Building New Deal Liberalism

The Political Economy of Public Works, 1933–1956

This book provides the first historical study of New Deal public works programs and their role in transforming the American economy, landscape, and political system during the twentieth century. Reconstructing the story of how reformers used public authority to reshape the nation, Jason Scott Smith argues that the New Deal produced a revolution in state-sponsored economic development. The scale and scope of this dramatic federal investment in infrastructure laid crucial foundations – sometimes literally – for postwar growth, presaging the national highways and the military-industrial complex. This impressive and exhaustively researched analysis underscores the importance of the New Deal in comprehending political and economic change in modern America by placing political economy at the center of the “new political history.” Drawing on a remarkable range of sources, Smith provides a groundbreaking reinterpretation of the relationship between the New Deal’s welfare state and American liberalism.

Jason Scott Smith is an assistant professor of history at the University of New Mexico. He previously held a Mellon Fellowship in American Studies at Cornell University, where he was a visiting assistant professor in the department of history and the department of government. In 2001–02 he was the Harvard-Newcomen Fellow at the Harvard Business School, where he taught courses on the history of capitalism. His work has appeared in a number of journals, including the Journal of Social History, Pacific Historical Review, Reviews in American History, and the Journal of Interdisciplinary History.
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The Political Economy of Public Works, 1933–1956

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## Common Abbreviations in Text and Notes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Advisory Committee on Allotments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AALL</td>
<td>American Association for Labor Legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFL</td>
<td>American Federation of Labor</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGC</td>
<td>Associated General Contractors of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Civilian Conservation Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWA</td>
<td>Civil Works Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERCA</td>
<td>Emergency Relief and Construction Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FERA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Relief Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>FWA</td>
<td>Federal Works Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSA</td>
<td>General Services Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIRA</td>
<td>National Industrial Recovery Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPB</td>
<td>National Planning Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRA</td>
<td>National Recovery Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRPB</td>
<td>National Resources Planning Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PECE</td>
<td>President’s Emergency Committee for Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWA</td>
<td>Public Works Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWR</td>
<td>Public Works Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>RFC</td>
<td>Reconstruction Finance Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVA</td>
<td>Tennessee Valley Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRA</td>
<td>War Relocation Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCCA</td>
<td>Wartime Civilian Control Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>Works Progress Administration (after 1939, Work Projects Administration)</td>
</tr>
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### Common Abbreviations

**Archives**
- FDRL: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
  - OF: Official File
  - PPF: President’s Personal File
  - PSF: President’s Secretary’s File
- JERS: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records

**Libraries**
- LC: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
- NA: National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- NA–College Park: National Archives, College Park, Maryland
- RG: Record Group