

The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America, 1978-1988 (Clarendon Paperbacks)

Steve Bruce



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The resurgence during the Reagan administration of right-wing organizations--like Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority--committed to bringing religion back into American politics, reflected the determination of fundamentalists to fight against a perceived domination that threatened the autonomy of conservative Protestantism from a liberal and cosmopolitan elite. The fundamentalists, however, have been forced into alliances with conservative Catholics and Jews, and other secular conservatives, in their quest for political strength; and, inherent tensions of this coalition-building effort have worked against the cause, being in large part responsible for the relative failure of the movement to make larger inroads into American popular politics. This important new book draws on survey data and interviews with fundamentalist activists to chart the rise and fall of the New Christian Right. Bruce traces the postwar social and religious origins of the movement, evaluates its achievements, and analyzes why, despite some local successes, it has failed to remake the United States as "one nation under God." He also draws larger conclusions about the political possibilities for religious minorities in modern societies.

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