



Confronting the Odds: African American Entrepreneurship in Cleveland, Ohio

Bessie House-Soremekun

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An interest in the history of African American entrepreneurship has produced a number of studies of economic development on the national level, but very few have examined this growth at the local level. *Against All Odds* was written to bridge that gap. Bessie House Soremekun provides a historical analysis of black entrepreneurship in Cleveland, Ohio, from the early 1800s to the present day. Soremekun's statistical analysis of the factors that contributed to the success of African American businesses in Cleveland is supported by extensive research, and her policy recommendations about how entrepreneurship could be stimulated through public and private programs are thought provoking. In addition, examining historical and current trends of African American entrepreneurship, Soremekun presents brief biographies of several successful entrepreneurs, among them best-selling author George Fraser and internationally acclaimed architect Robert P. Madison. The book also documents the life histories of business owners who have had unsuccessful business experiences, compares black male and female business owners, and offers insights into why some businesses succeed while others fail. *Against All Odds* will prove to be a worthy addition to the literature of African American entrepreneurship in the United States.

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