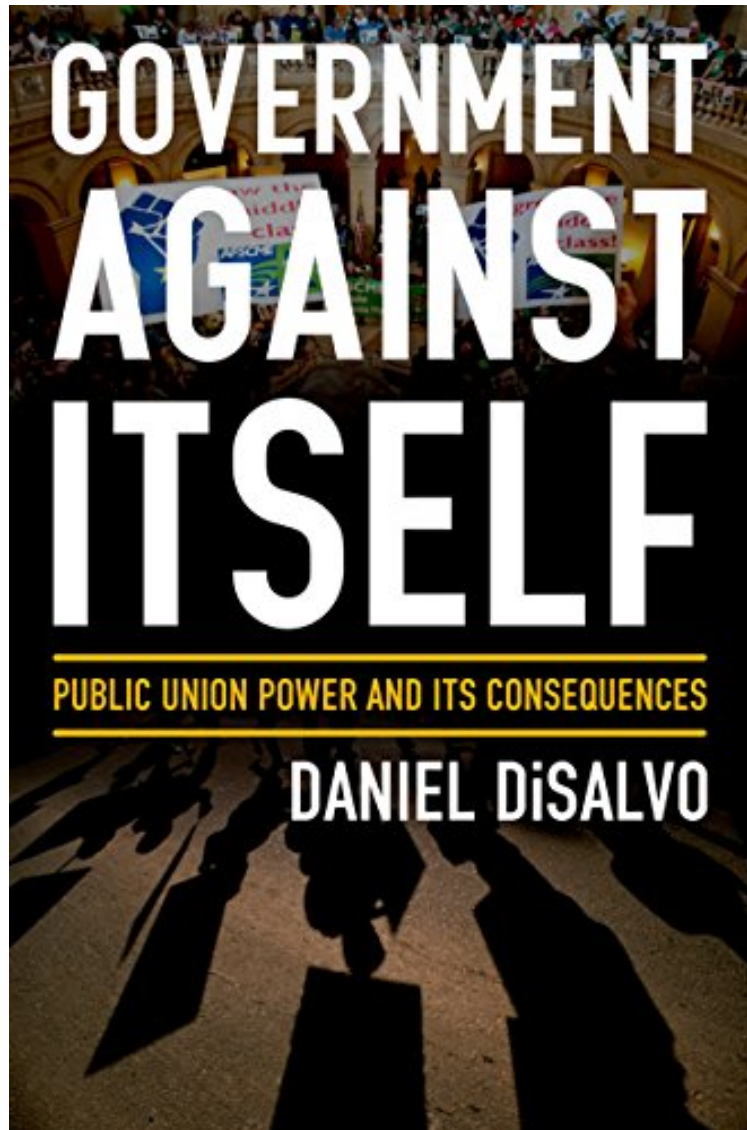


(Mobile ebook) Government against Itself: Public Union Power and Its Consequences

Government against Itself: Public Union Power and Its Consequences

Daniel DiSalvo

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following review helpful. Excellent book even though it makes me sick to my ...By Jim HartExcellent book even though it makes me sick to my stomach. Little improvements will not work. People at all levels are to self-serving as demonstrated by where we are after 40 years. Have to go back to FDR. No public sector unions, as he believed in.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An insightful and balanced review of why government isn't working and why we're getting less while spending more!By David c. KeehnAn insightful analysis of public unionism in America, particularly with respect to state and local governments. Mr. DeSalvo explores the growing pension and benefit costs of public workers that is bankrupting major cities and making balancing state and local government budgets difficult while crowding out other essential education, environmental, public health, and transportation services, Unlike private unions which have been declining, he makes the case that rapidly-growing public unions offer few benefits for broader society. Instead, their primary focus is on the parochial interests of their members, many who are forced to participate through agency shops and mandatory dues part of which go to union-promoting lobbying and political expenses. Public workers are really our employees but until recently, Americans and public officials have been lethargic in exercising the time and muscle to address public union's impact on government productivity. Mr. DeSalvo does not demonize public workers but instead focuses on the current broken system and recommends changes such as those recommend by Governor Brown in California.

As workers in the private sector struggle with stagnant wages, disappearing benefits, and rising retirement ages, unionized public employees retire in their fifties with over \$100,000 a year in pension and healthcare benefits. The unions defend tooth and nail the generous compensation packages and extensive job security measures they've won for their members. However, the costs they impose crowd out important government services on which the poor and the middle class rely. Attempts to rein in the unions, as in Wisconsin and New Jersey, have met with massive resistance. Yet as Daniel DiSalvo argues in *Government against Itself*, public sector unions threaten the integrity of our very democracy. DiSalvo, a third generation union member, sees the value in private sector unions. But in public sector, unions do not face a genuine adversary at the bargaining table. Moreover, the public sector can't go out of business no matter how much union members manage to squeeze out of it. Union members have no incentive to settle for less, and the costs get passed along to the taxpayer. States and municipalities strain under the weight of their pension obligations, and the chasm between well-compensated public sector employees and their beleaguered private sector counterparts widens. Where private sector unions can provide a necessary counterweight to the power of capital, public employee unionism is basically the government bargaining with itself; it's no wonder they almost always win. The left is largely in thrall to the unions, both ideologically and financially; the right would simply take a hatchet to the state itself, eliminating important and valuable government services. Neither side offers a realistic vision of well-run government that spends tax dollars wisely and serves the public well. Moving beyond stale and unproductive partisan divisions, DiSalvo argues that we can build a better, more responsive government that is accountable to taxpayers. But we cannot do it until we challenge the dominance of public sector unions in government. This carefully reasoned analysis of the power of public sector unions is a vital contribution to the controversial debates about public versus private unions, increasing inequality, and the role of government in American life

"Readers of any political persuasion should be sobered by his observation that democratic government's inevitable fate seems to be 'spending more, getting less.'" --Publishers Weekly "A sober analysis, both scholarly and political, of public sector unions. DiSalvo shows both sides, argues cogently, and concludes reasonably--against them. This is political science at its best." --Harvey Mansfield, Professor of Government, Harvard University; Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution "Daniel DiSalvo has laid bare the harsh political realities facing mayors across the country who want to improve the quality of life in their cities. In the annual battles over cutting services, raising taxes or controlling costs to balance the budget, public employee unions usually have the upper hand. In many jurisdictions, costs are skyrocketing, taxes are up and services are deteriorating, yet fiscal reform seems impossible. This book explains how and why the narrow interests of unions in improving pay and benefits frequently overwhelm the broader interests of the people in improving services." --Chuck Reed, Mayor of San Jose About the Author Daniel DiSalvo is Assistant Professor of Political Science at The City College of New York-CUNY and a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute's Center for State and Local Leadership. He has written on American political parties, elections, labor unions, state government, and public policy for both scholarly and popular publications, including *National Affairs*, *The Public Interest*, *City Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, *Commentary*, the *New York Daily News*, and the *New York Post*. He is the author of *Engines of Change: Party Factions in American Politics, 1868-2010*.