

# Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right (Politics and Society in Modern America, 10)

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In the early 1960s, American conservatives seemed to have fallen on hard times. McCarthyism was on the run, and movements on the political left were grabbing headlines. The media lampooned John Birchers's accusations that Dwight Eisenhower was a communist puppet. Mainstream America snickered at warnings by California Congressman James B. Utt that "barefooted Africans" were training in Georgia to help the United Nations take over the country. Yet, in Utt's home district of Orange County, thousands of middle-class suburbanites proceeded to organize a powerful conservative movement that would land Ronald Reagan in the White House and redefine the spectrum of acceptable politics into the next century.

*Suburban Warriors* introduces us to these people: women hosting coffee klatches for Barry Goldwater in their tract houses; members of anticommunist reading groups organizing against sex education; pro-life Democrats gradually drawn into conservative circles; and new arrivals finding work in defense companies and a sense of community in Orange County's mushrooming evangelical churches. We learn what motivated them and how they interpreted their political activity. Lisa McGirr shows that their movement was not one of marginal people suffering from status anxiety, but rather one formed by successful entrepreneurial types with modern lifestyles and bright futures. She describes how these suburban pioneers created new political and social philosophies anchored in a fusion of Christian fundamentalism, xenophobic nationalism, and western libertarianism.

While introducing these rank-and-file activists, McGirr chronicles Orange County's rise from "nut country" to political vanguard. Through this history, she traces the evolution of the New Right from a virulent anticommunist, anti-establishment fringe to a broad national movement nourished by evangelical Protestantism. Her original contribution to the social history of politics broadens--and often upsets--our understanding of the deep and tenacious roots of popular conservatism in America.

"A landmark study that will enlighten anyone who cares about the evolution of American politics since World War II. With Lisa McGirr's thorough, sophisticated, smoothly crafted exploration of Orange County conservatism, the history of the modern Right has finally come of age."--Michael Kazin, Georgetown University, coauthor of *America Divided* and *The Populist Persuasion*

"In her impressively researched, gracefully written book, Lisa McGirr convincingly demonstrates that historians, who have been preoccupied with the Left in the 1960s, need to develop a deeper comprehension of how conservatives in places such as Orange County reconfigured American political culture. Readers will find her attempt to understand them, rather than dismiss or condemn them, both rewarding and challenging."--William E. Leuchtenburg, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

"Something happened to the Republican Party in the 1960s, changing it forever. How did a crypto-liberal, Northeast-dominated, establishment-oriented party become a populist, counter-liberal crusade? Here's the story: exhaustively researched and presented with

telling analysis and narrative verve."--Kevin Starr, State Librarian of California

Lisa McGirr is Associate Professor of History at Harvard University.

#### Other Books

UNESCO Without Borders. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1945 with twin aims: to rebuild various institutions of the world destroyed by war, and to promote international understanding and peaceful cooperation among nations. Based on empirical and historical research and with a particular focus on history teaching, international understanding and peace, UNESCO Without Borders offers a new research trajectory for understanding the roles played by UNESCO and other international organizations, as well as the effects of globalization on education. With fifteen chapters by authors from cross-disciplinary and diverse geographical areas, this book assesses the global implications and results of UNESCO's educational policies and practices. It explores how UNESCO-approved guidelines of textbook revisions and peace initiatives were implemented in member-states, illustrating the existence of both national confrontations with the new worldview promoted by UNESCO, as well as the constraints of international cooperation. This book provides an insightful analysis of UNESCO's past challenges and also indicates promising future research directions in support of international understanding for peace and cooperation. As such, it will be of key interest to researchers, postgraduate students, academics in the fields of international and comparative education, education politics and policies, and to those interested in the historical study of international organizations and their global impact. The book will also appeal to practitioners, especially those who conduct research on or work in post-conflict societies.

□ □ □ □ □ . The Politics of Unreason: Right - Wing Extremism in America , 1970-1977. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. McGirr, L. (2001). Suburban Warriors : The Origins of the New American Right . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press."