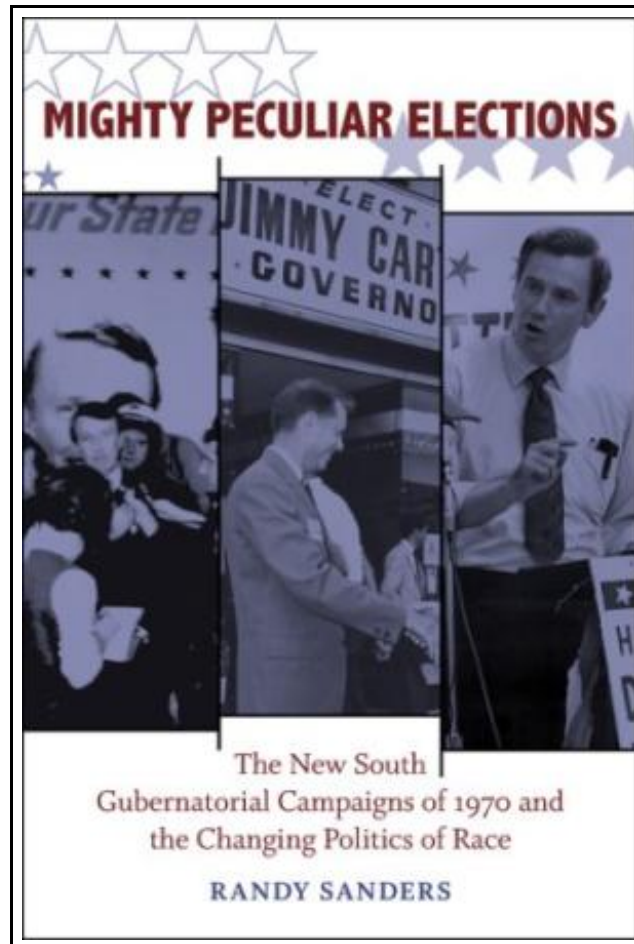


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Reviews

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MIGHTY PECULIAR ELECTIONS: THE NEW SOUTH GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGNS OF 1970 AND THE CHANGING POLITICS OF RACE



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Louisiana State University Press, United States, 2007. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Louisiana Pbk.. 224 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In 1970, four racially moderate Democrats won governors seats in the American South -- Dale Bumpers in Arkansas, Reubin Askew in Florida, John West in South Carolina, and Jimmy Carter in Georgia. In *Mighty Peculiar Elections*, Randy Sanders explores these campaigns and shows that while each reflected aspects of its state s unique history and political idiosyncrasies, taken together, they signaled changes in attitudes and the politics of race in the South as well as the nation as a whole. Most southerners by 1970 had come to realize the futility of overt opposition to federal civil rights policies and no longer wanted to hear political candidates singing the refrains of white supremacy. Bumpers won Arkansas s Democratic primary over former Governor Orval Faubus, who had symbolized southern intransigence since 1957, when he ordered the state militia to prevent school integration at Central High School in Little Rock. Askew defeated Florida s Republican incumbent governor, Claude Kirk, who seized a school district during the campaign in order to thwart a court-ordered school desegregation plan. Similarly, West ran against Republican Albert Watson, who spewed fiery anti-integration rhetoric, and Carter succeeded Lester Maddox, who had established and maintained his hard-line segregationist reputation by autographing ax handles, mementos of the weapon he used years earlier to prevent blacks from entering his restaurant. None of the victors in 1970 talked much about civil rights during their campaigns; they all downplayed, evaded, or finessed racial issues when those topics arose. Sanders describes how the successful candidates carefully shaped their campaigns, rejecting the rhetoric of resistance without uttering strong words in favor of desegregation. A shared campaign strategy of new populism emerged among these candidates...



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