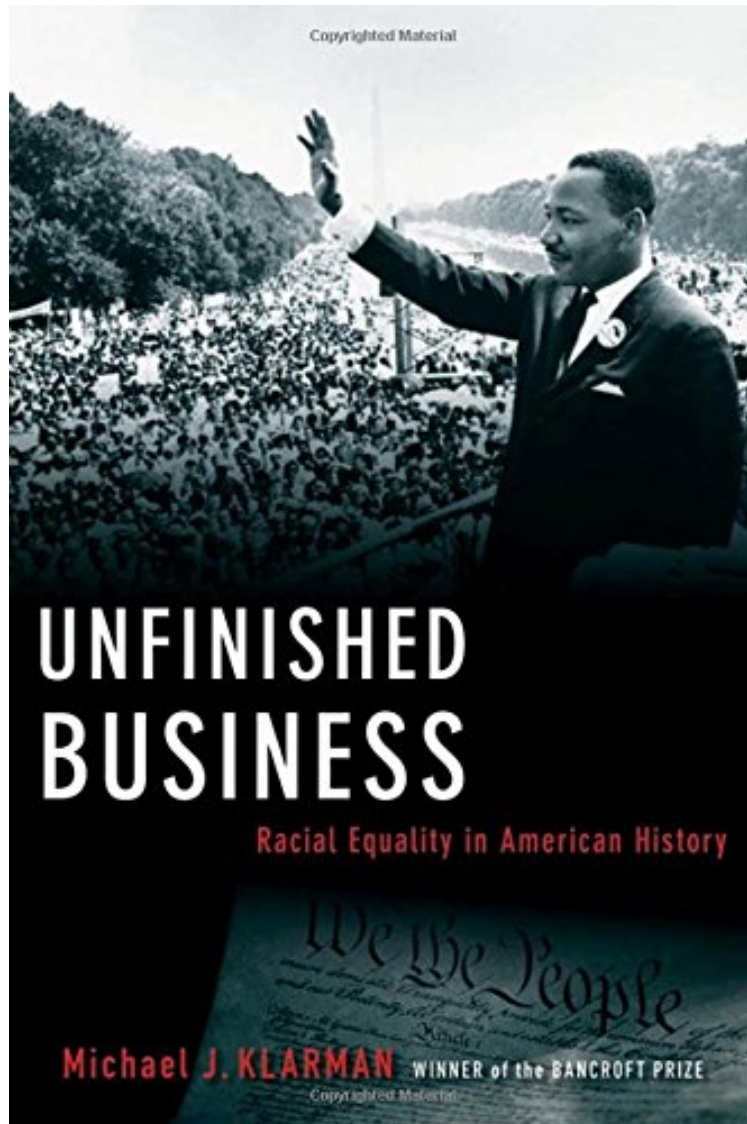


(Download) Unfinished Business: Racial Equality in American History (Inalienable Rights)

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Michael J. Klarman

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Michael J. Klarman, author of *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, which won the prestigious Bancroft Prize in American History, is one of the leading authorities on the history of civil rights law in the United States. In *Unfinished Business*, he illuminates the course of racial equality in America, revealing that we have made less progress than we like to think. Indeed, African Americans have had to fight for everything they have achieved. Klarman highlights a variety of social and political factors that have influenced the path of racial progress--wars, migrations, urbanization, shifting political coalitions--and he looks in particular at the contributions of law and of court decisions to American equality. The author argues that court decisions tend to reflect the racial mores of the times, which is why the Supreme Court has not been a heroic defender of the rights of racial minorities. And even when the Court has promoted progressive racial change, its decisions have often been unenforced, in part because severely oppressed groups rarely have the resources necessary to force the issue. Klarman also sheds light on the North/South dynamic and how it has influenced racial progress, arguing that as southerners have become more anxious about outside challenges to their system of white supremacy, they have acted in ways that eventually undermined that system. For example, as southern slave owners demanded greater guarantees for slavery from the federal government, they alienated northerners, who came to fear a slave power conspiracy that would interfere with their liberties. *Unfinished Business* offers an invaluable, succinct account of racial equality and civil rights throughout American history.

"Klarman is America's most distinguished scholar of the constitutional struggles to achieve racial equality. In this superb and engrossing book, he argues that America's halting steps toward racial equality have resulted more from political and cultural pressure than judicial rulings. A characteristic tour de force that will enlighten all Americans about our most vexing national debate."--Jeffrey Rosen, Legal Affairs Editor of *The New Republic* and Professor of Law, George Washington University
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"Klarman has written a compact, lucid, and riveting narrative of the struggle for racial justice in America and a cautionary tale of the limits of judicial power. Rich in insight, Klarman's book is essential reading for students of race and law."--Richard A. Posner, Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
"This remarkably concise and innovative book offers a comprehensive history of American race relations and takes our understanding of that topic in a compelling new direction."--Henry Louis Gates, Jr., W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities, Harvard University
About the Author
Michael J. Klarman is James Monroe Distinguished Professor of Law and Professor of History, University of Virginia. One of the nation's leading authorities on race and constitutional history, he clerked for Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and he won the 2005 Bancroft Prize for *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality*. He has written for *The Nation* among other publications and has given talks across the country.