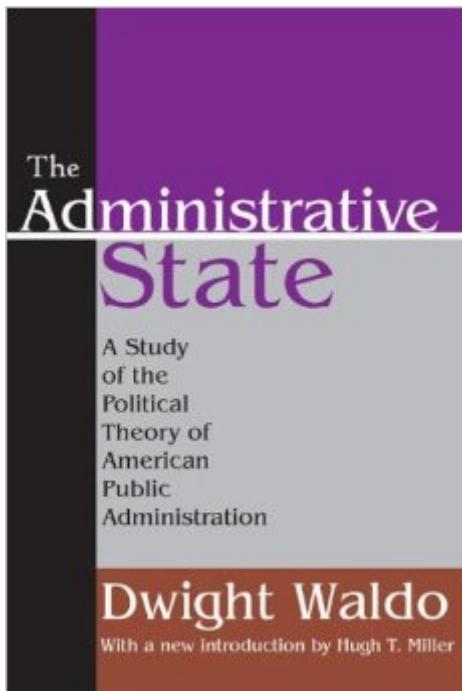


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The Administrative State: A Study Of The Political Theory Of American Public Administration



Synopsis

This classic text, originally published in 1948, is a study of the public administration movement from the viewpoint of political theory and the history of ideas. It seeks to review and analyze the theoretical element in administrative writings and to present the development of the public administration movement as a chapter in the history of American political thought. The objectives of *The Administrative State* are to assist students of administration to view their subject in historical perspective and to appraise the theoretical content of their literature. It is also hoped that this book may assist students of American culture by illuminating an important development of the first half of the twentieth century. It thus should serve political scientists whose interests lie in the field of public administration or in the study of bureaucracy as a political issue; the public administrator interested in the philosophic background of his service; and the historian who seeks an understanding of major governmental developments. This study, now with a new introduction by public policy and administration scholar Hugh Miller, is based upon the various books, articles, pamphlets, reports, and records that make up the literature of public administration, and documents the political response to the modern world that Graham Wallas named the Great Society. It will be of lasting interest to students of political science, government, and American history.

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Customer Reviews

Waldo's book is a classic in public administration. He is a historian at heart, and provides a history of one of the most active periods in PA, the century before the book's 1948 publication. The book is

scholarly, with citations and discussion about progress of thought in the field, but readable. The introduction by Hugh Miller is helpful in understanding the book. Waldo argues against the dominant PA perspective of his day, but does so after thorough review of all the thought. So, it takes a while to understand his point, but is worth the journey if you are interested in knowing about PA and its history.

Dwight Waldo's original manuscript for The Administrative State was his PhD thesis. The current paperpack release is illuminated with his subsequent experience in Federal Government and as Dean of Public Administration at UC Berkely and subsequent teaching and research. As the reader engages, it is necessary to remind yourself, periodically, that the author began this work between WWI and WWII and the "Great War" must be seen through this lens. Dated as the work is, and ponderously academic in its language, the thesis is startling current and helps the reader to understand the current government malaise at all levels. It raises some very interesting questions about the real impact a professional bureaucracy and professional politicians have had on the "representative democracy" espoused in our Constitution. I would recommend it to anyone who is serious about the argument big government versus limited government and its impact on individual liberty. On one page, I wrote in the margin this comes down to, what we call in business, Theory X versus Theory Y -- explaining the unreasonable strength of SEIU in the governance of the US.

Foundational resource in public administration, a must have in your library

good

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