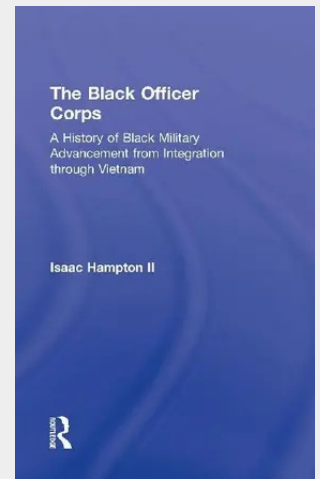


The Black Officer Corps

A History of Black Military Advancement from Integration through Vietnam

The U.S. Armed Forces started integrating its services in 1948, and with that push, more African Americans started rising through the ranks to become officers, although the number of black officers has always been much lower than African Americans' total percentage in the military. Astonishingly, the experiences of these unknown reformers have largely gone unexamined and unreported, until now. The Black Officer Corps traces segments of the African American officers' experience from 1946-1973. From generals who served in the Pentagon and Vietnam, to enlisted servicemen and officers' wives, Isaac Hampton has conducted over seventy-five oral history interviews with African American officers. Through their voices, this book illuminates what they dealt with on a day to day basis, including cultural differences, racist attitudes, unfair promotion standards, the civil rights movement, Black Power, and the experience of being in ROTC at Historically Black Colleges. Hampton provides a nuanced study of the people whose service reshaped race relations in the U.S. Armed Forces, ending with how the military attempted to control racism with the creation of the Defense Race Relations Institute of 1971. The Black Officer Corps gives us a much fuller picture of the experience of black officers, and a place to start asking further questions.

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