

Race and the Power of Sermons on American Politics

This book examines the intersection of race, political sermons, and social justice. Religious leaders and congregants who discuss and encourage others to do social justice embrace a form of civil religion that falls close to the covenantal wing of American civil religious thought. Clergy and members who share this theological outlook frame the nation as being exceptional in God's sight. They also emphasize that the nation's special relationship with the Creator is contingent on the nation working toward providing opportunities for socioeconomic well-being, freedom, and creative pursuits. God's covenant, thus, requires inclusion of people who may have different life experiences but who, nonetheless, are equally valued by God and worthy of dignity. Adherents to such a civil religious worldview would believe it right to care for and be in solidarity with the poor and powerless, even if they are undocumented immigrants, people living in non-democratic and non-capitalist nations, or members of racial or cultural out-groups. Relying on 44 national and regional surveys conducted between 1941 and 2019, *Race and the Power of Sermons on American Politics* explores how racial experiences impact the degree to which religion informs social justice attitudes and political behavior. This is the most comprehensive set of analyses of publicly available survey data on this topic.

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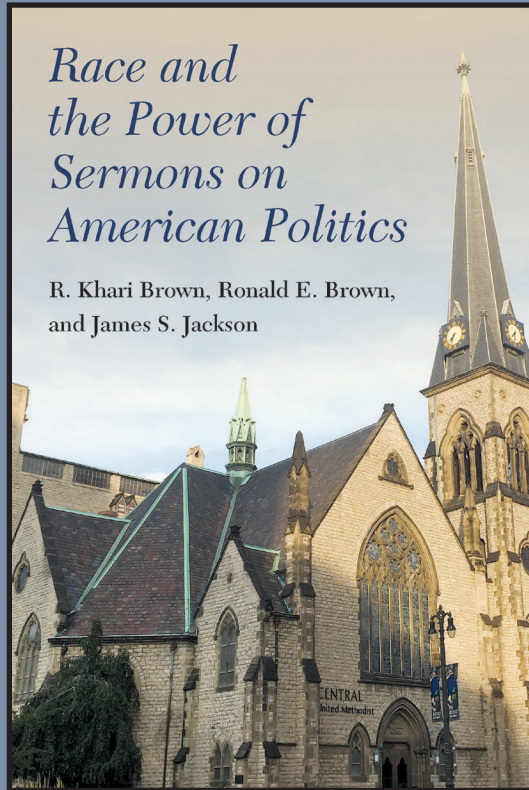
James S. Jackson is Daniel Katz Distinguished University Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan.

"...others have analyzed the political attitudes and behavior of clergy, but this is the first book to analyze what congregants report hearing from their clergy and how the messages given may shape the political attitudes and behavior of their congregants."

—Corwin E. Smidt, Michigan State University

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and James S. Jackson



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