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Review of *State of Change: Colorado Politics in the
Twenty-First Century*. Edited by Courtenay W.
Daum, Robert I. Duffy, and John A. Straayer.

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State of Change: Colorado Politics in the Twenty-First Century. Edited by Courtenay W. Daum, Robert J. Duffy, and John A. Straayer. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011. viii + 259 pp. Tables, maps, graphs, notes, references, index. \$26.95 paper.

This edited volume compiles an impressive set of contributions covering the complexity, causes, and implications of the transformation of Colorado politics and policy over the last few decades. Several chapters illustrate how demographics, institutions, and public policy altered the makeup of what was once considered a fairly solid red state into one with a more purple hue. Combined with chapters examining recent constraints on legislative authority and Colorado's fiscal policy, the volume represents an exceptional look into the changing nature of Colorado politics and serves as both a historical narrative and solid political analysis that should be compulsory reading for anyone interested in politics in the state and region.

The initial set of contributions focuses on the recent "purple-ing" of Colorado's electorate, detailing how demographic shifts, term limits, intraparty divisions, and national trends all played a part in the shift away from a more consistently red state. The second set explores the effects of the state's political institutions, from the direct initiative to less visible rules regarding the legislative process, on politics and policymaking in Colorado. The final chapters explore constraints placed on Colorado after a succession of policy adoptions that limit the options of lawmakers to construct fiscal policy. In the end, the reader is left with a solid understanding of both the politics underlying Colorado's transformation as well as the implications of this change.

On the whole, these contributions to the understanding of Colorado politics are solid and well worth reading. Particularly appealing is each chapter's consistent presentation of a historical framework and solid descriptive data on its respective topic, such as Daniel A. Smith's presentation of the development and use of direct democracy (chapter 4), followed by a reasoned analysis of the implications for politics in the state. There is something for readers interested in the political development of Colorado (albeit in most instances covering no more than a few decades) and for those interested in more analytic approaches

to understanding the causes and implications of the historic trajectory.

An emerging theme of the book, which presents itself primarily in the chapters devoted to legislative institutions and fiscal policy, is that Colorado is now something other than a representative democracy. With direct democracy and legislative initiatives limiting the role of the state legislature, several chapters conclude that Colorado is more of a hybrid democracy, with one contributor going so far as to suggest that the state's legislature "no longer qualifies as a representative government." While limits to legislative authority, polarization, and a lack of institutional memory are reasonable descriptions of Colorado's recent legislative politics, the presentation sometimes errs on the side of nostalgia. But this is a minor quibble. *State of Change* is a significant contribution that will appeal to anyone interested in the politics of one of the Great Plains's most politically visible states.

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