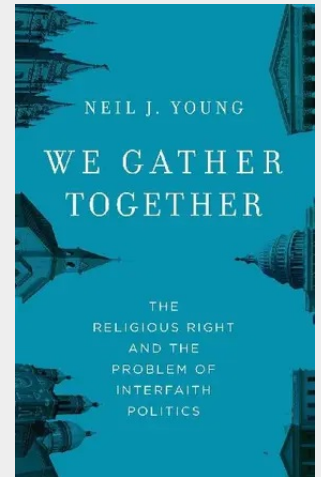


Young

We Gather Together

The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics

In the 1970s, mainly in response to Roe v. Wade, evangelicals and conservative Catholics put aside their longstanding historical prejudices and theological differences and joined forces to form a potent political movement that swept across the country--or so conventional wisdom would have us think. In this provocative book, Neil J. Young argues that most of this widely accepted story of the creation of the Religious Right is not true. *We Gather Together* examines evangelicals, Catholics, and Mormons (who are usually ignored in the story) in the early days of the religious right and paints a much different picture. Tracing the interactions among these three groups from the 1950s to the present day, Young shows that the emergence of the Religious Right was not a brilliant political strategy of compromise and coalition-building hatched on the eve of a history-altering election. Rather, it was the latest iteration of a much-longer religious debate that had been going on for decades in reaction to the building of a mainline Protestant consensus. This "restructuring" of interfaith relations took place alongside American political developments of the time, and evangelicals, Catholics, and Mormons found common cause and pursued similar ends in debates about abortion, school prayer, the Equal Rights Amendment, and tax exemptions for religious schools. They did so together at times but more often separately, and it is the latter part that historians have all but ignored. While these social and political issues were the objects of their displeasure, they weren't its source; far from setting aside their divisions to create a unified movement, cracks in the alliance shaped the movement from the very beginning. This provocative book will reshape our understanding of the most important religious and political movement of the last 30 years.



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