



Beyond Integration: The Black Freedom Struggle in Escambia County, Florida, 1960-1980

J. Michael Butler

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In 1975, Florida's Escambia County and the city of Pensacola experienced a pernicious chain of events. A sheriff's deputy killed a young black man at point-blank range. Months of protests against police brutality followed, culminating in the arrest and conviction of the Reverend H. K. Matthews, the leading civil rights organizer in the county. Viewing the events of Escambia County within the context of the broader civil rights movement, J. Michael Butler demonstrates that while activism of the previous decade destroyed most visible and dramatic signs of racial segregation, institutionalized forms of cultural racism still persisted. In Florida, white leaders insisted that because blacks obtained legislative victories in the 1960s, African Americans could no longer claim that racism existed, even while public schools displayed Confederate imagery and allegations of police brutality against black citizens multiplied.

Offering a new perspective on the literature of the black freedom struggle, *Beyond Integration* REVEALS HOW WITH EACH LEGAL STEP TAKEN TOWARD RACIAL EQUALITY, NOTIONS OF BLACK INFERIORITY BECAME MORE ENTRENCHED, REMINDING US JUST HOW DEEPLY RACISM REMAINED--AND STILL REMAINS--IN OUR SOCIETY.

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