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RACIAL INTEGRATION IN CORPORATE AMERICA, 1940–1990

In the space of about thirty years – from 1964 to 1994 – American corporations abandoned racially exclusionary employment policies and embraced some form of affirmative action to diversify their workforces. It was an extraordinary transformation, which most historians attribute to civil rights activists, federal legislation, and labor unions. This book examines the role of corporations in that transformation. Whereas others emphasize corporate obstruction, this book argues that there were corporate executives and managers who promoted fair employment and equal employment opportunity long before the federal government required it and who thereby helped prepare the corporate world for racial integration. The book examines the pioneering corporations that experimented with integration in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as corporate responses to the civil rights movement and urban crisis in the 1960s and 1970s and the widespread adoption of affirmative action in the 1980s and 1990s.

Jennifer Delton received her Ph.D. in history from Princeton University and is currently associate professor of history at Skidmore College. She is the author of *Making Minnesota Liberal: Civil Rights and the Transformation of the Democratic Party* and several articles on race, politics, and labor.

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