



The Path to Paralysis

How American Politics Became Nasty, Dysfunctional, and a Threat to the Republic By Donald G. Nieman

Pub Date: 15 October 2024

Binding: Paperback

Price: £29.99 / \$39.95
\$39.95

ISBN: 9781839992766

Extent: 320 pages

Size: 140 x 216 mm /
5.5 x 8.5 inches

BISAC CATEGORY: POLITICAL SCIENCE /

Civics & Citizenship HISTORY / United States /
21st Century, HISTORY / United States / 20th
Century

BISAC CODE: POL003000

BIC CODE: JPHV

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Offers the first comprehensive analysis of how U.S. politics became polarised and dysfunctional and why things aren't likely to change soon

How did the world's oldest democracy lose its mojo? How did we get to a point where we face existential crises like climate change yet leaders can't agree that there's a problem let alone develop solutions? Political leaders bear some of the responsibility. Newt Gingrich, Sarah Palin and Donald Trump, to name a few, have shattered political norms and transformed our politics into a free-for-all in which personal attacks, appeals to bigotry and fear, disregard for truth, and disdain for governing have become the norm. But they are more a symptom than the cause. *The Path to Paralysis* examines changes in political culture during the past 60 years – conflict over race, religion and gender; wrenching economic changes and growing concentration of wealth; the end of the Cold War; hardening regional divisions; and dramatic changes in communications – that made Donald Trump possible, if not inevitable. Long in the making, these cross-currents came together in the early 21st century – as the United States experienced the deepest recession since the 1930s and elected its first Black president – to create the perfect storm. The result was toxic and deeply polarised politics that threatened the existence of constitutional government.

Readership

Because of the topic and its lively style, the book will be attractive for use in modern U.S. history courses as well as to a general trade audience interested in politics and history.

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Donald G. Nieman is an authority on modern U.S. law and politics, and professor of history and provost emeritus at Binghamton University – State University of New York.

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