

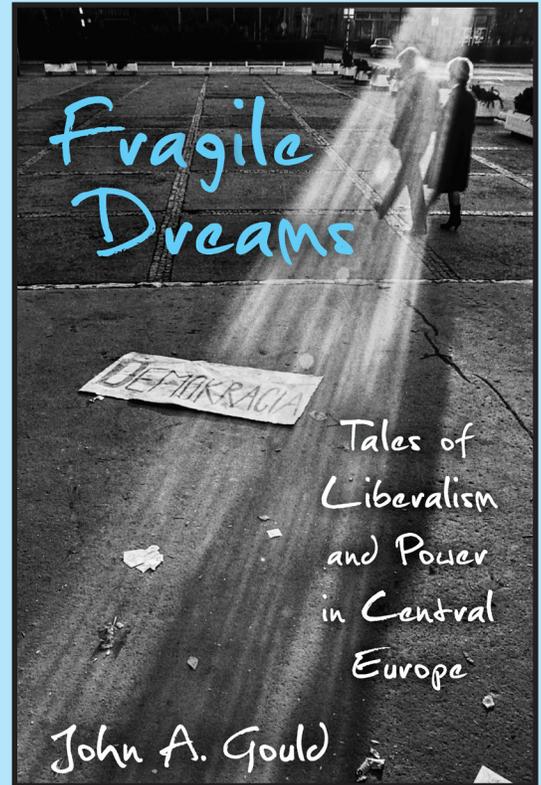
Fragile Dreams

Tales of Liberalism and Power in Central Europe

In *Fragile Dreams*, John A. Gould examines Central European communism, why it failed, and what has come since. Moving loosely chronologically from 1989 to the present, each chapter focuses on topics of importance to the fields of comparative politics, sociology, and feminist and gender studies. He addresses literature and key events related to the following: uprisings and social movements; communism and liberalism; the 20th century communist experience; post-communist liberal economic and political reform; politicized identity (with a focus on nation, gender and sexual orientation); democratization and EU accession; homophobia; and finally, populism and democratic decline. He draws heavily from his own research and experience as well as case studies of the former Czechoslovakia, Western Balkans, and Hungary—but much of the analysis has general applicability to the broader postcommunist region.

Broad in its coverage, this academically rigorous book is ideal for students, travelers, and general readers. Gould writes in the first person and seamlessly blends theory with stories both from the existing literature and from 30 years of regional personal experience with family and friends. Throughout, Gould introduces key concepts, players, and events with precise definitions. Wherever possible, he emphasizes marginalized narratives, centering theory and stories that are often overlooked in standard comparative political science literature.

John A. Gould is Professor of Political Science at Colorado College.



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