

Reproducing Athens-Susan Lape 2009-01-10 Reproducing Athens examines the role of romantic comedy, particularly the plays of Menander, in defending democratic culture and transnational polis culture against various threats during the initial and most fraught period of the Hellenistic Era. Menander's romantic comedies--which focus on ordinary citizens who marry for love--are most often thought of as entertainments devoid of political content.

Against the view, Susan Lape argues that Menander's comedies are explicitly political. His nationalistic comedies regularly conclude by performing the laws of democratic citizen marriage, thereby promising the generation of new citizens. His transnational comedies, on the other hand, defend polis life against the impinging Hellenistic kingdoms, either by transforming their representatives into proper citizen-husbands or by rendering them ridiculous, romantic losers who pose no real threat to citizen or city. In elaborating the political work of romantic comedy, this book also demonstrates the importance of gender, kinship, and sexuality to the making of democratic civic ideology. Paradoxically, by championing democratic culture against various Hellenistic outsiders, comedy often resists the internal status and gender boundaries on which democratic culture was based. Comedy's ability to reproduce democratic culture in scandalous fashion exposes the logic of civic inclusion produced by the contradictions in Athens's desperately politicized gender system. Combining careful textual analysis with an understanding of the context in which Menander wrote, Reproducing Athens profoundly changes the way we read his plays and deepens our understanding of Athenian democratic culture.

Egypt and the Contradictions of Liberalism-Dalia F. Fahmy 2017-01-05 The liberatory sentiment that stoked the Arab Spring and saw the ousting of long-time Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak seems a distant memory. Democratically elected president Mohammad Morsi lasted only a year before he was forced from power to be replaced by precisely the kind of authoritarianism protestors had been railing against in January 2011. Paradoxically, this turn of events was encouraged by the same liberal activists and intelligentsia who'd pushed for progressive reform under Mubarak. This volume analyses how such a key contingent of Egyptian liberals came to develop outright illiberal tendencies. Interdisciplinary in scope, it brings together experts in Middle East studies, political science, philosophy, Islamic studies and law to address the failure of Egyptian liberalism in a holistic manner - from liberalism's relationship with the state, to its role in cultivating civil society, to the role of Islam and secularism in the cultivation of liberalism. A work of impeccable scholarly rigour, Egypt and the Contradictions of Liberalism reveals the contemporary ramifications of the state of liberalism in Egypt.

Twilight of Authority-Robert A. Nisbet 1975 We had thought, or our forefathers had, that modern liberal democracy would be spared the kind of erosion and decay that both Plato and Aristotle declared endemic in all forms of state. Now we are not so sure." So wrote Robert Nisbet in the first edition of Twilight of Authority, published by Oxford University Press in 1975, shortly after the resignation of President Richard Nixon revealed what Nisbet called "only the most extreme and corrupt manifestation of a democratic royalism that has roots in several preceding administrations." Nisbet argues that the political community in the West has broken down after two centuries of ascendancy. He believes that the West has entered "a twilight age" that will be characterized by political and cultural crises similar to those that preceded the fall of Rome. He foresees the displacement of traditional, liberal society by centralized, collectivized power--what he terms "the war society," driven by the rising power and expense of a hugely scaled military. "The centralization, and, increasingly, individualization of power is matched in the social and cultural spheres by a combined hedonism and egalitarianism, each in its own way a reflection of the destructive impact of power on the hierarchy that is native to the social bond," he writes. Nisbet offers no prophecy of inevitable decline; rather, he means to call attention to "the problem of finding the means of generating a social order within which the individual can live and derive a spirit of initiative." Robert Nisbet (1913-1996) was renowned worldwide for his scholarship in the history and philosophy of social and political thought. He taught at Columbia, the University of California at Berkeley, Smith College, and the University of Bologna, and was the author of several major works, including Social Change and History and The Quest for Community. Robert G. Perrin is Professor of Sociology at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Legal Foundations of Capitalism-John Rogers Commons 2012-06-01 One of his most important American studies of labor economics published in the twentieth century, this book outlines an evolutionary and behavioral theory of value based on data drawn from court decisions. Analyzing the meaning of reasonable value as defined by the courts, he finds that the answer is based on a notion of reasonable conduct. Expanding this point to encompass the habits and customs of social life, he shows that court decisions are based on customs that are powerful forces shaping the economic system. In an early review Wesley Mitchell declared that Commons [1862-1945] carried this "analysis further along his chosen line than any of his predecessors. Into our knowledge of capitalism he has incorporated a great body of new materials which no one else has used adequately.": American Economic Review, XIV (1924) 253.

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