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Desegregating the Dollar: African American Consumerism in the Twentieth Century

By Robert E. Weems

New York University Press, United States, 1998. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Capitalism and slavery stand as the two economic phenomena that have most clearly defined the United States. Yet, despite African Americans nearly \$500 billion annual spending power, surprisingly little attention has been devoted to the ways U.S. businesses have courted black dollars in post-slavery America. Robert E. Weems, Jr., presents the first fully integrated history of black consumerism over the course of the last century. The World War I era Great Migration of African Americans from the rural South to northern and southern cities stimulated initial corporate interest in blacks as consumers. A generation later, as black urbanization intensified during World War II and its aftermath, the notion of a distinct, profitable African American consumer market gained greater currency. Moreover, black socioeconomic gains resulting from the Civil Rights movement which itself featured such consumer justice protests as the Montgomery Bus Boycott, further enhanced the status and influence of African American shoppers. Unwilling to settle for facile answers, Weems explores the role of black entrepreneurs who promoted the importance of the African American consumer market to U.S. corporations. Their actions,...



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