



# Jackie Robinson: An Integrated Life (Library of African American Biography)

*J. Christopher Schutz*

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Jackie Robinson's story is not only a compelling drama of heroism, but also as a template of the African American freedom struggle. A towering athletic talent, Robinson's greater impact was on preparing the way for the civil rights reform wave following WWII. But Robinson's story has always been far more complex than the public perception has allowed. Brooklyn Dodgers executive Branch Rickey famously told the young Robinson that he was "looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back." J. Christopher Schutz reveals the real Robinson, as a more defiant, combative spirit than simply the "turn the other cheek" compliant "credit to his race." The triumph of Robinson's inclusion in the white Major Leagues (which presaged blacks' later inclusion in the broader society) also included the slow demise of black-owned commercial enterprise in the Negro Leagues (which likewise presaged the unrecoverable loss of other important black institutions after civil rights gains). Examining this key figure at the crossroads of baseball and civil rights histories, Schutz provides a cohesive exploration of the man and the times that made him great.

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