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of ideas, interests, and leadership will return national health insurance to the national agenda. Hacker is probably right, but he doesn't need a separate chapter to make the argument. Nor does the chapter add much to the agenda-setting literature.

Despite this quibble, I highly recommend the book. It is an excellent analysis of the rise and demise of one of the most important policy episodes in the Clinton administration.

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Picking Federal Judges: Lower Court Selection from Roosevelt to Reagan *by Sheldon Goldman. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997. 428 pp. $48.00.*

This book has already been hailed as "the classic study of the subject" by Walter Murphy and a "tour de force" by Lee Epstein. It draws on extensive research in nine presidential libraries, including memos, letters, and unpublished diaries; the files of the Justice Department; hearings, many unpublished, before the Senate Judiciary Committee; numerous personal interviews with key players; systematic compilations of background characteristics of federal judicial appointees; and many other sources such as oral histories, published memoirs, and newspaper stories. It is almost inconceivable that all these materials will ever be surveyed again in a single work by a single scholar. In fact, since Goldman has been researching this topic for more than thirty years, it is fair to call the book a life's work.

The book's organization is straightforward: one chapter on each president from FDR to Reagan, collapsing the Kennedy/Johnson and Nixon/Ford presidencies, plus terse introductory and concluding chapters. Each of the central chapters begins with a thumbnail sketch of a presidency; surveys presidential and senatorial involvement in selecting specific federal circuit and district court judges; considers the involvement of other actors, such as party organizations and the American Bar Association; and concludes by surveying the demographic characteristics of the appointees.

The book can be read either as presidential or as judicial scholarship. In my view, it is most interesting under the former reading. In particular, it provides an extraordinarily detailed portrait of presidential patronage politics, albeit somewhat unsystematically, since the book is not conceived in these terms. Thus, in each chapter, we stand over the president's shoulder and with him read the memos crossing his desk; see him scribble recommendations on them; watch him fire off letters to his attorney general (and then read those letters); and see him receive senators on lobbying visits. We listen to key participants describe bureaucratic operations and recall events. Goldman treats us to hundreds of these vignettes, which presidential scholars will savor. From them we learn the following: presidents rarely trade judicial nominations for specific favors, though this has happened on occasion. Instead, presidents use judicial pork to bolster local party organizations, reward loyal followers, and grease the wheels of senatorial politics by creating a dense web of mutual obligation not tied to specific tit-for-tats. In this regard, the community between modern presidents and nineteenth century pork-meisters like Lincoln is striking. In addition, modern presidents use judicial appointments to score points with valued constituents (for example, Catholics, African Americans, and women) and as a management tool to impose their ideological preferences on the judicial bureaucracy.

The book is in no sense theoretical in the sense of contemporary social science. Indeed, it would fit comfortably in the series on American institutions published at Columbia and

Johns Hopkins Universities around the turn of the century. Yet, like the best of those studies, it will still be cited fifty years from now. Scholars more interested in the forests of presidential and judicial politics than hundreds of trees will nonetheless find themselves beginning with this work and returning to it frequently. As a life's work, it is a marvelous accomplishment.

Yale University Press has favored the book with a handsome production. The endnotes are sufficiently encyclopedic to be a valuable resource in themselves, and the index, focusing on names of appointees and participants, will prove useful to historians.

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Truman and the Democratic Party *by Sean J. Savage. Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1997. 259 pp. $34.95.*

Historians have found Harry Truman to be an enigma. On one hand, he was an idealistic reformer, committed to programmatic liberalism, including civil rights and an expanded role for government in the nation's social and economic life. On the other, Truman was a staunch Democratic partisan who valued intraparty harmony and loyalty, a strong proponent of patronage and an enhanced role for party organization, and friend and ally of many of the notorious party machine bosses of his day. How Truman attempted to deal with these often competing impulses and the personal and political consequences that resulted are the major foci of Sean Savage's careful, detailed political history of Truman's career.

Using information from various archival sources, as well as personal interview data from former Truman administration and Democratic National Committee (DNC) members, Savage devotes special attention to Truman's involvement in Democratic party organizational and nomination matters until after his presidency, as well as his presidential behavior as party leader. Especially revealing are chapters dealing with Truman's relationships with the machine bosses and his efforts to be the organizational leader of his party.

The portrait of Truman that emerges from Savage's analysis is largely positive. Truman's long public career witnessed the evolution of the Democratic party from a minority party with a rural and southern base, loosely linked to a few northern urban machines, to a majority party committed to nationalizing initiatives, but with an unstable coalition, including southern segregationists, organized labor, farmers, and blacks. Truman adapted to the changes and is depicted as a responsible party advocate, who, despite great personal costs, ''maintained the programmatic, ideological, and coalition foundation of the expanded Democratic party and liberal identity that Franklin D. Roosevelt had established''(p. 204). Truman is credited with moving the Democratic party beyond the New Deal with his Fair Deal, with new initiatives in the arenas of civil rights, public education, and national health insurance. In the end, ''Truman's liberal, reformist ethos and his sense of campaign obligations to blacks, the ADA [Americans for Democratic Action], and organized labor were more influential in the conduct of his party leadership than his more pragmatic, cautious ethos as a party regular'' (p. 164).

Savage does criticize Truman's party involvement on a number of dimensions. During the last years of his presidency, Truman proved unable to deal with what the author calls ''dissensus'' (p. 165), where ''party members increasingly lack a shared ideology and policy