

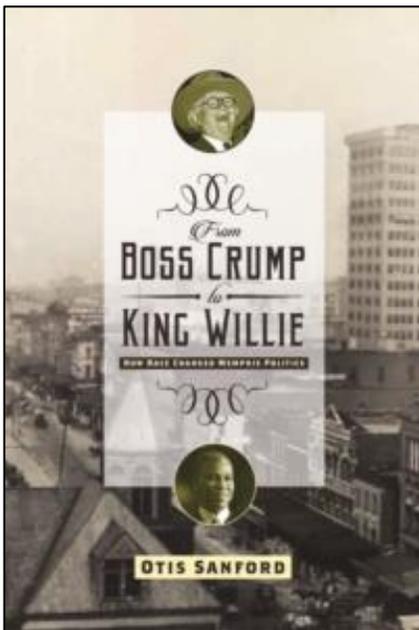
Otis Sanford

Otis Sanford holds the Hardin Chair of Excellence in Economic and Managerial Journalism at the University of Memphis. He also serves as the political commentator for WREG-TV Channel 3 and writes a weekly Viewpoint column for *The Commercial Appeal*. Before joining the U of M in 2011, Sanford was editor for opinion and editorials at *The Commercial Appeal* and formerly served as the paper's managing editor, the first African-American to hold both positions.

A Mississippi native and Ole Miss graduate, Sanford has 40 years of professional journalism experience. Starting in 1975 at *The Clarion-Ledger* in Jackson, Miss., Sanford's career began as a feature and entertainment writer. He joined *The Commercial Appeal* as a staff reporter, and then moved to The Pittsburgh Press as an assistant city editor. In 1992, he was named deputy city editor of the *Detroit Free Press* and later returned to *The Commercial Appeal* as deputy managing editor.



Book Synopsis: *From Boss Crump to King Willie*



From Boss Crump to King Willie offers an in-depth look at the vital role that race played in the political evolution of Memphis, from the rise of longtime political boss Edward Hull Crump to the election of Dr. Willie Herenton as the city's first black mayor. Filled with vivid details on the workings of municipal politics, this accessible account by veteran journalist Otis Sanford explores the nearly century-long struggle by African Americans in Memphis to secure recognition from local leaders and gain a viable voice in the city's affairs. Sanford explains how, in 1909, Crump won his first election as mayor without black support but then immediately sought to woo and keep the black vote in order to maintain his political machine for the next two generations. The African American community overwhelmingly supported the Crump organization because he at least listened and responded to some of their concerns, while other white leaders completely ignored them. The book probes Crump's hot-and-cold relationship with local newspaper editors, some of whom castigated his machine politics, and examines the press's influence on the political and civic life of the city. It also shows how, amid longstanding

racism and poverty in Memphis, the black community nevertheless produced many prominent business, religious, and political leaders, most of whom had an amicable relationship with "Boss" Crump. The book goes on to explore the political vacuum that ensued after Crump's death in 1954, and the factors that led to African Americans becoming the majority voting population in the city following Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in 1968.