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Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power

By Gene Dattel

Ivan R. Dee. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 432 pages. Since the earliest days of colonial America, the relationship between cotton and the African-American experience has been central to the history of the republic. Americas most serious social tragedy, slavery and its legacy, spread only where cotton could be grown. Both before and after the Civil War, blacks were assigned to the cotton fields while a pervasive racial animosity and fear of a black migratory invasion caused white Northerners to contain blacks in the South. Gene Dattels pioneering study explores the historical roots of these most central social issues. In telling detail Mr. Dattel shows why the vastly underappreciated story of cotton is a key to understanding Americas rise to economic power. When cotton production exploded to satiate the nineteenth-century textile industrys enormous appetite, it became the first truly complex global business and thereby a major driving force in U. S. territorial expansion and sectional economic integration. It propelled New York City to commercial preeminence and fostered independent trade between Europe and the United States, providing export capital for the new nation to gain its financial sea legs in the world economy. Without slave-produced cotton, the South could never have...



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