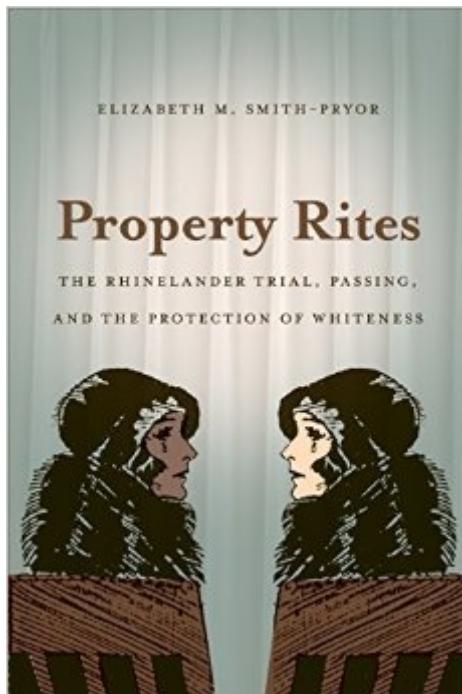


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# Property Rites: The Rhinelander Trial, Passing, And The Protection Of Whiteness



## **Synopsis**

In 1925 Leonard Rhinelander, the youngest son of a wealthy New York society family, sued to end his marriage to Alice Jones, a former domestic servant and the daughter of a "colored" cabman. After being married only one month, Rhinelander pressed for the dissolution of his marriage on the grounds that his wife had lied to him about her racial background. The subsequent marital annulment trial became a massive public spectacle, not only in New York but across the nation--despite the fact that the state had never outlawed interracial marriage. Elizabeth Smith-Pryor makes extensive use of trial transcripts, in addition to contemporary newspaper coverage and archival sources, to explore why Leonard Rhinelander was allowed his day in court. She moves fluidly between legal history, a day-by-day narrative of the trial itself, and analyses of the trial's place in the culture of the 1920s North to show how notions of race, property, and the law were--and are--inextricably intertwined.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book is outstanding... it explains every aspect of a trial that was as famous in its day as the O J Simpson trial. There is no other book on this subject that I could recommend.

This is really interesting and well written, so far I'm really enjoying this book. I believe my mother and perhaps my aunt will enjoy as well, I plan to pass it on! I highly recommend it.

An excellent scholarly treatment of the Rhinelander Trial of 1924 which provides a snapshot of the

manner in which definitions of race were socially constructed and contested during the inter war period of America. The work is suitable for use in college classrooms interested in race relations prior to the "Golden Decade" of the Civil Rights Era, but also as an example of high quality legal scholarship that many readers will find fascinating as notions of legal ownership and the implications of race intersect on the modern courtroom.

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