

edited volume, rather than a coherent argument about how and why we see changes in the likelihood of Black statewide candidates.

In chapter 7, Mayer takes up the question of the presidency, and the role of Southern voters in the aspirations of Black presidential candidates. How, Mayer asks, do we understand the paradox of a crucial Black electorate in the South, but no Black candidates from the South? The author walks us through the last 50 years, starting with Shirley Chisholm in 1972; Jesse Jackson in 1984; Barack Obama in 2008; and Cory Booker, Kamala Harris, and Deval Patrick in 2020. Was Obama's win transformative for Southern politics post 2012? How do we understand his win within the context of the other losses? Mayer argues that a crucial factor is Black voter turnout, as well as new voter regulations, and the racialized and polarized environment post-Trump. And he concludes that the barriers to a national Black candidate from the South have weakened over time.

The authors come back to the larger picture in the conclusion, reviewing the key factors that explain the success of Black candidates in the South, including changing demographics, partisanship, and the politics of race and religion. And then they compare the candidates explored along key variables—vote share by race and party and other demographics, and electability. The conclusion: Black victories require a mobilized and unified Black electorate and a substantial coalition of other Democrats, particularly white voters.

The last few paragraphs and postscript of the book remind us that the dynamics at play in these case studies are most likely the beginning of a new story of Black politics in the South, as we continue to watch candidates emerge for many statewide and national offices. *African American Statewide Candidates in the New South* will provide scholars with a foundation to understanding future Black electoral success.

New Democracy: The Creation of the Modern American State. By William J. Novak. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022. 384p. \$45.00 cloth.
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This is one of the most ambitious and interesting books I have read in a long time. William J. Novak, a historian who works at the University of Michigan Law School, is well known for challenging standard accounts of American politics in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This book weaves together many of his prior insights into a coherent whole. Students of American political development are strongly encouraged to read *New Democracy*, which tackles big questions much like classic books by Stephen Skowronek, Theda Skocpol, and Daniel

Carpenter. Students of comparative political economy may be interested in this book as well.

One defining feature of *New Democracy* is its depiction of historical eras. We typically read about Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era as distinct periods in US history. Novak argues that the years from 1866 to 1932 should be understood instead as a Second American Revolution with respect to governance. “Nineteenth-century traditions of local self-government and associative citizenship were replaced by a modern approach to positive statecraft, social legislation, economic regulation, and public administration still with us today” (p. 1). The modern American state took shape over decades, the product of multiple forces at the national, state, and local levels. Thus, the Great Depression was not the main reason why government expanded, and the New Deal was not the watershed moment that many believe.

Novak is one of many scholars who have studied changes in governance prior to the New Deal, and he knows it. Rather than focus on bureaucracy, federalism, or liberalism, his book puts democracy at the center of the story. Key actors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries believed that government had to play a larger role in order to ensure that ordinary citizens had a meaningful voice. Otherwise, growing inequalities of income and wealth would seriously damage the polity.

Another defining feature of *New Democracy* is its deliberate flouting of disciplinary boundaries. The argument builds on previous work by historians, legal scholars, social theorists, and political scientists. This combination allows the author to investigate empirical and normative dimensions of governance, which is a plus. It also presents organizational challenges because these disciplines often ask different types of questions and rely on different types of evidence. One common thread is the importance of ideas, and the book can be read as an intellectual history of state building in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century. The leading thinkers include many familiar names (e.g., Henry Adams, Jane Addams, John Dewey, Felix Frankfurter, Roscoe Pound) and others perhaps less so (e.g., Ernst Freund, Walter Weyl).

Each chapter analyzes the development of a core idea—citizenship, police power, public utility, social legislation, antimonopoly, and democratic administration. Entire books can and have been devoted to any one of these ideas, but Novak wants to show their interconnections. Understanding how conceptions of police power expanded (chap. 2), for instance, makes it easier to appreciate how governments justified a variety of social and economic regulations. Each chapter carefully describes the status quo before the Civil War. The developmental paths that emerge in these chapters are not identical. Prevailing ideas regarding citizenship changed quickly and dramatically with passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. In contrast, thinking about police power and

public utility transformed more gradually in the nineteenth century. It took time for policy makers to accept that individual liberty and the common good could be mutually reinforcing objectives, and that government action could enhance both. Political scientists who see development as the interplay of multiple orders, or as a layering process, will be familiar with this approach.

While the main payoff of the book comes from its synthesis of important trends, plenty of “smaller” moments stand out. The Illinois Railroad and Warehouse Commission Act (1871) was notable for declaring railways to be “public highways,” which enabled the state to set maximum rates for passengers and freight, prohibit unjust rate discrimination, and investigate possible violations. Several states followed Illinois’s lead, and they helped to pave the way for the federal Interstate Commerce Act (1887). On a related note, the book does a very good job of showing how concerns about natural monopolies, like municipal utilities, later informed how reformers dealt with private/artificial monopolies. Novak demonstrates that the famous *Lochner* case (1905), long a symbol of laissez-faire constitutionalism, was actually an exception; courts during this era usually accepted a greater role for government. And scholars who see connections between contemporary social policy and criminal justice policy (e.g., the poverty to prison pipeline) will find the two domains were closely connected in the early twentieth century.

Of course, no book is perfect. In my opinion, the author’s characterization of political science as a discipline where state and society are treated as distinct entities feels a bit dated (pp. 8–11). The chapter on citizenship focuses too much on the antebellum era and says too little about immigration restrictions and the fight for women’s suffrage. Although Novak is very good about conveying the interrelatedness of ideas and events, more clarity about timing and sequence would have helped. At times it appears that theory was trying to catch up with practice—that leading thinkers were working hard to rationalize policy changes that had already been adopted at the state and local levels (e.g., pp. 94–101, 167–79). In other words, I am not sure when these thinkers were truly the architects of the modern American state and when they acted more like building inspectors.

With a book this ambitious and rewarding, it is not difficult to imagine how future research could extend or challenge Novak’s core arguments. One might contend that transformations in governance are defined less by ideas and laws and more by the tangible impact on society. In that case, we would want to know how much companies and individuals were affected by new laws, regulations, and court decisions. Were these innovations largely symbolic gestures, or did they have substantial effects?

Finally, for all the talk of “revolution” (e.g., pp. 2, 69, 148, 186, 235), there was not much resistance from

those who wanted to preserve the status quo. With the notable exception of democratic administration, the wheels of change in this book did not encounter much friction. The chapter on citizenship includes a brief section describing pervasive efforts to constrict the rights of Black Americans after Reconstruction. The analysis of public utility and antimonopoly does not tell us much about how businesses or conservative thinkers tried to push back against the tide of government expansion. In short, politics in *New Democracy* is more about solving problems than struggling for power. This is certainly a valid way to think about politics, but other scholars may want to investigate the battles when studying this crucial period in US history.

Before the Religious Right: Liberal Protestants, Human Rights, and the Polarization of the United States. By

Gene Zubovich. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022.

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In recent decades, the scholarship on religion and politics in the United States has emphasized the influence of evangelical Protestants (and their tendency toward conservatism and at times Christian nationalism), as well as the increasing percentage of Americans with no religious affiliation. However, scholars have probably underemphasized understanding the views of the roughly one seventh of the population that belongs to mainline Protestant denominations. This is all the more surprising because, as recently as the 1970s, mainline Protestants were the largest religious group in the United States and exerted an outsized influence on American social and political life. Gene Zubovich’s *Before the Religious Right: Liberal Protestants, Human Rights, and the Polarization of the United States* (2022) is an exhaustive profile of how mainline Protestant theology influenced views on diverse issues including human rights, segregation, and economic policy in the period from the 1920s through the early 1960s. Although not without shortcomings, the book is a thorough account of how mainline Protestant theology influenced US and world events during the mid-twentieth century.

The book is organized around a narrative of the emergence and decline of a distinctive ecumenical Protestant political theology in the mid-twentieth century. Part I (chaps. 1–5), titled “One World,” describes the evolution in ecumenical Protestant theology and activism from the 1920s through the 1940s. Zubovich writes, “[i]n the 1920s, [ecumenical] Protestants began viewing the world as an interconnected whole, tied ever closer together by the spread of modernity and the Christian gospel” (p. 87). This viewpoint further evolved during the World Order movement of the mid-1940s, in which ecumenical