



“Cooperation in Black and White: Innovative Alliances in the Retail Grocery Trade”

A lecture by

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Beginning in the 1890s through the 1930s, independent grocers (white and black) formed a variety of innovative alliances—cartels, buying syndicates, and cooperatives—to navigate major changes within the trade. Through organizations like the Boston Wholesale Grocers' Association, Independent Grocers' Alliance, Red & White Stores, and Colored Merchants' Association, small businessmen formulated alternative ways of dealing and distributing goods, challenged chain stores, and created new entrepreneurial opportunities for black proprietors. Cooperative enterprise had limitations, however; while some groups advanced, others struggled to maintain a united front. This talk explores both successes and failures while questioning the role of collaboration in small business.

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LJ 119, Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building
10 First St. S.E., Washington DC

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