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Review of City of Disorder: How the Quality of
Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics.
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City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics. Alex Vitale. Reviewed by Stephen Pimpare.

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immigration struggles, but encourage an exploration of how we can improve inter-racial relations, and facilitate immigration incorporation now and in the future.

Julian Chun-Chung Chow, University of California, Berkeley

Alex Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics*. New York: New York University Press, 2008. \$40.00 hardcover, \$20.00 paper-cover.

Times Square is now a striking emblem of New York City's "quality of life" campaign and "zero tolerance" policing, defining features of the Giuliani administration. Once a seedy refuge for prostitution, drug dealing, X-rated films, and panhandling—dark and dangerous but also exotic and even, for many, alluring—it has now been "Disney-fied," say many, turned into a safe and antiseptic destination for tourists, complete with an Applebee's® and a vast array of corporate brand stores. Other New York neighborhoods underwent similar transformations in the 1990s, as public space was "reclaimed," "order" was restored, and the visible markers of poverty and social disorganization were scrubbed away like so much graffiti. Crime is down, tourism is up, and New York is no longer, as *Times* film critic Vincent Canby wrote in 1974, "a metaphor for what looks like the last days of American civilization."

Alex Vitale's *City of Disorder* offers a rich and thoughtful account of these transformations, although his subtitle does him a small disservice: what makes this book distinct is that it is not merely another recounting of the results of Rudolph Giuliani's efforts to restore order but is instead a more nuanced and historically-informed examination of how three decades of local politics and policymaking created conditions so favorable for this aggressive new regime. It's a story of causes as much as consequences. Not content to single out Republican Mayor Giuliani for blame or credit, Vitale traces the rise of intensive policing and the criminalization (but not ameliorization) of poverty and homelessness to the failures (and complicity) of urban liberals. While he notes, as others have, that many

of the policies identified in the public mind with Giuliani were in fact initiated by Democratic Mayors Koch and Dinkins, the larger argument, and the indictment, digs deeper, showing how a long line of Democratic mayors helped cause the problems Giuliani would exploit. As Vitale summarizes (p. 27):

Three primary contradictions in urban liberalism contributed to and accelerated the urban crisis that led to the rise of quality-of-life politics. First, while urban liberals were willing to spend billions of dollars subsidizing corporate economic development, they treated homelessness and disorder as social problems to be funded by poorly funded social programs rather than as symptoms of their own misguided economic development strategies. Second, while they supported the concept of community empowerment, their economic and social policies were designed and administered by centralized bureaucratic experts, with almost no meaningful input by the community. Third, even though they supported calls for social tolerance of diversity, urban liberals did little to create opportunities for diverse groups to coexist in a socially stable way.

Vitale systematically unpacks each of these interdependent claims, often drawing connections between the macro-level forces of the post-industrial global political economy; neighborhood-level efforts at political and policy influence; and the political, social, and economic forces driving (or pinioning) New York's elected leaders. It's a dense and layered accounting, but one which is always intelligible and almost always persuasive.

Given that much of the story he tells parallels other analyses of the neoliberal shift in national politics and the increasing dependence of the Democratic Party on corporate interests, a more extended effort to draw out these urban-national connections would have made the book even more powerful. And while Vitale does attend to questions of race, more attention seems warranted on this front, especially given that so many of the targets of hyper-policing and gentrification were poor black communities, or laborers—street vendors, “squeegee men,” and sex workers—who were disproportionately people

of color. But these are minor complaints and, as much as anything, merely reflect a wish that Vitale had written a longer book. It's a sharp and clear-eyed account, one which offers valuable lessons for those who would improve the quality of life for the most marginalized city residents, and not just the middling classes.

Stephen Pimpare, Yeshiva University

Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. \$49.95 hardcover, \$19.95 papercover.

There has been a good deal of scholarly speculation about the factors responsible for the rise of the political right since the Reagan revolution of 1980s. Although it was thought that the Clinton Presidency would reverse the conservative tide, the electoral victories that secured both houses of Congress for the Republican right in 1994, and the subsequent two-term presidency of George Bush, led many to believe that a permanent right-wing hegemony had been established. Of course, the Obama election and current Democratic majorities in both houses suggest otherwise. But it is too soon to tell whether these recent developments will change America from being what has sometimes been called the "Right Nation." Scholarly insight into complex social, economic, cultural and other factors that shape the political agenda can obviously help interpret these events.

In this interesting book, Schlman and Zelizer have assembled a number of commentaries on the diverse influences that contributed to the resurgence of the political right in the 1970s. Their central argument is that popular interpretations that attribute the rise of the political right to a backlash against the 1960s youth culture, race conflicts, the Vietnam war and insecurity arising from rapidly changing mores and beliefs, do not pay sufficient attention to the concerted efforts of activists from different spheres of life who toiled tirelessly to bring about a shift towards conservative politics. While broad, impersonal social forces undoubtedly played a role, the success of the