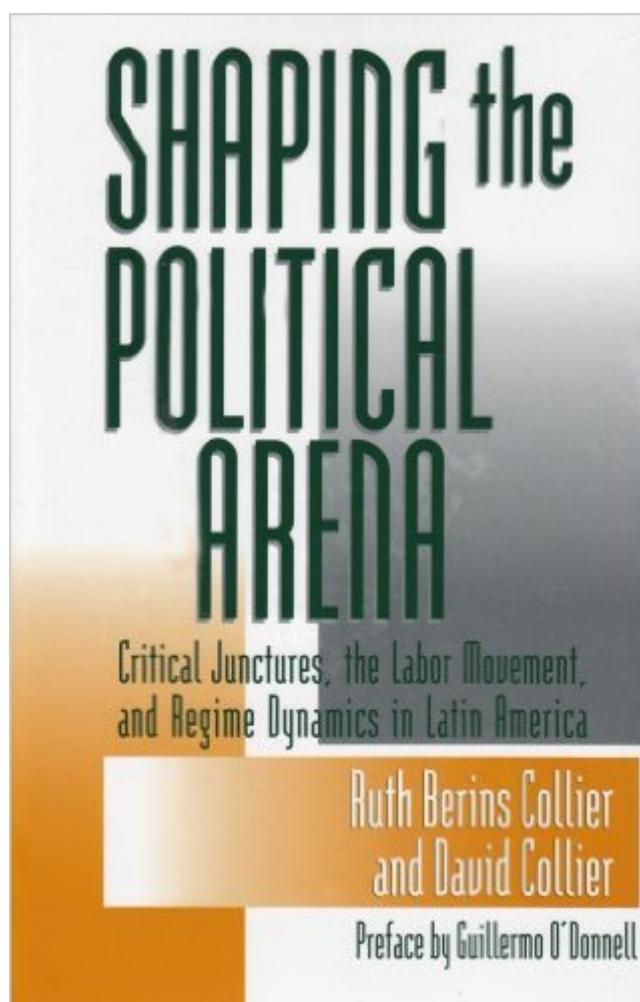


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Shaping The Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, And Regime Dynamics In Latin America (ND Kellogg Inst Int'l Studies)



Synopsis

This book is a disciplined, paired comparison of the eight Latin American countries with the longest history of urban commercial and industrial development—Brazil and Chile, Mexico and Venezuela, Uruguay and Columbia, Argentina and Peru. The authors show how and why state party responses to the emergence of an organized working class have been crucial in shaping political coalitions, party systems, patterns of stability or conflict and the broad contours of regimes and their changes. The argument is complex yet clear, the analysis systematic yet nuanced. The focus is on autonomous political variables within particular socioeconomic contexts, the treatment of which is lengthy but rewarding.... Overall, a path-breaking volume. • "Foreign Affairs" Excellent comparative-historical analysis of eight countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela) focuses on emergence of different forms of control and mobilization of the labor movement. By concentrating on alternative strategies of the State in shaping the labor movement, authors are able to explain different trajectories of national political change in countries with longest history of urban, commercial, and industrial development. Important and valuable work includes glossary of terms and extensive index (general and by country). • "Handbook of Latin American Studies

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Customer Reviews

Shaping the Political Arena is a massive study of state-labor relations in 20th century Latin America. It is impossible to concisely summarize all of the book's major arguments, but the core of the

argument goes as follows: In the early 20th century the relationship between the state and labor changed, as repression lessened and the state sought to institutionalize control through the recognition of some unions and the mobilization of workers as a political support base. This period marked the initial incorporation of labor, which was "the first sustained and at least partially successful attempt by the state to legitimate and shape an institutionalized labor movement" in which "institutionalized channels for resolving labor conflicts were created in order to supersede the ad hoc use of repression characteristic of earlier periods of state-labor relations, and the state came to assume a major role in institutionalizing a new system of class bargaining" (p. 7). The authors distinguish different patterns of labor incorporation. One pattern was state incorporation (Brazil and Chile), in which "the principal agency through which the incorporation period was initiated was the legal and bureaucratic apparatus of the state, and the principal goal of the leaders who initiated incorporation was the control and depoliticization of the labor movement" (p. 8). This contrasts with party incorporation in which a party sought to mobilize working class support. Party incorporation took three forms: electoral mobilization by a traditional party in which union-party links were minimal (Uruguay and Colombia), labor populism (Argentina and Peru), and radical populism which included the mobilization of the peasantry in addition to the working class (Mexico and Venezuela).

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