A faded passion? Estes Kefauver and the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly


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Abstract

In this paper I examine the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly (1957–1963), chaired by Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver. I assess the persistence into the postwar years of the antimonopoly critique of bigness that had animated the politics of reform in the pre–New Deal era, arguing that Richard Hofstadter correctly described antitrust as one of the “faded passions” of postwar reform. However, Kefauver’s antimonopoly crusade was significant in bridging the antimonopoly tradition rooted in the politics of the pre–New Deal era and the new antimonopoly politics of the 1970s and beyond, particularly as manifested in the “third wave” consumer movement. Tracing this connection between antimonopoly and consumer politics, I pay particular attention to the formulation and passage of the Kefauver–Harris Drug Act, the consumer safety legislation from the subcommittee, and to Kefauver’s determined but forlorn efforts in the late 1950s and early 1960s to persuade the federal government to establish a new Department of Consumers.
Estes Kefauver on WN Network delivers the latest Videos and Editable pages for News & Events, including Entertainment, Music, Sports, Science and more. Sign up and share your playlists. We see her relationship with merchants Irving and Paula Klaw, photographers John Willie and Bunny Yeager, boyfriends, and the public. Through it all, she is wholesome, sporting, and forthright - Eve before the fall.