

ramped up public spending on priorities of the business community including water and sewer pipes, rapid transit, the art museum, and the Free Library. Businessmen failed to oppose the scandal-tainted machine candidate for mayor in 1927; by the end of the 1920s, Philadelphia's captains of industry had clearly decided action taken by a corrupt machine was better than independent inaction.

The experience of Atlanta is the subject of Chapter 4. In contrast to Detroit, where business leaders simply got themselves elected to public office, or Philadelphia, where they were eventually co-opted by the political machine, business leaders in Atlanta found the most success on special commissions. These commissions were set up to oversee bond initiatives or city planning—the latter of which involved promoting residential segregation by race and decentralization in nearly equal measure. The electoral constraints on bond referenda required business interests to form alliances with other urban interest groups in order to fund their vision of a civic welfare state, including blacks who remained eligible to vote and were desperate to secure resources for African American schools.

Chapter 5 provides a review of contemporaneous efforts by urban businessmen to provide welfare capitalism to their employees, support for local emergency unemployment campaigns, and streamlined private charity for the poor. The Epilogue links these case studies to the federal action taken in the 1930s and thereafter to combat urban poverty and joblessness. Cities were too hamstrung by their massive debt commitments from the 1920s to offer the kind of support that the federal government eventually provided, demonstrating the limits of local responses to economic downturns. Nonetheless, the closing chapters of the book demonstrate that businessmen's involvement in urban affairs went beyond support for public spending intended to foster economic growth and improve the behavior of workers.

In sum, *Roaring Metropolis* offers a set of richly researched case studies illuminating how businessmen shaped urban policy in the 1920s. The chapters bookending these case studies can be at times overly insistent on revising particular historical narratives—for instance, no serious scholar of American urban history would argue that city dwellers took a break from political reform during the 1920s. In addition, it is not clear from the book how important business interests were for observed public policy outcomes. Infrastructure improvements and investments in education were broadly popular at the time and supported by a diverse coalition of urban voters. Nonetheless, I learned a great deal from reading the book and recommend it to scholars interested in urban reform in the early twentieth century.

ALLISON SHERTZER, *University of Pittsburgh*

*The Heart of the Declaration: The Founders' Case for an Activist Government.* By Steve Pincus. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. ix + 207. \$26.00, hardcover.  
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If you think the Declaration of Independence, the founding document of the United States, was not only an indictment of an overbearing, coercive British fiscal-military state, but also a plea for a much more limited government in America, Steve Pincus has

news for you. His message, based on a close reading of eighteenth-century political-economic thought as well as both the Declaration and the Articles of Confederation, the first U.S. constitution, Pincus's message is that the founders, or most of them, actually believed in an energetic, activist government that would partner with and support the private sector in promoting economic development and the pursuit of happiness. His short text, 156 pages, is buttressed by 46 pages of fine-print endnotes. The book is based on deep scholarship into primary sources for eighteenth-century Europe and America. And it has obvious relevance to recent works of economic historians on why some places since that era achieved high levels of economic development while most did not. It is also relevant to today's polarized politics, which feature deep divisions about the proper role of government in the economy.

From the Glorious Revolution to George III's ascent to the throne in 1760, Pincus argues, British governments pursued the right policies of protecting their American colonies from other European powers and encouraging their development as consumers of British manufactures and producers of vital raw materials for the mother country. The colonies expanded rapidly in population and prospered under these policies, and they had few if any reasons to think about separating from Britain.

That all changed after 1760 when the new King appointed ministers obsessed by the huge debts the British government had accumulated in its various wars from the 1690s to the 1760s. These ministers changed the right policies of promoting colonial trade and development to the wrong policies of "austerity and extraction" (p. 23). Austerity and extraction meant reduced government spending and higher taxes, both in Britain where most people were not represented in Parliament and America where none were, all in the name of reducing the British national debt.

This is fairly standard historical interpretation. What Pincus adds to it is an extended account of a Whig Patriot movement on both sides of the Atlantic, which argued that the pre-1760s policies of promoting trade, infrastructure, and development were a much better strategy for expanding the economic and tax bases, and therefore a more enlightened plan for reducing the national debt. The Whig Patriots opposed Walpole's "establishment Whigs" of the 1720s and 1730s, who favored cutting the taxes of rich landowners and raising them on the poor and middle classes and on commerce and industry. Patriots also opposed policies of austerity and extraction after 1760. By then the Whig Patriots in America included most of the people who would become the founders of the United States.

The Committee of Five who drafted the Declaration, according to Pincus, had three main gripes against post-1760 British ministries: First, British policies suppressed colonial trade with Spanish America, "cutting off our trade with all parts of the world," as the Declaration stated. Second, they suppressed immigration to America, "to prevent the population of these states." Third, the British supported chattel slavery; the draft Declaration of the Committee of Five—left out of the final version in the interests of unity after some southerners objected—excoriated George III for promoting the slave trade and slavery, and for striking down colonial laws aimed at ending the slave trade.

Pincus makes a good case for the Declaration favoring an energetic government actively promoting economic development in collaboration with the private sector. His case, incidentally, would make Washington, Hamilton, the Federalists of the 1790s, and later the Whigs and their American System into mainstream heirs of the Revolution instead of subversive of its true meaning, as Jefferson, Madison, the Democratic Republicans of the 1790s, and some historians later would charge. At the same time, he

seems to assume that if the founders said, as they did, that “Government was instituted to promote the welfare of mankind and ought to be administered for the attainment of that end,” it meant the Declaration “was a call for the creation of a powerful state that would actively promote the welfare of the people” (p. 134). Proponents of laissez-faire could just as easily contend that it endorsed their preferred policies of limited government.

Pincus says (p. 126) that there was a broad-based antislavery movement at the time of the Declaration, and identifies Jefferson as clearly a member of it. Why then did Jefferson, Madison, and their followers switch in the early 1790s, after Pincus cuts off his account, from favoring a strong, energetic government to a position of states’ rights and removal of slavery from the list of legitimate issues that Congress might debate? Was it because they had decided for high-minded reasons that limited government was now to be preferred to energetic government? Or was it because, as antislavery South Carolinian John Laurens in 1776 described the self-interested reasoning of slavery’s supporters (p. 123), “Without slaves how is it possible for us to be rich?”

RICHARD SYLLA, *New York University*

*The American Slave Coast: A History of the Slave-Breeding Industry.* By Ned and Constance Sublette. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2016. 752 pages. \$35.00, hardback.

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Slave breeding is the focus of this history of the United States from colonial times to the Civil War. The expansion of cotton cultivation and the closing of the international slave trade increased the demand for slaves in the Southwest and increased slave prices throughout the South. According to Ned and Constance Sublette, the authors of *The American Slave Coast*, slaveholders in the Chesapeake responded to these higher prices by breeding and selling slaves to traders for southern markets. “[P]rohibiting the African slave trade protected the market so that a new class of American traders could come forward, supplied with homegrown captives born into slavery on Virginia and Maryland farms. The conditions were right for a massive forced migration of enslaved Chesapeake laborers down South, and it did not have to be a one-time drain: a continuing domestic slave-breeding industry was now possible” (p. 362).

Despite its 700+ page length, *The American Slave Coast* does not include a comprehensive review of the literature on slave breeding. Many of the authors who deny or minimize the economic importance of slave breeding are not discussed in the text. For example, the Sublettes do not discuss Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman’s *Time on the Cross* (Little, Brown & Co., 1974). Nor, for that matter, do they discuss the works of Winthrop Collins or L. C. Gray. The slave-breeding industry is a controversial subject and many scholars have questioned its existence. Consider U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (D. Appleton and Co., 1918), p. 361: “It has been said by various anti-slavery spokesmen that many slaveowners systematically bred slaves for the market. They have adduced no shred of supporting evidence however.” A lack of supporting evidence led scholars to conclude that slaveholders rarely bred slaves for sale. Because *The American Slave Coast* omits their research, the Sublettes provide an incomplete literature review of slave breeding.