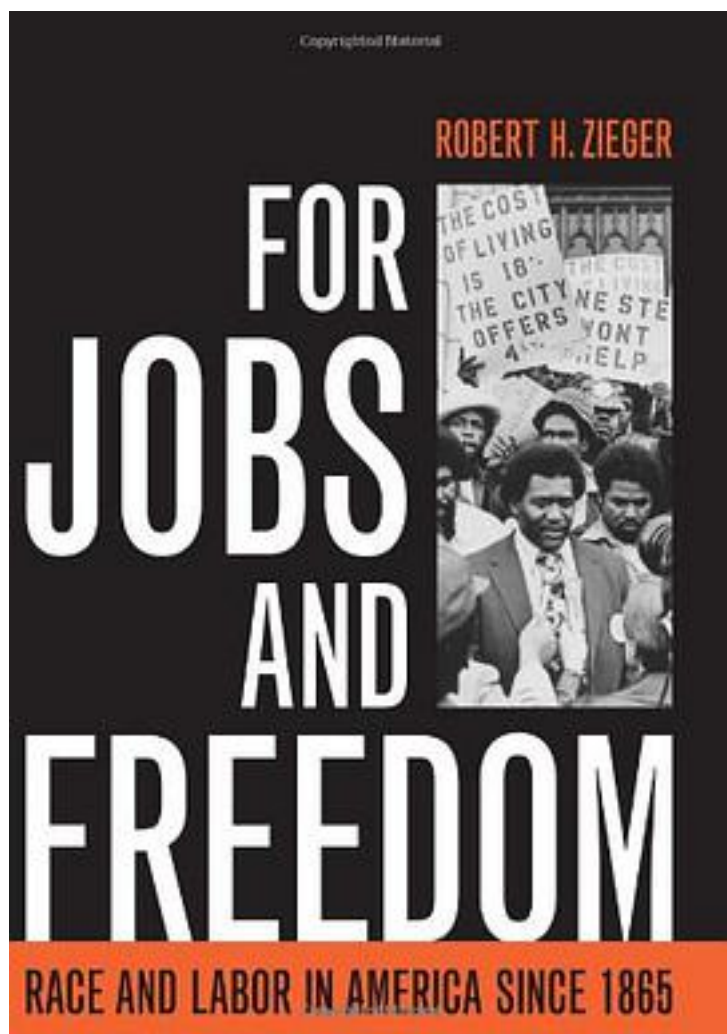


# For Jobs and Freedom



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著者:Robert H. Zieger

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Whether as slaves or freedmen, the political and social status of African Americans has

always been tied to their ability to participate in the nation's economy. Freedom in the post--Civil War years did not guarantee equality, and African Americans from emancipation to the present have faced the seemingly insurmountable task of erasing pervasive public belief in the inferiority of their race. *For Jobs and Freedom: Race and Labor in America since 1865* describes the African American struggle to obtain equal rights in the workplace and organized labor's response to their demands.

Award-winning historian Robert H. Zieger asserts that the promise of jobs was similar to the forty-acres-and-a-mule restitution pledged to African Americans during the Reconstruction era. The inconsistencies between rhetoric and action encouraged workers, both men and women, to organize themselves into unions to fight against unfair hiring practices and workplace discrimination. Though the path proved difficult, unions gradually obtained rights for African American workers with prominent leaders at their fore. In 1925, A. Philip Randolph formed the first black union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, to fight against injustices committed by the Pullman Company, an employer of significant numbers of African Americans. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) emerged in 1935, and its population quickly swelled to include over 500,000 African American workers. The most dramatic success came in the 1960s with the establishment of affirmative action programs, passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title VII enforcement measures prohibiting employer discrimination based on race. Though racism and unfair hiring practices still exist today, motivated individuals and leaders of the labor movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries laid the groundwork for better conditions and greater opportunities. Unions, with some sixteen million members currently in their ranks, continue to protect workers against discrimination in the expanding economy. *For Jobs and Freedom* is the first authoritative treatment in more than two decades of the race and labor movement, and Zieger's comprehensive and authoritative book will be standard reading on the subject for years to come.

作者介绍:

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