



Hoods and Shirts: The Extreme Right in Pennsylvania, 1925-1950

Philip Jenkins

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Extreme right-wing groups have always been a part of the American religious and political landscape. The era between the world wars, especially the 1930s, was a particularly volatile period, and by 1940, racist, nativist, and fascist groups had become so visible as to arouse public fears of insurrection and sabotage. In *Hoods and Shirts*, Philip Jenkins uses developments in Pennsylvania as a case study of the local activities and broader significance of organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Italian Black Shirts, the Silver Legion, the German-American Bund, and Father Coughlin's Christian Front.

Pennsylvania's cities were a stronghold of several of the most active extremist movements, and Jenkins argues that while the threats they posed were often exaggerated to benefit the solidarity of the political mainstream, a loose coalition of dozens of these groups nevertheless constituted a formidable political presence in the state. In chapters on each of the major organizations, Jenkins traces their common commitment to a fascist agenda as well as the ethnic and religious differences that divided them. His comprehensive analysis sheds new light on how these right-wing movements influenced the mainstream of American politics in the interwar years.

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