tive government" (p. 13), Schlesinger argued that without the hero to lead, America would "acquiesce in the drift of history" (p. 14).

Such a view reflects one of the central failures of Schlesinger's brand of liberal—elitism. In so doing, it ignores the most impressive reform movement of recent history, the southern civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr., was important, but that southern struggle was primarily a local effort. Its essence is best captured in a conversation between E. D. Nixon, Montgomery, Alabama, civil rights leader, and a local black woman. She said to him, "Lord, I don't know what 'ud happened to the black people if Rev. King hadn't went to town." To which Nixon responded, "If Mrs. [Rosa] Parks had got up and given the white man her seat, you'd never aheard of Rev. King." Until liberals like Schlesinger are willing to listen to "the people," and stop talking only to each other, Depoe is correct in saying that liberalism is delegitimized. (A must read for anyone interested in contemporary American liberalism is Leslie Dunbar's 1991 Reclaiming Liberalism.)

Although written for a specialized audience, Depoe's prose rarely lapses into dense jargon. Those who choose to read this book for its insights into the status of liberalism in contemporary America might skip the preface with sentences like this: "Leland Griffin has defined rhetorical trajectory as 'the salience and/or sequencing of god and devil terms in a body of discourse suggestive of the qualities, motivations, or state of mind of a speaker or writer, a state of mind in which another state of mind can appropriately follow'" (p. xiii). It gets better.

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This is an outstanding book on what, before the Oklahoma City bombing, may have seemed an unlikely topic to some readers: the evolution of the religious doctrines that have shaped America's modern right-wing extremist groups—the Aryan Nations, the Order, and Posse Comitatus, among others. Few scholars have even thought to take the religious views of such groups seriously, much less devote the incredible amount of effort Michael Barkun has in piecing together obscure religious tracts scattered across archives in Britain, Canada, and the United States. The result of Barkun's original undertaking is a book that for some time to come should be
the starting point for anyone wishing to understand the place of these small but dangerous groups in American society.

The book's central argument is that America's various right-wing extremists, far from having idiosyncratic religious views, have generally been influenced by a distinct religious tradition: Christian Identity. Barkun devotes much of his book to detailing how Christian Identity evolved from the beliefs of small groups of British-Israelites in late-nineteenth century Britain. British-Israelites believed that the British people were "descendants of the ten 'lost tribes' of Israel," a factor that in their view helped account for British greatness. As related forms of Anglo-Israelism circulated in North America during the 1920s and 1930s, especially along the Pacific Coast, from British Columbia to Southern California, belief in British greatness became belief in Aryan superiority and, even more dramatically, philo-Semitism was transformed into rabid anti-Semitism. As Anglo-Israelism took root, it became intertwined with a wide variety of religious and political organizations and influenced the work of numerous apocalyptic writers. Pentecostalists, pyramidologists, Ku Klux Klan ideologues, Henry Ford's Dearborn Independent, and Gerald L. K. Smith, among others, were influenced to various degrees by Anglo-Israelism even if they were not tied to the movement's main organization, the Anglo-Saxon Federation of America.

After World War II, Christian Identity grew out of the remnants of this tradition. By the mid-1970s, its "revolutionary millenarianism"—a belief in an approaching Armageddon between the children of God (white Aryans) and the children of Satan (Jews)—was at the center of the leading right-wing extremist movements in the United States. Identity ideas would be particularly strong among survivalists, Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance (WAR), the Aryan Nations, and others who sought to separate from the corrupt authority of the government and other institutions, perhaps through the creation of a new, racially pure nation somewhere in the western United States and Canada.

One of Barkun's more important findings is that the Identity movement did not represent an offshoot of Protestant Fundamentalism. Identity theology rejects dispensational premillennialism, particularly any notion that a "rapture" will spare true believers the hardship of an ultimate battle against the forces of evil. Identity followers eagerly anticipate just such a battle and reject any effort to stave it off through mainstream political reform efforts. These ideological differences between Identity and Fundamentalism are well worth understanding. They demonstrate the complex nature of the forces that have created the modern American right. It is reasonable to wonder, however, if Barkun underestimates to some degree the connecting forces between the mainstream and extremist right. Both Identity and Fundamentalist theology, after
all, share an apocalyptic vision, even if they disagree over exactly how the final struggle with evil will unfold. And while the Christian Right of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s has been characterized by political activism rather than the brooding, dangerous separatism of the extremists, issues of racial conflict and religious chauvinism have been at the center of both mainstream and extreme right-wing movements.

Even if the differences between the mainstream and radical right are somewhat more ambiguous than Barkun suggests, this is a minor criticism of a remarkable work. In a field of scholarship where it is easy to allow outrage and disapproval to substitute for serious analysis, Barkun has produced a deep and sophisticated assessment of one of the important ongoing phenomena of modern American life.