



# Gin, Jesus, and Jim Crow

Prohibition and the Transformation of Racial and Religious Politics in the South

**BRENDAN J. J. PAYNE**

In *Gin, Jesus, and Jim Crow*, Brendan J. J. Payne reveals how prohibition helped realign the racial and religious order in the South by linking restrictions on alcohol with political preaching and the disfranchisement of Black voters. While both sides invoked Christianity, prohibitionists redefined churches' doctrines, practices, and political engagement. White prohibitionists initially courted Black voters in the 1880s but soon dismissed them as hopelessly wet and sought to disfranchise them, stoking fears of drunken Black men defiling white women in their efforts to reframe alcohol restriction as a means of racial control. Later, as the alcohol industry grew desperate, it turned to Black voters, many of whom joined the brewers to preserve their voting rights and maintain personal liberties. Tracking southern debates about alcohol from the 1880s through the 1930s, Payne shows that prohibition only retreated from the region once the racial and religious order it helped enshrine had been secured.

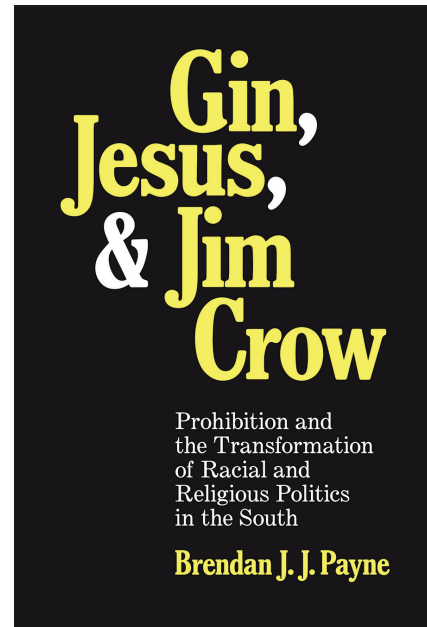
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### Praise for *Gin, Jesus, and Jim Crow*:

"'Gin Crow' was a close cousin to Jim Crow, as Brendan Payne shows in this stimulating study of the complexities of religion, prohibition, and politics in the South from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s. Neglected religious wets, especially African Americans, get their say here, and southern prohibition's connection to the rise of the Jim Crow system is deftly explained and deconstructed. An essential work for students of southern religion and politics."—Paul Harvey, author of *Christianity and Race in the American South: A History*

"Through clear, accessible prose, and with an eye toward understudied movements and shifting alliances, Payne gives readers a new lens through which to see contestations over strong drink and the import of this struggle to the history of race and religion in the American South."—Aaron Griffith, author of *God's Law and Order: The Politics of Punishment in Evangelical America*

"A nuanced description of the motivations and activities of Black southerners who fought against prohibition, a fight they saw as one of their only opportunities to push back against the increasing tide of Jim Crow laws. This is most definitely a work that should be widely read and discussed."—Michael Lewis, author of *The Coming of Southern Prohibition: The Dispensary System and the Battle over Liquor in South Carolina, 1907–1915*



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