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Library Journal Reviews

May 1, 2010

The Struggle To Limit Government: A Modern Political History**BYLINE:** Bob Nardini**SECTION:** REVIEWS; Social Sciences; Pg. 84**LENGTH:** 257 words

Samples, John. *The Struggle To Limit Government: A Modern Political History*. Cato, dist. by National Bk. Network. 2010. c.300p. index. ISBN 978-1-935308-28-7 . \$24.95. POL SCI

The "struggle" to limit government turns out not to have been much of a struggle at all, in the telling of Samples (director, Ctr. for Representative Government, Cato Inst.; *The Fallacy of Campaign Finance Reform*). While the "old regime" of active, paternal government erected by Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s and Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s faltered in the 1970s, giving Ronald Reagan an opening to slow the growth of government in the 1980s, by and large the political calculus for both parties has been to accept the status quo. Even Reagan was "primarily a reformer of the old regime"; the one other serious attempt to reduce the size of government, by the House Republicans elected in 1994 led by Newt Gingrich, "lost most of the major battles"; and Republicans since have been "Big Government conservatives" who "gave up on the goal of limited government in pursuit of majorities." In the end, the old regime has "done its work in corrupting the American people," but in a slightly apocalyptic conclusion, "the future may require an end to their ambivalence." **VERDICT** While Samples is far from a graceful writer, all too prone to repeating annoying phrases such as "the ambit of government," serious readers willing to stay with him, whether or not they agree with him, will appreciate this reasoned presentation of the libertarian case. -**Bob Nardini, Nashville**

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 2010**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH**DOCUMENT-TYPE:** Review**PUBLICATION-TYPE:** Magazine

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