



Paint the White House Black: Barack Obama and the Meaning of Race in America

Michael P. Jeffries

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Paint the White House Black: Barack Obama and the Meaning of Race in America Michael P. Jeffries Barack Obama's election as the first black president in American history forced a reconsideration of racial reality and possibility. It also incited an outpouring of discussion and analysis of Obama's personal and political exploits. *Paint the White House Black* fills a significant void in Obama-themed debate, shifting the emphasis from the details of Obama's political career to an understanding of how race works in America. In this groundbreaking book, race, rather than Obama, is the central focus.

Michael P. Jeffries approaches Obama's election and administration as common cultural ground for thinking about race. He uncovers contemporary stereotypes and anxieties by examining historically rooted conceptions of race and nationhood, discourses of "biracialism" and Obama's mixed heritage, the purported emergence of a "post-racial society," and popular symbols of Michelle Obama as a modern black woman. In so doing, Jeffries casts new light on how we think about race and enables us to see how race, in turn, operates within our daily lives.

Race is a difficult concept to grasp, with outbursts and silences that disguise its relationships with a host of other phenomena. Using Barack Obama as its point of departure, *Paint the White House Black* boldly aims to understand race by tracing the web of interactions that bind it to other social and historical forces.

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