Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky, 1830–1880

This book sheds new light on the role of religion in the nineteenth-century slavery debates. In it, Luke E. Harlow argues that ongoing conflict over the meaning of Christian “orthodoxy” constrained the political and cultural horizons available for defenders and opponents of American slavery. The central locus of these debates was Kentucky, a border slave state with a long-standing antislavery presence. Although white Kentuckians famously cast themselves as moderates in the period and remained with the Union during the Civil War, their religious values showed no moderation on the slavery question. When the war ultimately brought emancipation, white Kentuckians found themselves in lockstep with the rest of the Confederate South. Racist religion thus paved the way for the making of Kentucky’s Confederate memory of the war, as well as a deeply entrenched white Democratic Party in the state.

Luke E. Harlow is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His published work has appeared in *Slavery and Abolition, Ohio Valley History*, and the *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*. He is the co-editor of *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present*. 
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This book began as a doctoral dissertation at Rice University under the direction of John Boles. As much as in this project’s earliest stages, the finished work is indebted to John’s advice and care. His students are familiar with his palpable enthusiasm for their projects, which is inspiring. Specifically for the range of questions that animate this book, there was no better mentor. Yet more broadly, for the range of questions that animate academic life, John’s wisdom has always proven sage.

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