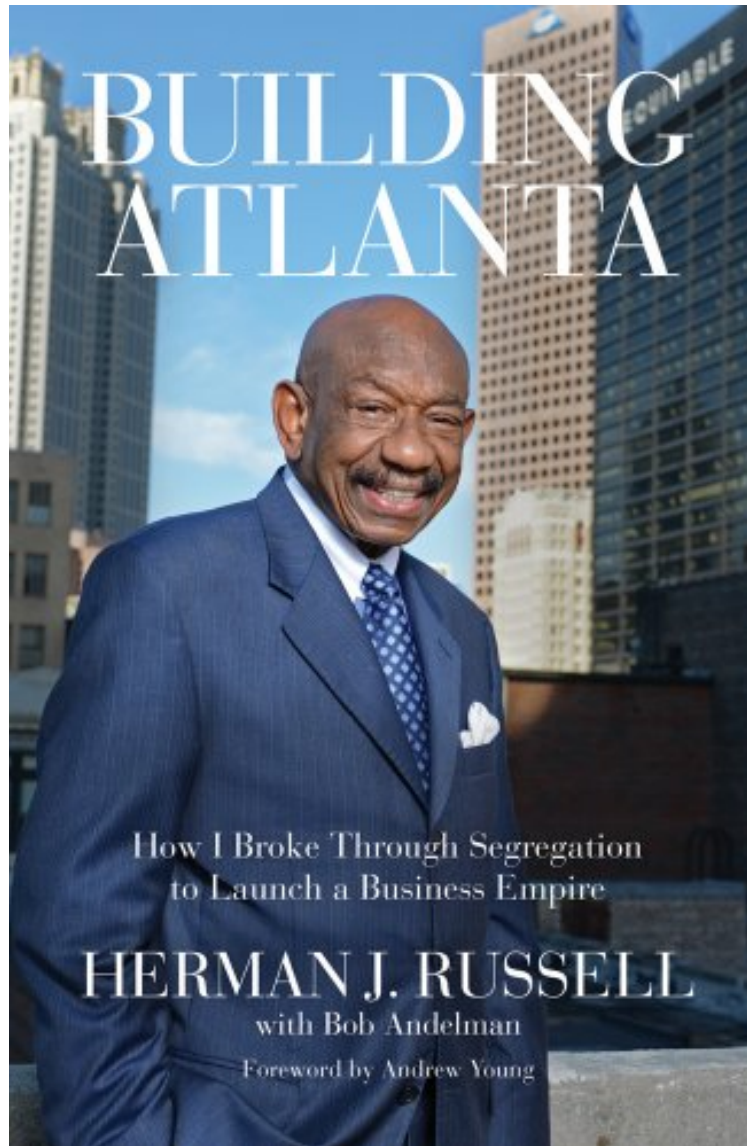


(Download pdf) Building Atlanta: How I Broke Through Segregation to Launch a Business Empire

Building Atlanta: How I Broke Through Segregation to Launch a Business Empire

Herman J. Russell, Bob Andelman
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Herman J. Russell, Bob Andelman : Building Atlanta: How I Broke Through Segregation to Launch a Business Empire before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Building Atlanta: How I Broke Through Segregation to Launch a Business Empire:

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Born into a blue-collar family in the Jim Crow South, Herman J. Russell built a shoeshine business when he was twelve years old and used the profits to buy a vacant lot where he built a duplex while he was still a teen. Over the next fifty years, he continued to build businesses, amassing one of the nations most profitable minority-owned conglomerates. In *Building Atlanta*, Russell shares his inspiring life story and reveals how he overcame racism, poverty, and a debilitating speech impediment to become one of the most successful African American entrepreneurs, Atlanta civic leaders, and unsung heroes of the civil rights movement. Not just a typical rags-to-riches story, Russell achieved his success through focus, planning, and humility, and he shares his winning advice throughout. As a millionaire builder before the civil rights movement took hold and a friend of Dr. King, Ralph Abernathy, and Andrew Young, he quietly helped finance the civil rights crusade, putting up bond for protestors and providing the funds that kept Kings dream alive. He provides a wonderful behind-the-scenes look at the role the business community, both black and white working together, played in Atlantas peaceful progression from the capital of the racially divided Old South to the financial center of the New South.

From Booklist Russell bought his first property at age 16 with funds saved from his shoe-shine business and skills in building construction he learned from his father. Income from the duplex paid for his college education. Born the last of eight children in a poor Georgia family, he rose to be a major builder and developer in Atlanta and a civic leader who helped elect Andrew Young, the first black congressman from the South since Reconstruction, and Maynard Jackson, the first black mayor of Atlanta. During the civil rights era, Russell worked behind the scenes with influential black clergy and businessmen, helped finance the black-owned newspaper, and provided bail money for those arrested for civil disobedience. As a businessman, he built homes for the newly emerging black middle class as racial restrictions were lifted, and he went on to desegregate the clubs, cliques, and boards of Atlantas movers and shakers. Detailing a long career of setbacks and successes, Russell shares memories of growing up in Atlanta during challenging and pivotal times. --Vanessa Bush Not many people alive in Atlanta today can look back and say they were involved with Dr. King, but Herman can do that. Hes been an important person in the history of this city. Arthur Blank, cofounder, the Home Depot; owner, Atlanta Falcons