



Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia

J. Douglas Smith

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Tracing the erosion of white elite paternalism in Jim Crow Virginia, Douglas Smith reveals a surprising fluidity in southern racial politics in the decades between World War I and the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Smith draws on official records, private correspondence, and letters to newspapers from otherwise anonymous Virginians to capture a wide and varied range of black and white voices. African Americans emerge as central characters in the narrative, as Smith chronicles their efforts to obtain access to public schools and libraries, protection under the law, and the equitable distribution of municipal resources. This acceleration of black resistance to white supremacy in the years before World War II precipitated a crisis of confidence among white Virginians, who, despite their overwhelming electoral dominance, felt increasingly insecure about their ability to manage the color line on their own terms. Exploring the everyday power struggles that accompanied the erosion of white authority in the political, economic, and educational arenas, Smith uncovers the seeds of white Virginians' resistance to civil rights activism in the second half of the twentieth century.

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