Reining in the State: Civil Society and Congress in the Vietnam and Watergate Era

by Katherine A. Scott

Reining in the State: Civil Society and Congress in the Vietnam and Watergate Era

Katherine Scott, Assistant Historian

Her book, Reining in the State: Civil Society and Congress in the Vietnam and Watergate Eras, is a significant contribution to the understanding of the relationship between civil society and government during these critical periods. The book provides a comprehensive analysis of how civil society organizations and Congress worked together to check the power of the executive branch, particularly in the context of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal.

The post-Watergate period is widely understood as an era of significant change in the balance of power between the executive and legislative branches. Although the war in Vietnam—led by President Richard M. Nixon—led to the passage of the War Powers Act over his veto, the promises of civil service reform were central to President Jimmy Carter’s election campaign. Despite these reforms, the book argues, the power of Congress to check the executive branch remained limited.

Leadership in the U.S. Senate: Herding Cats in the Modern Era

Jason Ross Arnold

Arnold’s work, Leadership in the U.S. Senate: Herding Cats in the Modern Era, is a detailed examination of the challenges faced by modern senators. The book explores the role of Congress in a time of unprecedented political and economic turbulence, and it highlights the complexity of leadership in a divided and polarized political landscape.

Arnold’s book does a fantastic job of documenting the great lengths the Democratic Party moved toward during the heyday of the Civil Rights Movement. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Congress and its role in shaping American politics.

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