

World War II and American Racial Politics

This book examines the heterogeneous consequences of World War II for white racial attitudes and the executive branch response to civil rights advocacy. Contrary to conventional wisdom, analysis of the available survey evidence finds that the white mass public's racial policy attitudes largely did not liberalize during the war against Nazi Germany. In this context, advocates turned their attention increasingly to the possibility of unilateral action by the president, which led them to emphasize war-specific measures where the president had some discretion – discrimination in the defense industry and segregation in the armed forces – combined with support for the president's foreign policy initiatives, strategic decisions that had important implications for twentieth-century racial politics. Along with offering a reinterpretation of this critical period in American political development, this book also has implications for the theoretical relationship between war and the inclusion of marginalized groups in democratic societies more generally.

Steven White is an assistant professor of political science in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. His research examines race and American political development, particularly the complicated relationship between war and the inclusion of marginalized groups. His research has been published or is forthcoming in *Studies in American Political Development*, *American Politics Research*, and *Social Science Quarterly*. He has also written for more popular outlets, including *The Monkey Cage* and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

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*Public Opinion, the Presidency, and Civil Rights
Advocacy*

STEVEN WHITE

Syracuse University, New York



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