to untangle this complex situation, asking, what do scholars mean by presidential leadership, how do they judge success, and why does it matter? Conceding that "Leadership is an important standard by which presidents and presidential candidates are judged," the author, after a rigorous and systematic study, argues that "voters perceive that a president is a good leader when that president is both strong and representative." The author relies on a "performance standard" in evaluating presidential leadership, where "strong" generally means that the president gets Congress to approve his proposals, and "representative" means that the president's positions are similar to those of the individual voter and the average citizen. Cohen's work is methodologically sophisticated, his arguments supported by the data, and his writing clear and persuasive. This excellent book will have a strong impact on the understanding of presidential leadership.

--M. A. Genovese, Loyola Marymount University

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.