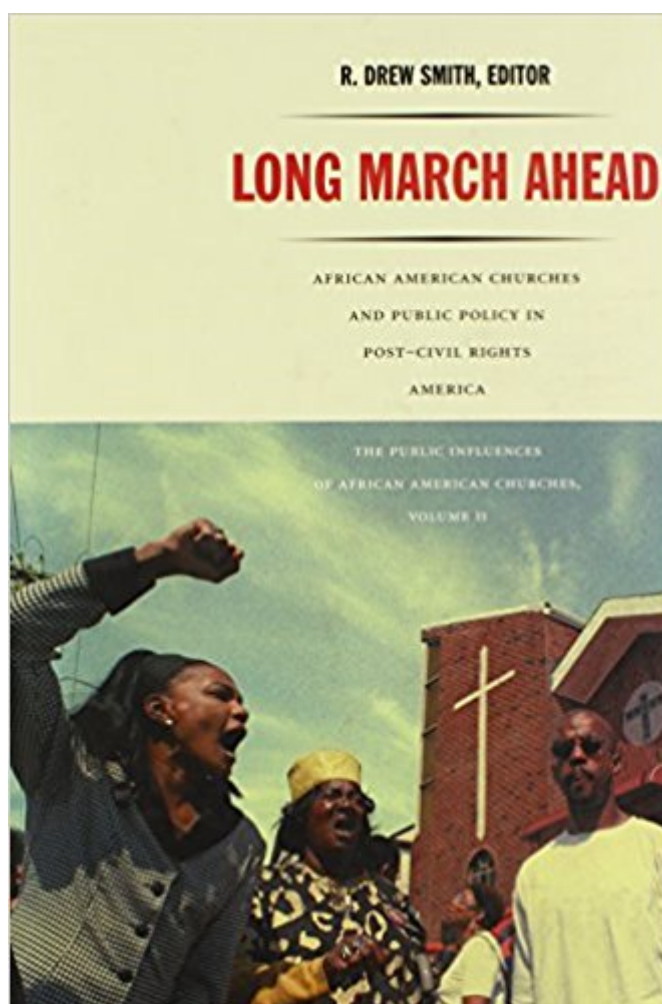


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Long March Ahead: African American Churches And Public Policy In Post-Civil Rights America (Public Influences Of African American Churches)





Synopsis

Analyzing the extensive data gathered by the Public Influences of African American Churches project, which surveyed nearly two thousand churches across the country, Long March Ahead assesses the public policy activism of black churches since the civil rights movement. Social scientists and clergy consider the churches'™ work on a range of policy matters over the past four decades: affirmative action, welfare reform, health care, women's rights, education, and anti-apartheid activism. Some essays consider advocacy trends broadly. Others focus on specific cases, such as the role of African American churches in defeating the "One Florida" plan to end affirmative action in college admissions and state contracting or the partnership forged between police and inner-city black ministers to reduce crime in Boston during the 1990s. Long March Ahead emphasizes the need for African American churches to complement the excellent work they do in implementing policies set by others by getting more involved in shaping public policy. The contributors explore the efficacy of different means of public policy advocacy and social service delivery, including faith-based initiatives. At the same time, they draw attention to trends that have constrained political involvement by African American churches: the increased professionalization of policy advocacy and lobbying, the underdevelopment of church organizational structures devoted to policy work, and tensions between religious imperatives and political activism. Long March Ahead takes an important look at the political role of African American churches after the great policy achievements of the civil rights era.

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Customer Reviews

“As a board member of the project researching the Public Influences of African American Churches, I am proud of the degree to which the team of researchers, directed by Dr. R. Drew Smith, illuminated the current impact of the African American church on the various forms of political behavior in its community. The very breadth and scope of this project provides a new research baseline for this subject that will be useful to religious institutions, scholars, and the public as they seek to understand the role of the American church in the life of the nation.”—Dr. Ronald Walters, Distinguished Leadership Scholar and Professor of Government and Politics, University of Maryland, College Park
R. Drew Smith’s *Long March Ahead* is an excellent collection of essays which points to the strengths and weaknesses of black churches in the public policy arena. While they remain key mobilizing institutions in black communities, the churches have not developed a coherent voice on significant public policy issues such as welfare reform in the post-civil rights era. Everyone concerned about the future of black churches in the twenty-first century needs to ponder the implications of these important case studies.”—Lawrence H. Mamiya, coauthor of *The Black Church in the African American Experience*

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An accurate history of the Christian social ethics or lack of it by the Black church in the shaping of Public Policy by a fair minded and meticulous scholar .It needs to be required reading for seminarians, pastors, and denominational leaders. J. Alfred Smith ,Sr.

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