

individuals' "negative rights" over the positive right to be healthy. She therefore suggests that the US judiciary has recently embraced an approach to constitutional law that is detrimental to the health of the American public. To restore some semblance of balance, the Supreme Court should take the implications of individual decisions for our collective well-being more seriously.

But balancing individual liberty and public health is a genuine challenge. Although some public health work is at least superficially impersonal—treating water to kill bacteria, for instance—public health policies are some of the most visceral and intimate interventions that democratic governments can implement. It is not surprising that government requirements that children be vaccinated before attending school or mandates for contact tracing and notification for sexually transmitted diseases are politically contested. Although there are a wide range of alternative approaches that we might adopt in trying to balance competing claims between the public good and individual liberty, a more thoughtful public conversation about these issues is undeniably in order. As Parmet's work makes clear, there is a great deal of danger in pretending that our individual actions and decisions do not affect the well-being of the community as a whole.

### **The Republican Evolution: From Governing Party to Antigovernment Party, 1860–2020.** By Kenneth Janda.

New York: Columbia University Press, 2022. 344p. \$120.00 cloth, \$30.00 paper.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592724000501

— Amy Fried , University of Maine  
amyfried@maine.edu

The state of America's democracy and the role of former President Trump in undermining critical democratic processes have received a great deal of scholarly and popular attention. But when an esteemed elder member of the academy publishes a book on the Republican Party's shift away from a commitment to governance to being anti-government, it is worth political scientists' attention.

In *The Republican Evolution: From Governing Party to Antigovernment Party*, Kenneth Janda makes his normative positions clear. On the one hand, Janda's approach in this work is resolutely grounded in a long tradition in political science—reminiscent of E. E. Schattschneider's 1942 book, *Party Government*—that defends the need for political parties as a mechanism for appealing to voters and for organizing elections and elected officials. On the other, Janda addresses his analysis not to other scholars but instead writes "for contemporary Republican activists who are uneasy with the trajectory of their party" (1).

In Janda's view, the US constitutional republic cannot operate well without principled political parties that uphold key democratic mechanisms, such as support for

fair elections and the peaceful transfer of power, but he argues that the contemporary Republican Party falls short of that measure in various respects. Indeed, Janda is quite pointed in criticizing the GOP and in offering suggestions for change. Yet even though he adopts a critical tone, *The Republican Evolution* is not primarily focused on criticism.

Nearly the entire book is made up of two discrete parts. The first is a breakdown of planks in Republican Party platforms from their origin through the 2020 election, when the party simply added to its 2016 platform a statement praising President Donald Trump and disparaging his critics. The second part is a historical retelling of the party, its important leaders, and its turning points through the lens of different organizational types.

Janda's analysis of party platforms adds to scholarly knowledge about these formal statements of party positions. By building on and contrasting his findings to John Gerring's (1998) *Party Ideologies in America, 1826–1996*, as well as to a 1936 doctoral dissertation by Richard Browne titled "National Party Platforms and Their Significance," Janda uses these party documents to understand how Republicans have changed. Although Republican (and Democratic) candidates are not bound to follow planks from their parties, he argues that it is important to attend to them because research has found that presidents do attempt to pursue policies discussed during campaigns.

With this investigation, Janda demonstrates clear breaks in the Republican Party's stances on particular policies and on broader values, such as equality, freedom, and the emphasis on social order and public goods. Students of American political history surely know that early Republicans supported public works programs, whereas their later counterparts opposed "big government," rhetorically at least. But some issue shifts are not so well known, such as the GOP's move from supporting to opposing reforms to the Electoral College and statehood for Washington, DC. More broadly, the section on party platforms provides valuable data for Janda's contention that the Republican Party has gone through three major periods that focused on nationalism, neoliberalism, and ethnocentrism, respectively. His findings strongly support his analytical framework.

While Janda explains how Republicans' strategic choices affected the party's stances on civil rights, his language at times downplays the political considerations that guided or at least influenced other aspects of the party's transformation. For instance, he contends that "the 'Party of Lincoln'—a governing party—evolved into an antigovernment party" (244), but this shift away from supporting "national power" did not reflect some natural process of party development. Instead, it was driven by the GOP's strategic response to changing political dynamics. As Democrats embraced women's rights, civil rights, liberal social issues, and greater spending for the poor,

Republicans “deliberately reversed its positions, advocating states’ rights and defending racial inequities” (244).

Providing more information about the intraorganizational efforts that gave rise to these party platforms would have been worthwhile. Interestingly, the greatest detail that Janda provides on this front involves the Democratic Party—in particular, the Democrats’ 2020 platform, which took shape through a process created by the putative nominee Joe Biden and by Biden’s most successful primary challenger, Sen. Bernie Sanders. These leaders thus brought together parts of the Democratic Party coalition, marking a clear contrast to how Republicans proceeded in 2020. As Janda argues at the end of the platform analysis section, “To fully understand how platforms, planks, and principles originate and perpetuate, one must consider the politics and politicians of the times” (155). Admittedly, explaining the politics behind all aspects of the GOP’s platform development during these three periods would be quite a tall order.

The second section of the book analytically reviews Republican politics from its earliest days through to the Southern Strategy of using resistance to Black civil rights to appeal to this region, up to (roughly) reactions to the January 6 insurrection. Moreover, it gives great attention to how the GOP has changed as a political organization. Janda discusses largely chronological shifts in the Republican Party in operating as a principled political party, an electoral team, a political tribe, and a personality cult. Starting about one hundred years ago, individual presidential candidates primarily used the party infrastructure to put together an effective electoral team. Janda contends that it was during Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign that Republicans started operating less like an electoral team focused on winning and more like a principled political party. At the same time, Goldwater began the Republican Party’s turn to ethnocentrism as an orienting principle, leaving behind commitments to the provision of public goods and support for national sovereignty at the expense of state powers. Richard Nixon (to some extent) and then Ronald Reagan built on this suite of changes, each appealing to white voters in the once firmly Democratic South.

Janda argues that the Republicans began functioning as a tribe and a cult much more recently, the former largely in response to changes in media and the latter due to the personalistic appeal of Donald Trump. He sees this version of the Republican Party as posing “a danger to American democracy” (230) by disparaging government and by sowing distrust, including undermining trust in elections. Here, Janda misses the opportunity to link his organizational analysis to his earlier analysis of the party platform: he might have shown that the Republicans’ 2020 decisions to simply reissue their 2016 platform, alongside praise of Trump, and to cancel the state primaries were both indicative of its tendency to act as a cult.

In the last section of *The Republican Revolution*, Janda provides advice to today’s Republicans. His recommendations include rejecting Donald Trump’s view that the 2020 presidential election was stolen and instead buttressing the legitimacy of US election systems, recovering the GOP’s interest in using government to solve problems, and heralding the role of immigrants in American society. Janda also suggests that Republicans determine to what extent the party embraces libertarian ideas. How hard his recommendations would be to achieve, however, is suggested by Janda’s own historical analysis, which recognizes the long arc that gave rise to the party’s current state. In some respect, there is no going back to the “Party of Lincoln.” For instance, Janda notes, “Once a champion of national authority and political equality, the Republican Party in 1964 deliberately reversed its positions, advocating states’ rights and defending racial inequities” (244). Obviously 1964 is 60 years ago, and so most Republicans have lived most or all their adult lives after this shift. Another change difficult to turn back would be what he describes as a cult-like relationship between the party and Donald Trump. Although, as he notes, some current and former Republicans are distressed by the party’s move to define itself by Trump’s statements and actions, Trump remains the clear front-runner for the GOP’s presidential nominee, at least at the time of this review.

Janda’s sweeping historical review of the GOP’s transformations and his careful analysis of platform planks demonstrate how much a political party can change over the decades. Whatever happens with this iteration of the Republican Party, this book will prove to be an invaluable resource for scholars of American political parties, campaigns, and elections far into the future.

**The Power of Partisanship.** By Joshua J. Dyck and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz. New York: Oxford University Press, 2023. 250p. \$99.00 cloth, \$27.95 paper.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592724000483

— Wendy J. Schiller , *Brown University*  
Wendy\_Schiller@Brown.edu

*The Power of Partisanship*, by Joshua J. Dyck and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz, is essential reading for students of politics who share James Madison’s hope that the American people would have sufficient knowledge to hold their elected officials accountable. Madison did not want political parties to be the vehicle through which voters filtered their views of policy and politicians because he feared they would be divisive forces in the new democracy. Instead, he envisioned a political system where multiple groups and sets of politicians would set forth policies designed to compete for support from voters, who would then consider the potential impact of those policies and