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  Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877. by Richard Franklin Bensel
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The absence of certain services in general purpose governments does not mean that the services are not provided to citizens. It may, but it may also mean some other governmental unit is providing the service. That unit may or may not be using a direct service provision mode. A limitation of the work, then, comes from the focus on general-purpose governments. Stein’s contribution to urban theory hinges on the relationship between diversity in service modes and functional inclusiveness. But one really does not know if functionally-inclusive cities in one metropolitan area utilizing diverse service provision arrangements provide more, different, more efficient, or better services than more numerous single-purpose governments in a different metropolitan area. One does not even know if service provision arrangements are more complex in different metropolises. All one knows is that for general purpose governments such variability exists. This is a very difficult empirical question, but in my opinion ought to be very high on the research agendas of urbanists interested in service provision.

*Urban Alternatives* is critical reading for all who would participate in the debate over the efficient provision of urban services. But the book also makes important contributions to the understanding of variations in the service provision process. Combining careful empiricism with powerful analysis, it provides a springboard for further research into an important area.

Bryan D. Jones, *Texas A&M University*


Richard Franklin Bensel’s *Yankee Leviathan*, is a major historiographic contribution to the “new institutionalist” literature on state-building first initiated by authors such as Charles Tilly, Stephen Skowronek, and Theda Skocpol. Bensel’s thesis is that the Civil War period marks the origins of central state authority in America “in the sense that the conflict settled long-standing questions of whether the national government was to possess the fundamental attributes of territorial and governmental sovereignty” (1). The theoretical core of Bensel’s argument is drawn from the consensus among new institutionalists that “stateness” is best conceptualized by a Weberian ideal-type of centralized, autonomous, bureaucratic authority.

Bensel contends that when measured against this standard of political development the antebellum political order was at best an “arena” in which contending social forces and economic coalitions “competed over decisions related to continental settlement and foreign policy” (2). The national polity had virtually no autonomous administrative capacity and, thus, could do no more than serve as forum for direct and unmediated negotiations between
representatives of northern industry, southern slavery, and western agriculture. Bensel's work breaks new ground by documenting the concept of a "weak state" with an empirical analysis of the distribution of federal officials, troop deployments, arsenals, custom houses, lighthouses, etc. In this manner, Bensel demonstrates that "the most remarkable feature" of the American political order "is how little in the way of state apparatus the Confederate and Union states inherited from the antebellum federal government" (105). On the other hand, by the end of Reconstruction, Bensel concludes that a modern state had been founded insofar as a sovereign central authority had been established which could at least initiate (if not administer) substantive economic and social policies.

Bensel analyzes the process of central state expansion as a historically contingent sequence of events: capture (1859–1861), expansion (1862–1876), and compromise (1877) of the state apparatus by the Republican party. The combination of the Republican party's ascent to power and the Democratic party's secession from the national apparatus left the Republican party with such unchallenged control of the Union state that Bensel convincingly describes the northern political order as a party-state. Bensel observes that from 1861–1877, "the American state and Republican party were more or less synonomous and this near identity was accompanied by an instrumentalist implementation of a broad political agenda, including aggressive tariff protection for industry, western homestead settlement, the promotion of northern and western railroad construction, the creation of supporting clientele groups (for example, through pensions allocated to Union veterans), and the expansion of national markets in capital investment and commerce" (236).

Bensel locates the support for these central state initiatives through an extensive and methodologically impressive analysis of Congressional voting behavior just before and during the Civil War. He measures Congressional voting patterns by classifying the representatives according to the dominant economic activities of their particular district, e.g., free soil agriculture, slave-holding, manufacturing, or finance. His empirical results clearly indicate that "direct representation of the political economic interests of the respective districts works very well" as a proximate explanation of voting on issues such as finance, tariffs, and revenue policy (335). Bensel finds that congressmen from the most heavily industrialized districts provided the strongest and most consistent support for central state expansion and acted as the nucleus of the Republican state-building coalition (210).

However, in challenging various marxist interpretations of the "capitalist state," Bensel argues that the major impetus behind state expansion was the necessity of waging a modern war. Specifically, Bensel claims that state expansion was motivated by the need to mobilize an economy in ways that would facilitate greater revenue extraction and permit the reallocation of
manpower toward the war effort. He supports this hypothesis with a comparative analysis of state-building in the Union and the Confederacy. Importantly, he demonstrates that despite the states' rights ideology of southern planters, and the precapitalist economic base of the Confederacy, the Civil War produced central states of "roughly equivalent overall strengths though with significant and surprising internal differences" (12–13).

In this respect, Bensel links similarities in state development to the wartime exigencies of resource extraction and matériel mobilization, while differences in political development are linked to the constraints and possibilities of the two states' contrasting economic bases. For example, Bensel suggests that to pursue an effective war mobilization policy the Union state's major need was first to sustain and expand the robust market economy that provided its chief source of revenues (i.e., to implement the Republican agenda) and, second, to create a modern financial system that would facilitate its decision to finance the war with greenbacks and federal debt issues. Thus, Bensel observes that "the policies of the Union state melded into the processes of the northern capitalist economy" (188). This alliance of state interests with capitalist expansion resulted in a "market-oriented state" that was centrally strengthened, but was otherwise nonintrusive in terms of its administrative design and substantive policies. By contrast, Bensel shows that the Confederate war mobilization steadily outstripped the productive capabilities of its prewar economy and thus resulted in a much more innovative mobilization, even a quasisocialistic reconstitution, of the southern economy, particularly its inadequate industrial and transportation base. Thus, the southern mobilization was far more state-centered than its northern counterpart and created a "Southern Leviathan" with deeper and more extensive administrative penetrations of society, including the direct ownership and management of productive facilities.

Hence, Bensel affirms a basic tenet of recent statist theory that warfare leads to the centralization and expansion of national states, while the type and extent of such expansions will depend simultaneously on the opposing state's warmaking capability and the productive capacities of the domestic economy (cf. Poggi, The State, 1990). Indeed, generalizing his own case studies, Bensel speculates that the institutional and expansive design of wealthy capitalist states is brought into a much closer relationship with the needs of capitalist production during times of war, since their major policy imperative is to further stimulate and accelerate economic and technological development. It is only when the productive potential of an existing economic base no longer suffices to meet the challenges of warfare (i.e., revenue and matériel) that state elites are driven to innovate and go beyond the prewar forms of societal production. In the case of the American Civil War, what emerges is a capitalist state closely attuned to the requirements of industrial development and western settlement.
However, Bensel notes that for this same reason, Civil War policies also generated a self-limiting pattern of political development. The Republican agenda for radical Reconstruction offered possibilities for additional expansion of the central state's administrative capacities, but such policies would have required enormous outlays in taxes, administrative personnel, and military occupation. Consequently, Reconstruction posed a strategic policy dilemma for the Republican party; it had to choose between deploying resources toward further state-building (i.e., reconstructing the South) or toward advancing the interests of its social base through industrial development and western settlement. For a variety of reasons, which Bensel examines in greater detail, the Reconstruction option was forestalled when a new class of finance capitalists (created by the war-debt monetary system) decided that radical Reconstruction was antithetical to its contemporary interests (301). Thus, Bensel concludes, mainly due to the resistance of finance capitalists, "state expansion ground to a halt—not to resume until the turn of the century" (367).

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The scholarly study of religion and politics has made substantial progress over the past 15 years. From simple distinctions as Protestant and Catholic, we have progressed to comparing different groups of evangelical Protestants, and have explored the role of religious practice, doctrine, foundational beliefs, identities, and experience in shaping political attitudes and behavior. Most of this research has used national surveys, but there is growing evidence that individual churches may be a useful unit of analysis to further refine our understanding of the connection between religion and politics.

Jelen's book is the first of a two-book set on religion and politics in the churches of Greencastle, Indiana. This volume focuses on the beliefs of those who attend church in that community, and the final volume will examine the beliefs and behaviors of the ministers of those churches. Jelen passed out copies of the survey instrument to those who attended any one of 15 separate churches in Greencastle. These churches were not a random sample of community churches, since some congregations refused to cooperate, but they nonetheless include a good cross-section of denominations. The surveys were returned by mail, with a surprisingly good response rate. Although there are obvious limitations to this method (which the author is careful to discuss), it provides an excellent opportunity to study congregational differences in political attitudes.
The Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) is an American learned society. It promotes political science in the Southern United States. The Southern Political Science Association was founded in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. It is independent of the American Political Science Association. Its first president was Cullen B. Gosnell, a Professor of Political Science at Emory University.