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# MADAM C. J. WALKER'S GOSPEL OF GIVING

Black Women's Philanthropy during Jim Crow

TYRONE MCKINLEY FREEMAN

Foreword by A'Lelia Bundles

The iconic businesswoman's life of generosity and inspiration

"This is no simple story of Madam Walker's charitable giving. Instead, by spanning the course of Walker's remarkable life from the daughter of enslaved parents to beauty culture mogul, Tyrone McKinley Freeman's brilliant and impeccably researched book demonstrates that wealth did not drive Walker to give, but that she was the embodiment of a much longer, though often hidden, tradition of black philanthropy. This book will forever change the way we understand Walker's importance and provides a much needed context for contemporary calls for economic justice."

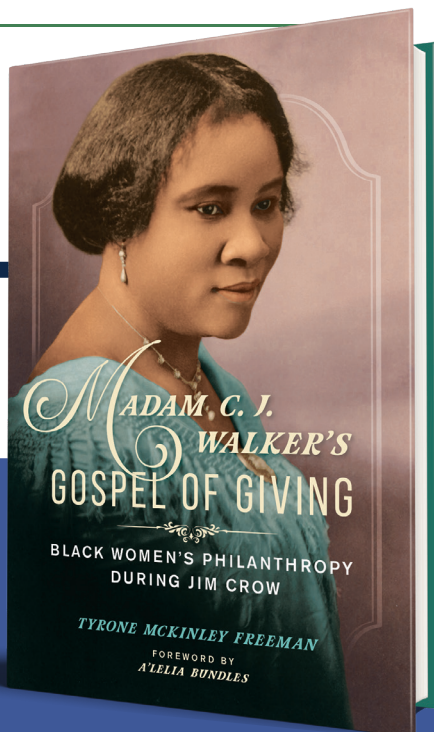
—TIFFANY GILL, author of *Beauty Shop Politics: African American Women's Activism in the Beauty Industry*

Founder of a beauty empire, Madam C. J. Walker was celebrated as America's first self-made female millionaire in the early 1900s. Known as a leading African American entrepreneur, Walker was also devoted to an activist philanthropy aimed at empowering African Americans and challenging the injustices inflicted by Jim Crow.

Tyrone McKinley Freeman's biography highlights how giving shaped Walker's life before and after she became wealthy. Poor and widowed when she arrived in St. Louis in her twenties, Walker found mentorship among black churchgoers and working black women. Her adoption of faith, racial uplift, education, and self-help soon informed her dedication to assisting black women's entrepreneurship, financial independence, and activism. Walker embedded her philanthropy in how she grew her business, forged alliances with groups like the National Association of Colored Women, funded schools and social service agencies led by African American women, and enlisted her company's sales agents in local charity and advocacy work.

Illuminating and dramatic, *Madam C. J. Walker's Gospel of Giving* broadens our understanding of black women's charitable giving and establishes Walker as a fore-mother of African American philanthropy.

**TYRONE MCKINLEY FREEMAN** is an assistant professor of philanthropic studies at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.



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