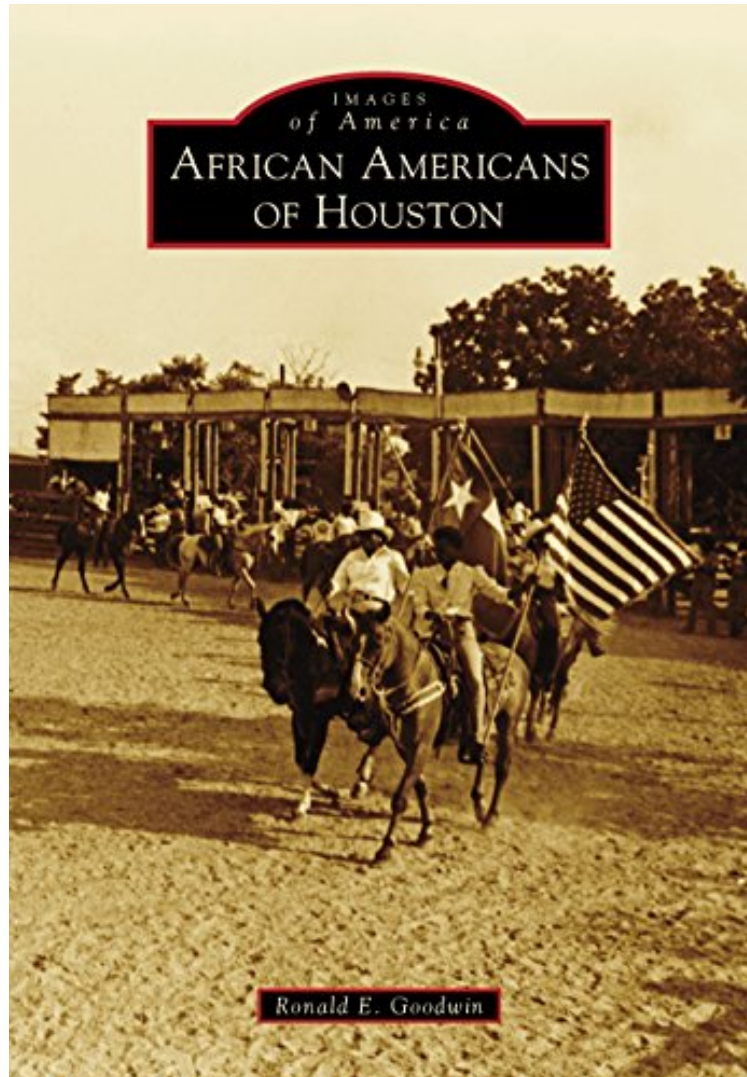


(Ebook free) African Americans of Houston (Images of America)

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Ronald E. Goodwin

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Ronald E. Goodwin : African Americans of Houston (Images of America) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised African Americans of Houston (Images of America):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. While it does have some nice old photographsBy CustomerAs an avid collector of the many books in this series, I found the Arcadia book on Houston to be one of the weakest entries. While it does have some nice old photographs, it lacks insight into the community or the forces driving organization building among blacks in Houston. There are numerous points in the book where the author gives descriptions of black institutions. In places where he appears to lack understanding of the organization, he defaults to saying that the organization was a product of African Americans attempting to "mimic" white organizations. I found the analysis lacking and the descriptions offensive. The writing was lazy and the facts were limited. I would have loved to see

details concerning unique aspects of Houston's black community. What sets Houston apart from other cities? These details were missing. The gulf in quality can best be appreciated when you compare this book to other entries in the series such as the one on New Orleans or the one detailing Detroit's Paradise Valley. Still, this book is better than nothing.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Houston's African American Community in Photographs By Robin Friedman

The Images of America series of Arcadia Publishers offers readers the opportunity to explore the diverse, local character of American life through small, uniformly-bound collections of photographs and texts. Books in the Images of America series feature African American communities in places such as Washington, D.C., Chicago, San Francisco, Milwaukee, Pine Bluff Arkansas, and many others. The Washington, D.C. public library system has a strong collection of African American related books which has allowed me to visit many communities through the Images of America volumes.

Ronald Goodwin's book "African Americans of Houston" (2013) is one of the best and most recent in the Images of America series. The book consists of an excellent collection of photographs of Houston together with a nuanced and perceptive historical discussion. Goodwin is a young historian with an interest in urban history and in the African American communities of Texas. The book taught me both about Houston and about its African American community.

The opening pages of the book concentrate on photographs of a growing downtown Houston during the early years of the 20th Century. Goodwin shows a strong interest in studying the public places of city life and in emphasizing their importance to the community. He discusses how the city tried to present itself as a lively, diverse metropolis in its urban spaces while minimizing the presence of African Americans and subjecting them to the rules of Jim Crow. Goodwin also shows a fascination with urban transportation, especially with streetcars. He offers many photographs of Houston's once-flourishing streetcar system, which could easily be the subject of a separate Images of America book. He describes how streetcars and other means of public transportation discriminated against African Americans and their neighborhoods. African Americans frequently were not allowed on the streetcars or on public transit. There were some African American cars and some cars that allowed segregated seating. The book also focuses on Houston's African American communities which began to flourish in the city just after the Civil War. There are pictures of unpaved, litter-filled streets, which the city did not maintain in the early years, and long rows of identical cheaply constructed houses. Goodwin discusses the effects of Jim Crow while he also emphasizes the strong positive aspects of African American life during the years of segregation. He presents photographs of African American businesses, professionals, theaters churches, libraries, and schools. He shows local events such as parades which instilled a sense of neighborhood. Goodwin argues that the community developed a substantial degree of cohesiveness and economic strength during the segregation years. With the civil rights era, many African American businesses faded as members of the community became welcome elsewhere and as middle-class residents abandoned the once strong local areas for the suburbs. The book discusses educational opportunities in African American Houston. Goodwin presents photographs of old segregated primary and secondary schools and of trade schools for the training of beauticians. His primary interest, however, is in the growth of college and professional education. As Goodwin indicates, in 1946, an African American man, Herman Sweatt, represented by Thurgood Marshall, went to the Supreme Court to secure admission to the University of Texas Law School. In an attempt to avoid an unfavorable decision, Texas established a college for African Americans in Houston called Texas State University for Negroes, later renamed Texas Southern University. TSU plays a large role in this book as Goodwin offers photographs of students, professors, athletic events, and presidents of the institution. Former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan was a TSU graduate and developed her formidable ability as a public speaker through the school's debating program. Goodwin discusses the desegregation of Houston in the 1960s. Although there were protests in the city and harsh police action at TSU, the city integrated relatively peacefully and quietly. African American leaders worked behind the scenes with city businesses and government officials to provide for a low-key end to Jim Crow. This book offers a brief, insightful look at Houston and at its African American community and its history. Robin Friedman

Texas is a Southern state, and in many ways, Houston is a typical Southern city. While Houston did not experience the types or degrees of racial violence found in other Southern cities during the Jim Crow era, black Houstonians nonetheless found themselves often relegated to the margins of society. For decades there were two distinct Houstons: one white and the other black. However, Houston's black community created businesses that flourished and schools that educated children and developed a culture that celebrated the accomplishments of their parents while eagerly anticipating the accomplishments of future generations. Images of America: African Americans of Houston captures the many facets of black Houston. From churches to nightclubs; city parks to city hall; and political giants Barbara Jordan, Mickey Leland, and Sheila Jackson Lee to the driving beats of Archie Bell and the Drells, the Ghetto Boys, and Beyoncé, black Houston is alive with a determination that past injustices will never dampen the future opportunities for greatness.

About the Author Author Ronald E. Goodwin completed his undergraduate degree from Texas Lutheran University while serving on active duty in the US Air Force. Goodwin's current research interests include urban history, the impacts of planning decisions on neighborhood development, and the historical development of Texas's black

community.