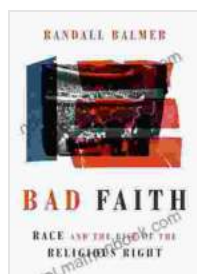


Race and the Rise of the Religious Right

The rise of the Religious Right in the United States has been a significant phenomenon in modern American politics and culture. This movement, composed primarily of white evangelical Protestants, has played a pivotal role in shaping political discourse and public policy, particularly on issues related to social conservatism. However, the relationship between race and the Religious Right is complex and multifaceted, with a history that spans decades.



Bad Faith: Race and the Rise of the Religious Right

by Randall Balmer

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray : Enabled

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Print length : 91 pages

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Historical Context

The seeds of the Religious Right can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Protestant fundamentalists opposed the perceived threats of secularism, liberalism, and the growing influence of Catholicism. During the 1950s and 1960s, fundamentalist leaders rallied against the civil rights movement and the Supreme Court's decision in

Brown v. Board of Education, which desegregated public schools. They stoked fears among white Southerners that their way of life was under attack.

Political Mobilization

The Religious Right emerged as a political force in the 1970s and 1980s, under the leadership of figures such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. These leaders capitalized on the growing conservative sentiment in the wake of the Watergate scandal and the economic recession. They mobilized their followers by framing social issues, such as abortion, homosexuality, and prayer in schools, as moral threats to the nation.

Racial Appeals

One of the key strategies employed by the Religious Right was the use of racial appeals. White evangelical leaders adeptly tapped into the racial anxieties and resentments felt by many white Americans, particularly in the South. They portrayed civil rights legislation as an attack on white culture and used coded language to evoke fears of racial integration.

The New Christian Right

In the 1990s, a younger generation of Religious Right leaders emerged, led by figures such as Ralph Reed and George W. Bush. This "New Christian Right" sought to rebrand the movement, distancing itself from the overt racism of the past. However, they continued to rely on racial appeals, albeit more subtly. For example, they opposed affirmative action and promoted welfare reform, policies that disproportionately affected African Americans.

The Obama Presidency

The election of Barack Obama as the first African American president in 2008 was a pivotal moment in the relationship between race and the Religious Right. Obama's presidency galvanized many evangelical conservatives, who saw it as a repudiation of their values. They became increasingly politicized and pushed for more conservative policies, contributing to the rise of the Tea Party movement.

Contemporary Trends

In recent years, the Religious Right has continued to play a significant role in American politics. It remains a core constituency for the Republican Party and has been instrumental in the appointment of conservative judges to the federal judiciary. However, the movement has become increasingly diverse, with a growing number of non-white evangelical leaders.

Impact on American Society

The rise of the Religious Right has had a profound impact on American society. It has contributed to the polarization of the political landscape, intensifying debates over social issues. The movement has also influenced public policy, shaping everything from education and healthcare to immigration and environmental protection.

The complex relationship between race and the Religious Right is a testament to the intertwined nature of faith, politics, and identity in the United States. The movement's use of racial appeals has had a lasting impact on American politics and society, shaping the country's social fabric and political discourse. Understanding this relationship is crucial for comprehending contemporary social and political dynamics.

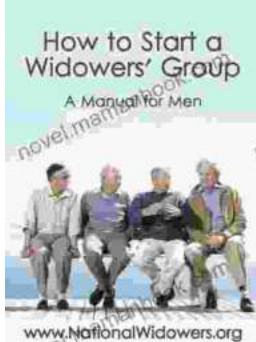


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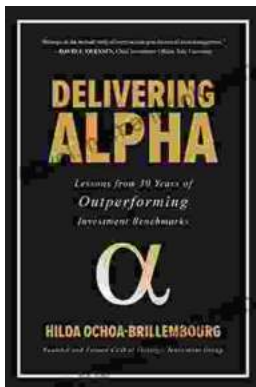
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