



Paving the Way: New York Road Building and the American State, 1880-1956

By Michael R. Fein

University Press of Kansas. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Paving the Way: New York Road Building and the American State, 1880-1956, Michael R. Fein, Most historians have credited New Deal initiatives in economic regulation and social welfare policy with bringing about the modern American state. Michael Fein now reveals the surprising story of how road building paved the way to the modern state during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and how public works policy emerged as a third critical pillar in support of state building. "Paving the Way" shows that the growing transportation needs of a steadily industrializing nation reconfigured state politics, bringing about a revolution in governance as it reshaped the landscape. Examining state and local policy developments from half a century before the New Deal, Fein describes how the transition from rutted wagon trails to smooth highways shifted road-maintenance responsibility from local residents to state engineers. Focusing on New York State, a national leader in infrastructure development, Fein demonstrates that its citizens gradually became more comfortable with state bureaucracy because it resulted in better roads. This conferral of political legitimacy on state engineers by the general populace proved instrumental in the consolidation of engineers' power, translating their...



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