

it is highly recommended for those who are interested in both organized and unorganized crime in the 1920s and 1930s. It is also an intriguing book because of the questions it raises in the reader's mind. Georgette paints a different picture of the Capone organization from the one which some mob historians have constructed. Her account also raises particular questions for Hoosiers. Indiana was the birthplace of several of the criminals who appear in the book, as well as the location of some of the events that occur within it, and yet we still have no focused account of organized crime in Indiana during this period. Did something about the

Midwest prompt this rise of lawlessness? Was the mafia active in places like Indianapolis? Did local police, not unlike FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, ignore them? If there was not mob activity, why not? If *Al Capone and His American Boys* is just a starting place for asking these questions, then we can thank both Helmer and Georgette for it.

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### *The Roots of Modern Conservatism Dewey, Taft, and the Battle for the Soul of the Republican Party* By Michael Bowen

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Pp. ix, 254. Notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00.)

How do we tell the story of the American Right, and where do we start? These are the questions underlying Michael Bowen's interesting study, *The Roots of Modern Conservatism*. Too often, Bowen argues, the story begins with Barry Goldwater and the successful campaign to make him the 1964 Republican presidential nominee. However, as Bowen astutely notes, Goldwater represented "not the birth of a new political movement, but rather, a passing of the torch between generations" (p. 205).

We have to look more closely, then, at the almost two decades before 1964. Prior historians have done so by studying the development of a conservative intellectual movement around magazines like *National Review*; grassroots mobilization in places like Orange County, California; or polarizing figures like Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Bowen argues that we should also look at internal struggles for the control of the Republican Party. Coming out of World War II, the G.O.P., once the dominant party in American

politics, had lost four straight presidential elections (and were destined, of course, to lose a fifth) and had not controlled Congress since 1932. Republicans were desperate to come up with a strategy for winning back political power. The ensuing intraparty conflict pitted two factions against each other, one led by Ohio senator Robert Taft, the other by Thomas Dewey, the governor of New York.

Bowen's central argument is that these conflicts only gradually became what in retrospect we might think they always were: battles between self-identified moderate/liberal and conservative factions. To be sure, the two sides sometimes distinguished themselves publicly in sharp ideological terms, but in everyday politics these distinctions meant less. Day-to-day jockeying for power within the party in the 1940s and early 1950s often had more to do with mundane issues of electability and alliance building than ideology. Candidates who had built strong local organizations and controlled party patronage got support from local party workers, regardless of ideology. "Individuals backed candidates because of past connections, recent history, promises of future advancement, and electability, not necessarily who had the most compatible platform planks or policy goals" (pp. 203-204).

Similarly, actual legislating and governing rarely fit simple ideological molds. Dewey governed New York State as a fiscal conservative and pro-

moted pro-business economic policies. In Congress, Taft strongly supported federal housing programs and aid to education, measures that drew support (and opposition) across ideological lines. Pragmatic calculations of what was feasible often trumped ideological considerations of what was right.

When and how did ideological differences assert themselves? Bowen pictures not a sharp rupture, but a gradual process of polarization, unfolding between the late 1940s and 1960. Although he depicts changes within each faction, most of the impetus seems to have come from the Right. Beginning in the late 1940s, through years of both defeat and victory, conservative Republicans increasingly resented the power that they felt the moderate faction wielded within the party. The transformation of the Right seems to be important as well. As the 1950s unfolded, a "new generation of Republican opposition" emerged within the party (p. 173), while an independent "grassroots conservative movement" developed, "which demanded a harder line than either faction [within the party] was willing to take" (p. 75). Together they created a Right more willing to elevate ideology over practical politics.

Bowen uses his central argument to weave a coherent and compelling narrative. He draws upon a rich trove of primary materials, including the papers of Dewey, Taft, Dwight Eisenhower, and other party leaders, as well as Republican Party and Republican National Committee documents. He

could have strengthened his argument, however, had he used his documentary evidence to draw clearer contrasts between the beginning and end of the time period. Still, this is a book well worth the attention of scholars who study the Right.

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### *African American Fraternities and Sororities*

#### *The Legacy and the Vision*

Edited by Tamara L. Brown, Gregory S. Parks, and Clarenda M. Phillips

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. Pp. viii, 496. Charts, notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$29.95.)

### *The Company He Keeps*

#### *A History of White College Fraternities*

By Nicholas L. Syrett

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. Pp. xvi, 412. Photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$30.00.)

What is manliness? How do elite definitions of manliness influence the nature and character of campus culture? What impact, in turn, does this culture have on the college experiences of non-elite students and how do they respond? Considering both *The Company He Keeps* and *African American Fraternities and Sororities* allows the interested reader to entertain these and other questions.

Nicholas Syrett's work, as its title implies, focuses on an organizational type characterized by particular race and class restrictions. Nonetheless, the historical scope of the work, and the sheer number of organizations to be considered, leaves him with a lot of ground to cover. The book is organized around the chang-

ing definitions of manliness revealed in the fraternities' historical records. Within that broad central theme, readers will find less emphasis on some concerns—voluntary association, organizational culture, or social capital among them—than they will on others, in particular the emergence of sexuality as a categorical identity. Syrett argues that over the course of time, the increased encroachment of non-elite “others” (women, the working class, students of color) into the sphere of higher education, combined with the emergence of a category of others marked as “homosexual,” contributed to a shrinking of the range of acceptable masculine practices in homosocial spaces. This process has culminated in a white fraternal mas-