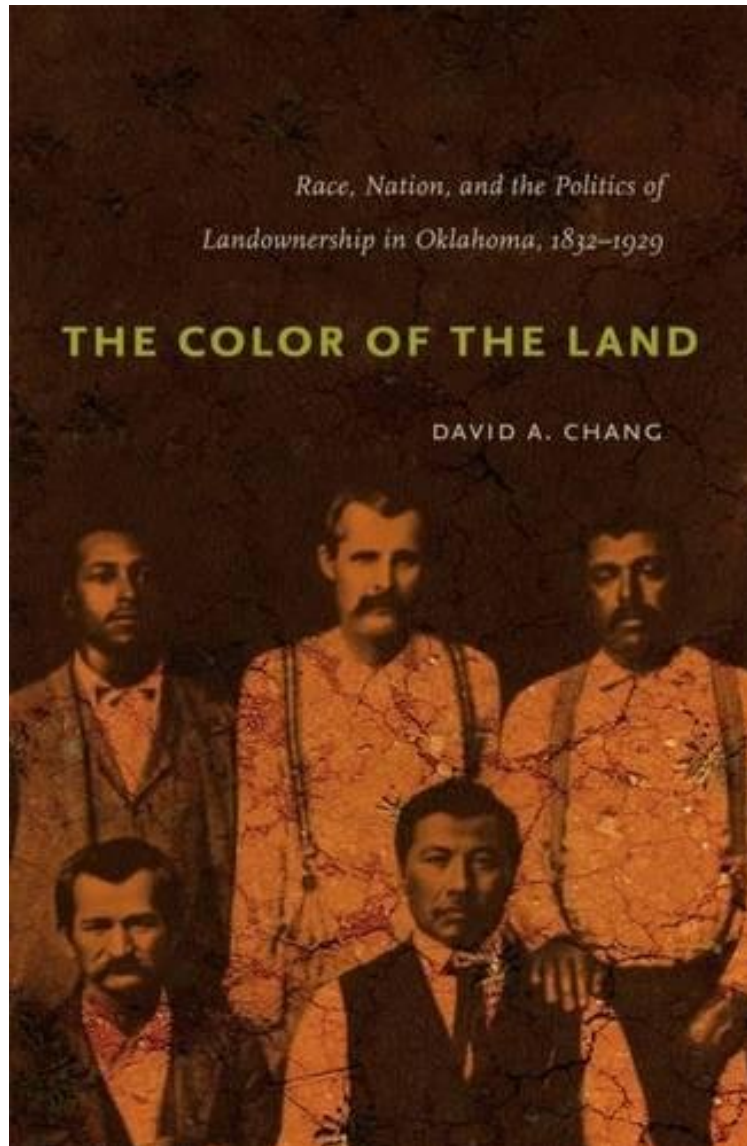


The Color of the Land: Race, Nation, and the Politics of Landownership in Oklahoma, 1832-1929

David A. Chang

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David A. Chang : The Color of the Land: Race, Nation, and the Politics of Landownership in Oklahoma, 1832-1929 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Color of the Land: Race, Nation, and the Politics of Landownership in Oklahoma, 1832-1929:

The Color of the Land brings the histories of Creek Indians, African Americans, and whites in Oklahoma together into one story that explores the way races and nations were made and remade in conflicts over who would own land, who would farm it, and who would rule it. This story disrupts expected narratives of the American past, revealing how identities--race, nation, and class--took new forms in struggles over the creation of different systems of property. Conflicts were unleashed by a series of sweeping changes: the forced "removal" of the Creeks from their homeland to Oklahoma in the 1830s, the transformation of the Creeks' enslaved black population into landed black Creek citizens after the Civil War, the imposition of statehood and private landownership at the turn of the twentieth century, and the entrenchment of a sharecropping economy and white supremacy in the following decades. In struggles over land, wealth, and power, Oklahomans actively defined and redefined what it meant to be Native American, African American, or white. By telling this story, David Chang contributes to the history of racial construction and nationalism as well as to southern, western, and Native American history.

Chang expertly demonstrates his ability to wed issues of race, class, land, and nationhood into one concise and coherent monograph. An outstanding study. It will undoubtedly become standard reading for anyone trying to better understand the dynamic, racialized landscape of Oklahoma.--The Chronicles of Oklahoma Exhaustively researched, carefully organized, and effectively argued. . . . Chang has made an important contribution. . . . It will certainly challenge scholars to rethink the history of allotment in Oklahoma and beyond for years to come." --The Journal of Southern History Chang speaks to current debates on the formation of national identity and racial construction, including that on black Indians. . . . Contributes to the understanding of the interplay among class, whiteness, and masculinity. . . . Provides a useful way of explaining the transition from Indian Territory to Oklahoma that would enliven both a survey lecture and a graduate seminar.--Journal of American History David A. Chang has written one of the best books of U.S. history to appear in the last year. Highly analytical and deeply researched, it is also eminently readable and perfectly pitched to classroom use. Full of ideas and humanity, The Color of the Land consistently provokes and edifies.--Western Historical Quarterly Valuable to many, including those who study race, the South, slavery, migration, American Indians, [and] the development of the nation. . . . An outstanding book and a model for future studies. . . . Essential.--Choice Historian David A. Chang has given this difficult, but interesting story a solid, innovative treatment. . . . This book will be a valuable addition to library collections on the era of allotment, and could be used profitably as a book for discussion in advanced classes in Native American history or government policy." --Canadian Journal of History The Color of the Land ties together the politics, culture, and geography of Oklahoma into a well-written, easily accessible narrative. Such work reminds historians that our primary task is to tell stories without sacrificing deep intellectual questions or thorough research.--Southern Historian There are few scholars capable of addressing all the potential axes of investigation as fully and thoroughly as Chang does. To weave Indians, African Americans, and Euro-Americans together into one story that also encompasses race, class, nation, and land is to account for the variables historians have been discussing in a piecemeal fashion for a generation or more. At once explicitly comparative and exquisitely sensitive to the connections between the units under comparison, this is the kind of work that we need more of.--Joshua A. Piker, University of Oklahoma Chang explores how Indians and white Americans used race and nation to control access to land and dispossess those defined as 'other.' His ambitious and groundbreaking book is deeply researched, broadly engaged with important debates, and thoroughly convincing.--Claudio Saunt, author of Black, White, and Indian: Race and the Unmaking of an American Family About the Author David A. Chang is assistant professor of history at the University of Minnesota.