How is it that in America the image of Jesus Christ has been used both to justify the atrocities of white supremacy and to inspire the righteousness of civil rights crusades? In The Color of Christ, Edward J. Blum (with Paul Harvey) weaves a tapestry of American dreams and visions—from witch hunts to web pages, Harlem to Hollywood, slave cabins to South Park, Mormon revelations to Indian reservations—to show how Americans remade the Son of God visually time and again into a sacred symbol of their greatest aspirations, deepest terrors, and mightiest strivings for racial power and justice.

The Color of Christ uncovers how, in a country founded by Puritans who destroyed depictions of Jesus, Americans came to believe in the whiteness of Christ. Some envisioned a white Christ who would sanctify the exploitation of Native Americans and African Americans and bless imperial expansion. Many others gazed at a messiah, not necessarily white, who was willing and able to confront white supremacy. The color of Christ still symbolizes America's most combustible divisions, revealing the power and malleability of race and religion from colonial times to the presidency of Barack Obama.

Edward J. Blum is a historian of race and religion in the United States. An award winning writer, his books include (with Paul Harvey) The Color of Christ: The Son and the Saga of Race in America (2012), W. E. B. Du Bois, American Prophet (2007) and Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898 (2005). Dr. Blum has been awarded the Gustave O. Arlt Award in the Humanities by the Council of Graduate Schools for the best first book by a historian published between 2002 and 2009, the Peter Seaborg Award for the best book in Civil War Studies (2006), and the C. Vann Woodward Dissertation Prize for the best dissertation in southern history (2004). Twice he has been recognized by the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights and in 2007 was named by the History News Network a “top young historian.” He has been a fellow with the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute at Harvard University and with the National Endowment for the Humanities. He is also the coeditor of the blog titled “TUSH.O: Teaching U.S. History.”

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