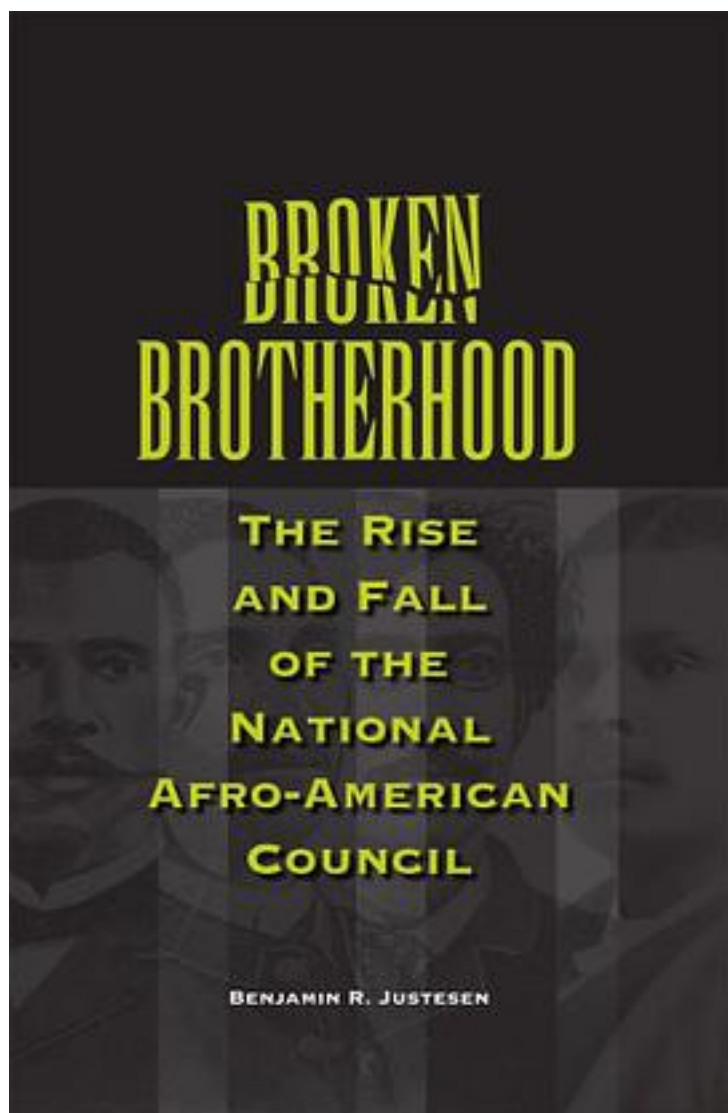


# Broken Brotherhood



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"Broken Brotherhood: ""The Rise and Fall of the National Afro-American Council "gives a comprehensive account of the National Afro-American Council, the first truly nationwide U.S. civil rights organization, which existed from 1898 to 1908. Based on exhaustive research, the volume chronicles the Council's achievements and its annual meetings and provides portraits of its key leaders. Led by four of the most notable African American leaders of the time--journalist T. Thomas Fortune, Bishop Alexander Walters, educator Booker T. Washington, and Congressman George Henry White--the Council persevered for a decade despite structural flaws and external pressures that eventually led to its demise in 1908. Author Benjamin R. Justesen provides historical context for the Council's development during an era of unprecedented growth in African American organizations. Justesen establishes the National Afro-American Council as the earliest national arena for discussions of critical social and political issues affecting African Americans and the single most important united voice lobbying for protection of the nation's largest minority. In a period marked by racial segregation, widespread disfranchisement, and lynching violence, the nonpartisan council helped establish two more enduring successor organizations, providing core leadership for both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League. "Broken Brotherhood" traces the history of the Council and the complicated relationships among key leaders from its creation in Rochester in 1898 to its last gathering in Baltimore in 1907, drawing on both private correspondence and contemporary journalism to create a balanced historical portrait. Enhanced by thirteen illustrations, the volume also provides intriguing details about the ten national gatherings, describes the Council's unsuccessful attempt to challenge disfranchisement before the U.S. Supreme Court, and sheds light on the gradual breakdown of Republican solidarity among African American leaders in the first decade of the twentieth century.

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