



# **Long March Ahead: African American Churches and Public Policy in Post-Civil Rights America (The public influences of African American churches ;)**

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Analyzing the extensive data gathered by the Public Influences of African American Churches project, which surveyed nearly two thousand churches across the country, *Long March Ahead* assesses the public policy activism of black churches since the civil rights movement. Social scientists and clergy consider the churches' work on a range of policy matters over the past four decades: affirmative action, welfare reform, health care, women's rights, education, and anti-apartheid activism. Some essays consider advocacy trends broadly. Others focus on specific cases, such as the role of African American churches in defeating the "One Florida" plan to end affirmative action in college admissions and state contracting or the partnership forged between police and inner-city black ministers to reduce crime in Boston during the 1990s.

*Long March Ahead* emphasizes the need for African American churches to complement the excellent work they do in implementing policies set by others by getting more involved in shaping public policy. The contributors explore the efficacy of different means of public policy advocacy and social service delivery, including faith-based initiatives. At the same time, they draw attention to trends that have constrained political involvement by African American churches: the increased professionalization of policy advocacy and lobbying, the underdevelopment of church organizational structures devoted to policy work, and tensions between religious imperatives and political activism. *Long March Ahead* takes an important look at the political role of African American churches after the great policy achievements of the civil rights era.

### Contributors

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