

revisionist literature is its exposure of the dominant influence, throughout the period, of pervasive white racism.

This volume will doubtless be useful to students of Reconstruction, but it would be much more attractive if it contained a bibliography and index, and carried a more reasonable price tag.

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The New Deal and the States: Federalism in Transition. By James T. Patterson. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969. Pp. viii, 226. Notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$6.50.)

Although American historians are often prone to focus too much attention on the activities of the federal government to the detriment of state affairs, this distortion is particularly evident in studies of the New Deal years. To date there have been but few published works and a scattering of doctoral dissertations dealing with the impact of Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies on the state level despite the mountain of source material which certainly exists. This situation may well cause many scholars to conclude that James T. Patterson's attempts to analyze the relationship between the New Deal and the states are premature and based upon insufficient sampling, especially since the sheer magnitude of the task prevents him from singling out more than a few of the myriad of New Deal programs for consideration. The author candidly acknowledges the difficulties involved and contends that a perusal of the current literature, coupled with his own original research, does enable him to discern the general patterns of response without losing sight of individual variations. Not everyone will agree that he has done so, but no one can deny that he has made a scrupulously honest attempt.

In the main, the author's findings indicate that most New Deal programs suffered from a lack of centralization, rather than an excess. The efforts of the various states to cope with the depression before the advent of the Roosevelt administration were confusing and ineffectual, with very few exceptions. Attempts to implement such relief projects as the Federal Employees Relief Administration, Works Progress Administration, and unemployment compensation at the state level often led to factionalism, interparty squabbling, and bitterness between federal and state officials, with the unemployed and the indigent the unfortunate victims. Efforts to coordinate other New Deal programs through such agencies as the National Emergency Council generally resulted in failure, and very few states made a concerted effort to emulate national policy by launching their own little New Deals. Far from being a dictatorial blueprint to which each state must slavishly adhere, Patterson argues, the New Deal was rather like an "over-used piece of carbon paper whose imprint on the states was often faint and indistinct" (p. 126).

Patterson attributes this unhappy situation partly to the lingering hold which the hoary tradition of self-help and laissez faire still exercised in many state capitals, as well as to the vast differences in environment which obtained in the forty-eight states. Using the techniques of political science to good advantage, he concludes that the highest degree of cooperation with and imitation of the New Deal was to be found in states which were predominantly urban, possessed abundant financial resources, had a high degree of voter participation, benefited from a reformist tradition, and were characterized by a high incidence of interparty competition. Even here, though, the author is careful to avoid forcing his material into a strait jacket by pointing up significant variations in the pattern such as the success of reform in rural, poor, one party Georgia, and its comparative failure in urban, wealthy, two party Illinois.

It is this generally judicious policy of tempering his generalizations with exceptions and of singling out areas for future study which enhances the value of the book and prevents it from being too highly speculative. If and when other historians heed Patterson's advice and turn their attention from the excitement of Washington to the more mundane occurrences in the various state capitals, they may challenge his findings in some individual states, but the chances are good that his analysis of the overall picture will remain basically valid.

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