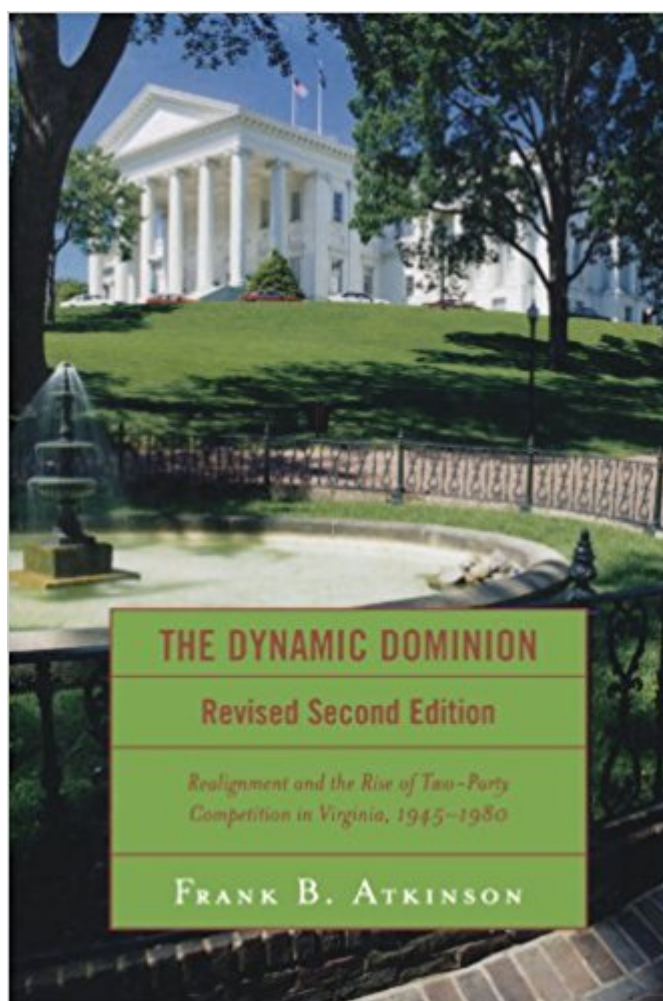


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The Dynamic Dominion: Realignment And The Rise Of Two-Party Competition In Virginia, 1945-1980



Synopsis

The Dynamic Dominion tells the dramatic story of Virginia's political transformation from the Second World War to the Reagan Revolution. The cradle of American democracy and thus of the democratic movement that is sweeping the globe today the venerable Old Dominion has emerged again in the second half of the 20th century as a dynamic political pace setter for the nation. In 1945, Virginia was a one-party, one-faction state under the aristocratic rule of conservative Democratic Senator Harry F. Byrd and his famed "Byrd organization." From his perch as the uncontested leader of the state that led the south, Virginia's Byrd became a regional symbol, a congressional kingpin, and a national power. With its political system and culture static, Virginia's voice was heard nationally mostly in dissent, as it had been for a century. Within a few decades, emerging two-party competition and an unprecedented party realignment combined to place the rapidly changing commonwealth in the national vanguard. Well before Republican parties throughout the South became competitive, Virginia's Republicans in the 1970s compiled the most impressive winning streak of any state party in the country. They did it by constructing a coalition of rural conservative Democrats and suburban Republicans the same coalition that Ronald Reagan assembled nationwide in 1980, ushering in the Reagan Revolution. As told in The Dynamic Dominion, the Virginia story contains all the excitement, drama, conflict, and intrigue of a fast-paced thriller. It is a story of triumph and tragedy, celebrities and statesmen, heroes and scoundrels of shifting party loyalties and makeshift coalitions, hard-fought campaigns and razor-close elections of ambition and cynicism alongside sacrifice and idealism. Best of all, the tale is true. It is the fascinating story of contemporary democracy flourishing in Virginia . . . the place where it was born.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Frank Atkinson's book is a dramatic account of the political events that precipitated the realignment of both political parties in the state. His work is an indispensable starting point for anyone interested in understanding the modern Virginia political scene. (Thomas R. Morris) This book is packed with insights, and it's essential reading for every informed Virginian. The Dynamic Dominion is an eminently fair, comprehensive account of the tumultuous events that have shaped this state in the modern era, told by a premier interpreter of our contemporary political history. (Dr. Larry J. Sabato)

Frank B. Atkinson is the chairman of McGuireWoods Consulting LLC and a partner in McGuireWoods LLP in Richmond, Virginia. In 1994-1996, he served in the cabinet of Governor George Allen as counselor and director of policy. During the Reagan administration, he served as special counsel and deputy chief of staff to the U.S. Attorney General and before that was special assistant in the Justice Department.

The end of the Byrd era, and all that it did to Virginia, told from a right-of-center, but honest perspective. Virginia is big enough for large personalities, and small enough for petty feuds. Atkinson captures them both. The first third of his sequel, Virginia in the Vanguard, is like a continuation of this valuable work. Byrd to Wilder. Only in Virginia.

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