



Strangers in the Land of Paradise: Creation of an African American Community in Buffalo, New York, 1900-1940 (Blacks in the Diaspora)

Lillian Serece Williams

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Strangers in the Land of Paradise

The Creation of an African American Community, Buffalo, NY, 1900–1940

Lillian Serece Williams

Examines the settlement of African Americans in Buffalo during the Great Migration.

"A splendid contribution to the fields of African-American and American urban, social and family history.... expanding the tradition that is now well underway of refuting the pathological emphasis of the prevailing ghetto studies of the 1960s and '70s." ?Joe W. Trotter

Strangers in the Land of Paradise discusses the creation of an African American community as a distinct cultural entity. It describes values and institutions that Black migrants from the South brought with them, as well as those that evolved as a result of their interaction with Blacks native to the city and the city itself. Through an examination of work, family, community organizations, and political actions, Lillian Williams explores the process by which the migrants adapted to their new environment.

The lives of African Americans in Buffalo from 1900 to 1940 reveal much about race, class, and gender in the development of urban communities. Black migrant workers transformed the landscape by their mere presence, but for the most part they could not rise beyond the lowest entry-level positions. For African American women, the occupational structure was even more restricted; eventually, however, both men and women increased their earning power, and that?over time?improved life for both them and their loved ones.

Lillian Serece Williams is Associate Professor of History in the Women's Studies Department and Director of the Institute for Research on Women at Albany, the State University of New York. She is editor of Records of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, 1895–1992, associate editor of Black Women in United States History, and author of A Bridge to the Future: The History of Diversity in Girl Scouting.

352 pages, 14 b&w illus., 15 maps, notes, bibl., index, 6 1/8 x 9 1/4

Blacks in the Diaspora?Darlene Clark Hine, John McCluskey, Jr., and David Barry Gaspar, general editors

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