



Race & Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972

Adam Fairclough

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Race and Democracy is the first history of the civil rights movement in Louisiana. Central to Race and Democracy is Fairclough's argument that historians and the media, in their fascination with the action-oriented, youth-dominated 1960s, do not appreciate the full variety, depth, and durability of black protest. Moreover, by according higher visibility to the most "glamorous" aspects of the movement, they have neglected the crucial role of the NAACP. The dominant civil rights organization in the deep south before the mid-1950s, the NAACP had already amassed an impressive record of victories through litigation and fieldwork before SCLC, CORE, and SNCC arrived on the scene. In reassessing the role of the NAACP, Race and Democracy highlights the contributions of black lawyer Alexander Pierre Tureaud and the many extraordinarily brave men and women for whom the struggle for civil rights was a lifetime commitment. Race and Democracy includes careful analyses of white responses to the civil rights movement as expressed through political factions, trade unions, business lobbies, the Catholic Church, White Citizens Councils, and the Ku Klux Klan. As well as examining the leadership of three powerful governors - Huey Long, Earl Long, and John McKeithen - it describes the roles of such key individuals as federal judge Skelly Wright, Catholic archbishop Joseph Rummel, and racist politico Leander H. Perez. Throughout, Fairclough places the Louisiana movement in the context of such national trends and events as war, depression, McCarthyism, Black Power, and federal intervention. He concludes by surveying present-day Louisiana and assessing the political significance of David Duke.

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