

Red State Blues

Over the last quarter-century, a nationalized and increasingly conservative Republican Party made unprecedented gains at the state level, winning control of 24 new state governments. Liberals and conservatives alike anticipated far-reaching consequences, but what has the Republican revolution in the states achieved?

Red State Blues shows that, contrary to liberals' fears, conservative state governments have largely failed to enact policies that advance conservative goals or reverse prior liberal gains. Matt Grossmann tracks policies and socio-economic outcomes across all 50 states, interviews state insiders, and considers the full issue agenda. Although Republicans have been effective at staying in power, they have not substantially altered the nature or reach of government. Where they have had policy victories, the consequences on the ground have been surprisingly limited. A sober assessment of Republican successes and failures after decades of electoral victories, *Red State Blues* highlights the stark limits of the conservative ascendancy.

Matt Grossmann is Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University and Senior Fellow at the Niskanen Center. A regular contributor to *FiveThirtyEight*, he has published analysis in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Politico* and hosts the *Science of Politics* podcast. He is the author of *Asymmetric Politics* (with David A. Hopkins), *Artists of the Possible*, and *The Not-So-Special Interests*.

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How the Conservative Revolution Stalled in the States

Matt Grossmann
Michigan State University



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For Norah and Ari

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In an unanticipated move, I became Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR) at Michigan State University in 2016. The Institute has a long-running role as the primary outreach vehicle connecting the state government in Lansing with the university three miles away. The distance between scholarly knowledge and political practice, of course, often seems quite a bit longer. IPPSR tries to reduce the gulf, connecting university researchers with policymakers as well as training candidates, state legislators, staff, and interns. I thus acquired a front-row seat for action in one state capital area during unified Republican control. That inspired this book, as I decided to take on a new scholarly venture on state politics and policy. Thanks to IPPSR administrators for helping me keep up with scholarship despite the new role, especially Arnold Weinfeld, Linda Cleary, Lin Stork, AnnMarie Schneider, Cindy Kyle, Iris Harper, and Milly Shiraev. The Lansing policymaking community, especially supporters of our Michigan Political Leadership Program, also helped orient my research to the on-the-ground concerns of state politics.

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