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Additional Information

His Light Still Shines:

Corporate Advertisers and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

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Abstract

This article examines a sample of 91 commemorative adverts published in Black consumer magazines *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony* between 1981 and 1991 to explore how corporate advertisers responded to the creation of a federal holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in November 1983, and first officially celebrated in January 1986, the King holiday provided advertisers with an opportunity to honor King and celebrate his historical significance; something which fed into broader efforts by North American corporations to showcase their understanding and appreciation of Black history and, by extension, the Black consumer market. However, the multivalent tone of these commemorative features can be situated within ongoing and hotly contested debates over the meaning of King's activism and legacy, revealing the complex relationship between corporate social responsibility, Black history, commemorative advertising, and political messaging.

Keywords

1980s, advertising, African American, American politics, *Black Enterprise*, Black history, civil rights, corporate social responsibility (CSR), cultural memory, *Ebony*, ethnicity, magazines, Martin Luther King, Jr., MLK, race

In the January 1986 issues of *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise*, two of the nation's leading African American magazines, readers were greeted with identical advertisements from the McDonald's Corporation, which paid tribute to noted civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.¹ The adverts had been printed to coincide with the first official celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a federal holiday signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1983.² A solemn affair, the features were dominated by an ethereal portrait of King gazing down into the flame of a burning candle. Beginning with the assertion that "His light still shines," text printed below this image praised King for his role in bringing about social and political change, and declared that "the commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday as a national holiday now allows his light to shine even brighter." Through this statement, the adverts equated recognition of the King holiday with a broader support for "his quest for social and economic justice," and aligned McDonald's with both King and his cause. This sentiment was reinforced through the inclusion of the company's logo in the bottom-right corner of the adverts—small enough to appear respectful, but carefully placed in the minister's eyeline to subtly reiterate McDonald's connection to the "many bright victories" achieved by King and other activists during the heyday of the postwar Black freedom struggle.



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Fig 1.

Adverts such as these became a prominent part of McDonald's "His Light Still Shines" campaign, which aimed to pay tribute to Dr. King's legacy during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

To some critics, such initiatives were little more than shameless opportunism. In response to McDonald's "His Light Still Shines" campaign, journalist Bill Mandel declared that the company had "Big Mac-ed Martin Luther King ... in the service of fried grease on a

bun."³ However, the reality was altogether more complex. As this article demonstrates, King-themed commemorative advertisements not only reflected a significant shift in public attitudes towards the civil rights leader during the decades following his death, but arguably helped to increase public acceptance of his newfound status as an American hero. Similarly, just as McDonald's commemoration of King was connected to other Black history-themed initiatives, so too did efforts by companies such as IBM, AT&T, and Greyhound to "honor" King's life overlap with a broader embrace of Black history as a means of showcasing their awareness of, and sensitivity to, African American communities.⁴ As a form of corporate social responsibility, King-themed advertising features were certainly self-serving.⁵ Nevertheless, for many corporations, they reflected a genuine effort to commemorate King's historical significance and the contributions of African Americans to the development of the modern United States.⁶

Despite their best intentions, however, commemorative features were shaped by and provided a multivalent response to ongoing debates over the "true" meaning of King's legacy. As historians such as David Chappell, Lewis Baldwin, and Rufus Burrow note, a heated battle over how to remember King erupted during the years following his death.⁷ Central to this fight were two overlapping discourses that African American literary scholar Houston Baker describes as "conservative nostalgia" and "critical memory." The first discourse lends itself to a "beautification of history designed to erase the revolution ... and give a rousing cheer for free enterprise individualism."⁸ By contrast, Baker argues that the employment of "critical memory" works to illustrate the radical, community-oriented "politics of Black publicity in America," and to "reclaim from conservative revisionism and nostalgia" the Black liberation philosophies espoused by King and other prominent civil rights leaders.⁹ By applying these ideas to a sample of King-themed advertisements published in the January issues of *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise* between 1981 and 1991, this article sheds new light on how the specific ways in which North American corporations chose to mark the King holiday carried far-reaching ideological implications.¹⁰

In the lead-up to the first formal celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, leftwing activists and historians stressed the importance of viewing King's life and activism through the politically-engaged lens of "critical memory," a position which emphasized his connection to the Black masses and warned against his passive and depoliticized deification.¹¹ Echoing such concerns, some advertisers appeared willing to acknowledge King's radicalism through their commemorative features, something that included gesturing towards his diasporic understanding of the Black freedom struggle, and connecting individual and collective celebrations of the King holiday to both the ongoing struggle for racial equality in the United States and veiled critiques of the Reagan administration. Such adverts can be read as an important precursor to the more recent embrace of Black activism and the Black Lives Matter Movement by corporate entities eager to position themselves on the "right side" of history.¹²

However, like the McDonald's advert pictured above, the majority of advertisers were reluctant to acknowledge the more transformative elements of King's political philosophy—the King who, as figures such as philosopher Cornel West and historian Jacqueline Dowd Hall note, embraced democratic socialism and radical grassroots political activism, and who "opposed the Vietnam War and linked racism at home to militarism and imperialism abroad."¹³ By positioning King as a national hero and emphasizing his "many bright victories," such adverts downplayed the animosity towards the minister displayed by many sections of the American community during his life, and helped to reinforce a "civic mythology of racial progress in late twentieth-century America."¹⁴ Some political conservatives attempted to go further still, seeking to rebrand King as a "colorblind" activist who would have opposed affirmative action programs and whose dream of Black liberation was rooted in bootstraps entrepreneurialism and the entry of African Americans into the corporate mainstream.¹⁵ In turn, advertising efforts to celebrate the King holiday inadvertently or explicitly positioned him as an advocate of colorblindness—an activist whose true legacy would not be achieved through a commitment to race-conscious social activism, but instead by appeals to "brotherhood" and by refusing to "see the world in black and white."¹⁶

Martin Luther King, Jr.: History, Memory, and Corporate Advertisers

Like the huge granite likeness which dominates the national memorial in his honor located close to the National Mall in Washington, DC, Martin Luther King, Jr. stands tall among the icons of American history. In a Gallup poll conducted in 1999 to identify the "most admired individuals of the 20th century," King appeared second behind only Mother Teresa.¹⁷ For decades, the American public has recognized King's place in "the pantheon of great American heroes" and has celebrated his life and activism as an embodiment of the American Dream.¹⁸ However, the relationship between cultural memory and history is a tricky business, and it is important to note that the current reverence afforded to King was in short supply for much of his life. Long denounced by law enforcement and political conservatives as a subversive radical, the minister's opposition to the Vietnam War and growing critiques of American capitalism during his later years drew widespread condemnation from more moderate White Americans and also saw his support within the African American community waver.¹⁹ In an August 1966 Gallup poll, nearly four times as many respondents rated their opinion of King as "highly unfavorable" than as "highly favorable," with political scientist Sheldon Appleton contending that such data reinforced King's standing as "one of the most disliked American political figures in that age."²⁰

King's dramatic public rehabilitation was predicated on the violent nature of, and response to, his death, which created both a crisis and an opportunity for the American political establishment and mass media. Following the minister's assassination,

widespread civil unrest highlighted the chasm which continued to divide Black and White Americans and intensified the search for new strategies aimed at soothing Black urban rage.²¹ Historian Matthew Dennis asserts that a symbol of racial reconciliation, King quickly became "part of a desired solution to this unrest, a means of restoring peace through justice and reform."²² Catalyzed by King's demise, media executives and funding bodies poured resources into new Black-oriented programming and educational projects.²³ At the same time, Democratic and Republican politicians vied with one another to praise King's legacy as a means of ingratiating themselves with Black voters.²⁴ During his unsuccessful challenge to Richard Nixon in the 1972 presidential race, Democratic candidate George McGovern highlighted his sponsorship of a Senate bill to make King's birthday a national holiday through paid adverts in Black magazines, and by the end of the decade President Jimmy Carter had thrown his own weight behind the campaign.²⁵ Two years later, more than 100,000 people gathered at a rally in the nation's capitol to express their support for a national King holiday.²⁶ Finally, in November 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill confirming federal recognition of a national holiday, describing him as a man whose words and actions "stirred our nation to the very depths of its soul."²⁷



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Fig 2.

The McGovern-Shriver campaign ran this ad with photographs of McGovern speaking to Black constituents and posing with prominent Black leaders including Coretta Scott King. The long copy touts his work towards civil rights; mentions his sponsoring of the bill to make King's birthday a national holiday.²⁸

King's assassination also helped to quicken a change of attitudes towards African Americans in the corporate world.²⁹ Interest in the so-called "Negro Market" had tentatively expanded during the first half of the twentieth century, and the combination of growing Black consumer power and continued urbanization during and following World

War II saw more companies warm to Black America as a fast-growing and geographically concentrated segment of the nation's economy.³⁰ In tandem with such demographic and economic developments, the coalescing civil rights struggle highlighted the "not-buying power" of the Black community to American businesses, with boycotts and economic sanctions effectively used to pursue and defend legislative and political breakthroughs.³¹ However, even following the passage of landmark civil rights legislation in the 1960s, many companies remained reluctant to take on Black staff or commit significant resources to Black-oriented advertising and marketing campaigns. This would change as the social and economic disruption created by Black Power and a series of "long hot summers," culminating in nation-wide unrest following King's death in 1968, impressed upon American corporations the need to build bridges with Black consumers.³² Advertising historian Jason Chambers suggests that King's assassination prompted leading businesses to begin minority hiring programs and spurred a "golden age" for Black owned advertising and public relations firms.³³ Privately funded initiatives were complemented by the embrace of "Black capitalism" by the federal government, a capacious term which redirected energy away from civil rights protest and toward entrepreneurship and small business programs.³⁴

Ironically, King had long believed that capitalism had "outlived its usefulness," and the minister's shift towards a more openly anti-capitalist position during the later years of his life put him increasingly at odds with many of the country's business leaders.³⁵ In public addresses, King decried the interconnected problems of "racism, poverty, militarism, and materialism," flaws which he believed to be "rooted deeply in the whole structure of our society."³⁶ In one of his last major sermons, delivered at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in February 1968, King reiterated his distrust of American corporations and expressed disappointment that African Americans were "so often taken by advertisers ... those gentlemen of massive verbal persuasion."³⁷ Despite King's personal antipathy towards corporate excess, business executives and public relations specialists looked to his teachings as a model for promoting a more egalitarian (and therefore more productive) professional culture during the years following his death.³⁸ One notable area in which King's speeches became popular was the field of business leadership and management, with companies appropriating King's teachings for the goal of achieving his "beloved community" in the workplace.³⁹

For advertisers, King's continued visibility and newfound popularity made him an attractive marketing spokesman and public relations device. Over the previous two decades, Seagram's Distillers, Pepsi-Cola, Old Taylor, the American Oil Company, and numerous other businesses had gradually turned towards Black history-themed advertising campaigns as a means of ingratiating themselves with Black consumers. As marketing professor and advertising historian Judy Foster Davis notes, corporate efforts to wed "[B]lack history, [B]lack pride, marketing and public relations" were widely praised within the Black community, with accompanying pamphlets, calendars, and records being requested by Black colleges, libraries, and churches across the country.⁴⁰ By the end of

1966, this trend had become so pronounced that the *Chicago Defender*, a leading Black newspaper, informed its readers that "the nation's leading firms have jumped on the Negro history bandwagon."⁴¹ Looking to unify these overlapping themes, corporate advertisers quickly assimilated representations of King into their broader efforts to celebrate Black history, something which appealed to African Americans "eager to learn of their historical accomplishments," whilst simultaneously providing advertisers with "an almost effortless way to demonstrate their insights into [B]lack's role in America."⁴²

One example of this trend can be seen through advertisements produced by American Airlines during the early 1970s, which positioned the company as a vehicle to help Black tourists visit landmarks such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in New York. Through linking Black tourists to the growing number of sites and monuments honoring King, American Airlines promised to deliver locations which were "alive with the present and rich in the past."⁴³ Such appeals were often cloaked in the promotion of historical literacy among young African Americans, with the airline framing popular engagement with Black history (through the guise of King and other historical figures), as an important link between family and nation.⁴⁴ Other businesses that centered King in their appeals to Black consumers included Seagram Distillers, which made the minister a prominent part of its annual Black History Calendar.⁴⁵ By the early 1970s, Seagram claimed to be distributing more than 100,000 calendars every year and was promoting the project as "an almanac and as a record of achievement."⁴⁶ Support for projects such as the King Memorial Center in Atlanta, which had been established by Coretta Scott King shortly after his death, provided another way for corporations to "honor" the minister's legacy and demonstrate their attentiveness to Black consumers.⁴⁷



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Fig 3.

Advert for the 1973 edition of Seagram's Black Historical Calendar, which was promoted to readers as a "dramatic record of Black achievement."⁴⁸

Perhaps the most substantive efforts to integrate King's memory and message into corporate advertising during the years immediately following his death came from the Greyhound Corporation, something that can be linked to the influence of prominent Black spokesmen within the business, as well as the catalyzing impact of civil rights protest and negative publicity. Greyhound had aggressively courted the "Negro Market" from the early 1960s in an attempt to counteract its historical associations with Jim Crow-era public transportation, something which was indelibly etched into the nation's collective consciousness through the image of a burning Greyhound bus on the outskirts of Anniston, Alabama, which had been set alight by White racists during the 1961 Freedom Rides.⁴⁹ Stung into action, Greyhound hired a number of Black public relations officials and marketing specialists, including former baseball star Joe Black as a special markets representative.⁵⁰ Black's influence led Greyhound to become a pioneer in targeted advertising, and he also helped to steer innovative community engagement campaigns such as a Fathers of the Year program, which he hoped would "counter the image that [B]lack men were irresponsible fathers."⁵¹

With the pitcher being a huge admirer of Dr. King, it is unsurprising that the minister quickly became a prominent part of Greyhound campaigns oriented towards Black consumers.⁵² This included adverts featuring extracts from notable public addresses such as King's speech at the 1963 March on Washington, as well as his image alongside figures such as Abraham Lincoln.⁵³ In recognition of the American bicentennial, Greyhound published an advertisement in the January 1976 issue of *Ebony* which featured King alongside Crispus Attucks, a Black dockhand widely recognized to be the first American killed during the American revolution.⁵⁴ By stressing that "our revolutionary spirit has come a long, long way," Greyhound provided readers with a liberal and racially inclusive narrative of American social advancement, whilst simultaneously working to distance the company from its own racially exclusionary past. Perhaps more interesting was Greyhound's suggestion that King was a "revolutionary," a description that gestured towards a more radical and critically-engaged interpretation of King's political activism, albeit one still organized primarily around patriotism and American national identity.⁵⁵



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Fig 4.

Greyhound bicentennial advert featuring Dr. King and Revolutionary war hero Crispus Attucks.

Advertisers, the King Holiday, and "Critical Memory"

As Greyhound's bicentennial advert shows, by 1976 Joe Black had become a vice-president at the company, where he continued to play a major role in shaping its "policies, programs, practices and procedures" towards African American patrons.⁵⁶ This influence guided Greyhound's early response to the King holiday movement, with the company offering public support throughout the 1970s. In the January 1981 issue of *Ebony*, the same month in which more than 100,000 people attended a rally in support of the King holiday in Washington, DC, the magazine printed a Greyhound advert dedicated to King's role as a "leader, preacher [and] friend of all."⁵⁷ Under a series of hand-drawn images of King, the advert posed the question, "shouldn't we honor him with a national holiday?" The following January, another Greyhound advert printed in *Ebony* marked the beginning of "King Week," an annual celebration based at the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta. The company noted that "we offer many schedules to Atlanta from almost anywhere in the country," and posed the question to *Ebony*'s readers; "why not go Greyhound to Atlanta during 'King Week' and help keep the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. alive?"⁵⁸

By promoting the importance of the King Center as an institution for social change, Greyhound's recognition of "King Week" arguably helped to encourage engagement with King's activism through the lens of "critical memory." As Baker notes, this approach rejected King's canonization and instead emphasized his radicalism and continued relevance to the development of "a self-interested and politically engaged [B]lack public

sphere."⁵⁹ This was an idea which had been played on through allusions to King as a "revolutionary" in Greyhound's earlier bicentennial advert, and which would become even more explicit in a January 1983 advert. Printing an image of King's head emerging from the clouds like a sun, the advert included an extract from the minister's 1963 book of sermons *Strength to Love* which contended that "these are troubled times ... times of challenge and controversy."⁶⁰ Below King's visage were sunbeams labeled with a variety of socioeconomic and political issues that included "High Unemployment," "High Interest Rates," and "Reaganomics," a term used in reference to the collective economic doctrines of the Reagan administration, which included widespread tax breaks, cuts to government welfare spending, and the deregulation of domestic markets.⁶¹



"I know that these are troubled times, but remember what I said to you in 1959: The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands at times of comfort and convenience but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. The true neighbor will risk his position, his prestige and even his life for the welfare of others. In dangerous valleys and hazardous pathways he will lift some bruised and beaten brother to a higher and more noble life."

So my friends, if we truly believe in the legacy that Dr. King left us, let's reach out and help one another.

Joe Estabek
The 21st Century Corporation

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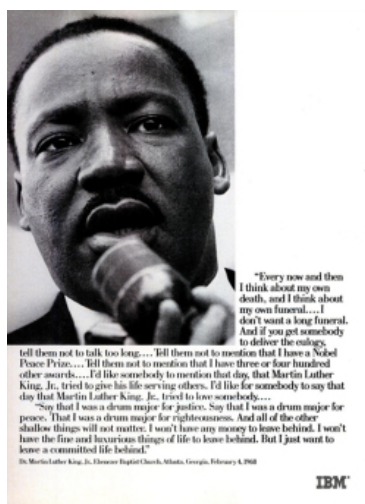
Fig 5.

This 1983 advert from Greyhound appeared to identify Reaganomics as one of the "dangerous valleys and hazardous pathways" facing Black Americans during the 1980s.

The Reagan administration contended that these measures, also known as supply-side economics, would lead to greater wealth generation; the benefits of which would be passed down from the "one percent" to middle- and working-class Americans.⁶² However, Reagan's critics dismissed this approach as "trickle-down economics," arguing that Reaganomics would exacerbate wealth inequality and have a disproportionate impact on African American families and communities.⁶³ In a damning indictment penned for *The Crisis* in December 1982, Benjamin Hooks, the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, contended that "after two years of Reaganomics, [B]lack Americans are worse off than at any point since the mid-1960s." Hooks directly implicated Reagan's economic strategy in stagnating efforts to address persistently high levels of Black poverty, arguing that African Americans, "so long the

victims of racial discrimination, are [now] the primary victims of callous economic and fiscal policies."⁶⁴ Similarly, by including Reaganomics as one of the "dangerous valleys and hazardous pathways" facing African Americans during the 1980s, Greyhound took the unusual stance of directly commenting on the political and economic policy of an incumbent administration.

Another feature published during the first half of the 1980s that appeared to encourage a more critical engagement with King's activism came from multinational technology firm IBM, which printed matching adverts in the January 1985 issues of *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony*. The company had long championed its civil rights credentials, pointing to its appointment of pioneering Black executives such as T. G. Laster as well as the implementation of equal opportunity policies more than a decade before the 1964 Civil Rights Act.⁶⁵ Quoting from King's "Drum Major Instinct" sermon delivered at Ebenezer Baptist Church just two months before his death, the adverts stressed King's role as a "drum major for justice."⁶⁶ While the excerpts printed in the IBM adverts chose to omit one of the speech's more controversial lines—King's reiteration of his opposition to the Vietnam War—they did include quotations which gestured towards King's critique of consumer capitalism and dedication to racial and social justice: "I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind."⁶⁷



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Fig 6.

This IBM advert quoted from King's 1968 "Drum Major Instinct" address to offer an apparent critique of consumer capitalism.⁶⁸

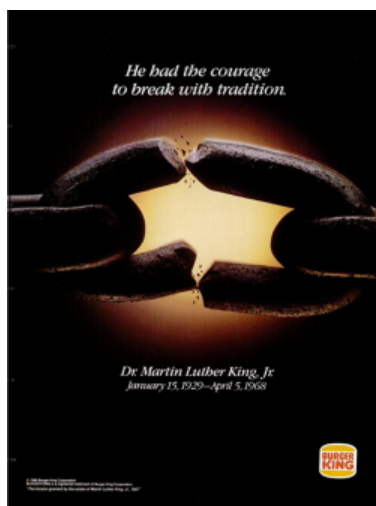
While Greyhound and IBM were among just three companies to print King-themed advertisements in the January issues of *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony* during the five years leading up to 1986, the first federally sanctioned celebration of the King holiday heralded a flurry of new advertisements. In 1986 alone, these publications included 13 adverts—five more than the total number of King-oriented adverts printed over the previous five years. As the table below shows, this surge in advertising features would be maintained into the early 1990s, with an average of 14 King-themed adverts published in the January issues of *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise* during the five years following 1986. Some of these campaigns, including McDonald's "His Light Still Shines" project, extended beyond Black publications to appear in general interest magazines or on network television, and some companies also helped to subsidize parades and other public events connected to the King holiday.⁶⁹ While it is difficult to draw direct connections between the continued rehabilitation of King's public image during the 1980s and King-themed advertising and related initiatives, it seems likely that King's embrace by corporate America helped to reinforce the legitimacy of the King holiday and hasten its widespread (although by no means universal) acceptance.⁷⁰

Table 1.

Number of King-themed advertisements printed in the January issues of *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise*. This refers to adverts which feature images of King, employ his rhetoric, or otherwise make clear reference to the civil rights leader.

| Year | Number of King-themed Print Adverts |
|-------------|--|
| 1981 | 1 |
| 1982 | 1 |
| 1983 | 1 |
| 1984 | 1 |
| 1985 | 4 |
| 1986 | 13 |
| 1987 | 13 |
| 1988 | 15 |
| 1989 | 14 |
| 1990 | 14 |
| 1991 | 14 |

Building on earlier features by Greyhound and IBM, a small number of these advertisements—approximately ten percent of the 91 adverts analyzed for this paper—can be argued to have addressed King's legacy, and the King holiday, through the lens of "critical memory." This was achieved in different ways, including through an emphasis on King's political radicalism and the diasporic parameters of the Black freedom struggle. One of the most striking of these adverts was produced by Burger King, with a dramatic image of a breaking chain conjuring up notions of slave emancipation and connecting King's legacy to a longer history of Black liberation struggles.⁷¹ This image could also be interpreted as a symbol of African Americans "breaking free" from the intellectual, psychological, and political shackles of White America—a central goal of Black Power activists such as Stokely Carmichael.⁷² Just as Black professionals such as Joe Black had a major influence over the development of Greyhound's corporate advertising, Burger King's minority advertising campaigns were handled by UniWorld, a Black-owned agency founded in 1969 by Byron Lewis.⁷³ While it is unclear whether UniWorld produced Burger King's "chain breaking" advert, it is notable that companies where Black professionals held greater influence over advertising content seemed more willing to acknowledge the more radical components of King's political philosophy through their commemorative features. That, as noted in the advert's small print, permissions were granted by the King estate for the Burger King campaign is also significant, pointing towards the growing efforts of the King family to both police the portrayal of the activist's legacy and exert their commercial rights over his intellectual property.⁷⁴



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Fig 7.

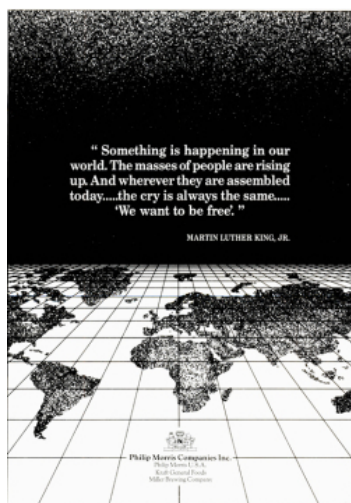
This 1987 Burger King advert evoked images of slave uprisings and radical protest.⁷⁵

Other advertisers appeared to center King's commemoration within broader debates over diasporic activism and the international Black freedom struggle. Perhaps the clearest example of this trend came from tobacco company Philip Morris. As scholars such as Sara Jain have noted, tobacco companies have historically placed larger amounts of advertising in Black publications, and, particularly since the 1960s, have aggressively marketed certain brands or types of cigarettes towards African American urban communities.⁷⁶ The CDC notes that "the tobacco industry's attempts to maintain a positive image among African Americans" have extended to support for cultural events, financial support for Black educational institutions, and donations to African American civic and community organizations.⁷⁷ By the early 1980s, Philip Morris had begun to use appeals to King's memory as a core marketing strategy, with company records noting that "greater involvement in [B]lack social and cultural events such as ... Martin Luther King Day" would help reinforce its popularity among Black consumers.⁷⁸ The company also contributed to public initiatives such as a Martin Luther King, Jr. concert series coordinated by New York State Senator Marty Markowitz.⁷⁹

To commemorate the King holiday, Philip Morris turned to the well-worn strategy of basing an advert around one of the minister's own quotations. However, the quotation the company chose for its January 1991 advert eschewed the conventional emphasis on early King addresses such as his "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington.⁸⁰ Instead, Philip Morris' advertising team used an excerpt from King's "I've Been to the Mountaintop" address, which was given at the Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, just one day before his assassination. Arguably King's most impressive public sermon, "I've Been to the Mountaintop" provides a compelling example of how the minister's political philosophy had shifted leftwards during the second half of the 1960s.⁸¹ King scholar and rhetoric analyst Keith Miller argues that efforts to marginalize the address reflected a broader political desire to frame King's activism around the more limited and pragmatic movement goals of the late 1950s and early 1960s, rather than cast light on "the King of 1966–1968, whose major speeches proved more radical and more disturbing."⁸²

The quotation used in the Philip Morris advert encapsulated one of the core messages in "I've Been to the Mountaintop" and, by extension, King's own broadening understanding of racial and economic justice. It contended that "something is happening in our world. The masses of people are rising up. And wherever they are assembled today ... the cry is always the same ... 'We want to be free.'" This extract was printed over a black-and-white world map centered on the continent of Africa and which left large sections of North America out of shot. Like IBM's selective invocation of King, the quotation used by Philip Morris had been shortened, cutting out sections of King's original address which had made the connections between African Americans and the Black diaspora even more explicit. Nevertheless, the advert presented readers with a rhetorically strident message of collective Black action and proletarian struggle; one which, when coupled with its use of the present tense, framed Black freedom as a radical, diasporic, and ongoing movement.

This sentiment reinforced the company's own claims to be a market leader on issues of social and racial justice, with market publications such as *Dollars & Sense* contending that "when it comes to race, Philip Morris historically has marched to a different drummer."⁸³



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Fig 8.

Philip Morris was one of the few corporations to explicitly address the diasporic parameters of the Black freedom struggle in its King-themed adverts.⁸⁴

Corporate Advertisers, Colorblindness, and Conservative Nostalgia

In some ways, the adverts listed above complemented the ongoing efforts of leftwing activists and political commentators to ensure that King's radical politics and global vision for Black equality was not diminished during the years following his death. However, by the 1980s it was clear that these efforts had been largely unsuccessful.⁸⁵ As the distance between King's death and the present grew ever greater, so too did his representation in American popular and political culture become increasingly sanitized and deradicalized. This began with his speeches, which, through endless reproduction and selective quotation, lost their political bite.⁸⁶ Philosopher Cornel West is among a number of scholars to bemoan the nation's willingness to accept King the martyr at the expense of King the democratic socialist and anti-imperial thinker and fighter.⁸⁷ For corporations eager to demonstrate their appreciation of King's legacy, but also keen to avoid making potentially controversial political statements, the former representation of King proved infinitely more appealing. Accordingly, by limiting their discussion of King to statements of

support for the King holiday and generic appeals to keeping his dream alive, advertisers such as McDonald's and 7Up sought to raise their profile within Black America without alienating White patrons.



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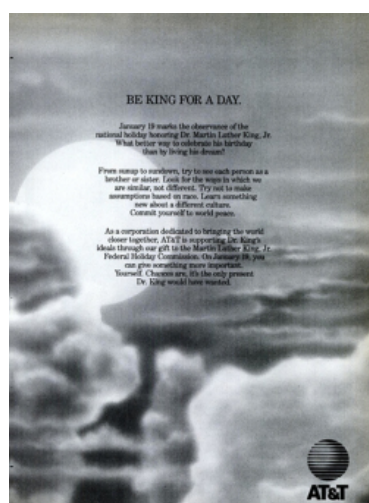
Fig 9.

Adverts such as this one from 7Up appear to celebrate King in generic and depoliticized terms.⁸⁸

Going further still, conservative activists and public spokesmen seized upon the King holiday as an opportunity to champion his memory through the lens of what Baker describes as "conservative nostalgia"—a position which offered a "middle-class beautification of history designed to erase the revolution [and] pray blessings upon the heads of [W]hite people."⁸⁹ A major feature of such efforts was an attempt to rebrand King as an advocate of "colorblindness." This ideology, which emerged during the 1960s and had become an important plank of conservative messaging on race by the 1980s, contended that racism was a "nonissue" in post-civil rights America and rationalized contemporary racial inequalities "as the outcome of nonracial dynamics;" the result of market forces, uncontrollable social phenomena, or inherent cultural problems within racialized groups.⁹⁰ Expressed in a different way, colorblind ideology posited that ignoring racial difference through not "seeing" race was a crucial step to ending racism itself. Reagan, who had remained an enthusiastic opponent of King throughout his life and who continued to resist calls for the creation of a national holiday for the civil rights leader into the 1980s, utilized this ideology to position himself as "the inheritor of King's 'colorblind' dream."⁹¹

To do so, the president appropriated a line from King's most famous public address at the March on Washington in 1963, where the activist had envisioned a day when his "four little children [would] live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." Reagan's misreading of King's rhetoric equated the activist's demand for racial equality under the law and hopes that his children's lives would not be defined by their race with an opposition to race-based policies such as affirmative action, which had been introduced to help offset the systemic and historical advantages accumulated by White citizens.⁹² In a January 1986 radio address, the president reinforced this idea by positioning racial quotas or mandatory minority hiring regulations as antithetical to King's dream; a message that was taken up by Attorney General Edwin Meese, who argued that the elimination of minority hiring goals for government contractors was "very consistent" with King's dream of "a colorblind society."⁹³

This notion—that the avoidance of race could help advance the cause of racial equality—can be traced through many of the commemorative advertisements which appeared in *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony* during and following the first celebration of the King holiday in 1986. Some features, such as a feature by telecommunications company AT&T, leaned on the notion of colorblind "brotherhood" which had been adopted into the lexicon of many American businesses during the years following his death. AT&T adverts implored readers to "Be King for a Day" by "trying to see each person as a brother or sister" or by avoiding assumptions "based on race." Such rhetoric was a classic example of colorblind political messaging, which encouraged the public to look past race as a way of achieving racial equality and a harmonious multiracial society. Instead of addressing the racist underpinnings of American society, King's message was thus reduced to generic platitudes and calls to "look for the ways in which we are similar, not different," or to "learning something new about a different culture."⁹⁴



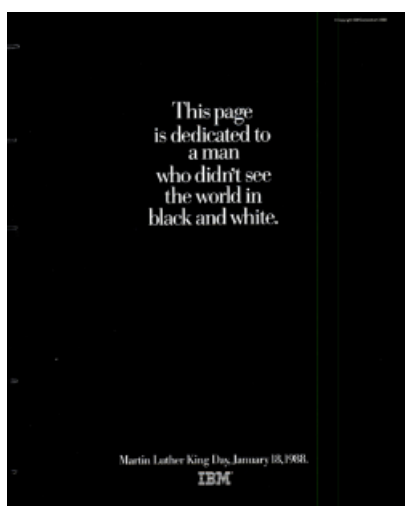
[Click for larger view](#)

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Fig 10.

Through the language of "brotherhood" and appeals to interracial understanding, AT&T echoed "colorblind" political messaging by conservatives.⁹⁵

Other features were even more explicit in connecting King's memory to colorblind ideologies, with adverts from IBM informing readers that "this page is dedicated to a man who didn't see the world in black and white."⁹⁶ While many other adverts chose to print images of King or other Black people as part of King-themed commemorative features, it is telling that these two examples of "colorblind" advertising from AT&T and IBM avoided the depiction of racialized human actors or portraits of King altogether, further reinforcing their colorblind message. In its earlier "Drum Major" advert, IBM had appeared to promote public engagement with King's legacy through the lens of critical memory. However, just a few years later, at least some of its advertisements had clearly taken up the kind of colorblind political messaging promoted by Reagan and his acolytes. As this conflict shows, for IBM and other corporate advertisers, the ideological underpinnings of King-themed advertising were often inconsistent, with corporations attempting to navigate between more progressive messaging in an attempt to entice Black consumers, and more ambiguous or even conservative messaging in response to anxieties that overt support for social justice issues could alienate White patrons. As marketing expert Yvette Lynne Bonaparte notes, these same push-and-pull tensions have, in different ways, characterized the more recent response of corporate advertisers to the Black Lives Matter Movement.⁹⁷



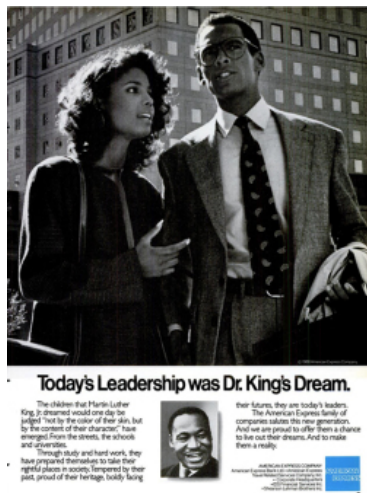
[Click for larger view](#)

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Fig 11.

This IBM feature also appeared to reinforce colorblind political rhetoric.⁹⁸

At the same time, many corporate advertisers framed the realization of King's dream through a classed lens of Black professional achievement—thus embracing "conservative nostalgia" to provide "a rousing cheer for free enterprise individualism."⁹⁹ This message can be clearly seen through adverts such as one financed by American Express which appeared in the years following the first official celebration of the King holiday. The Black couple in the advert embodied the upwardly mobile target audience of the Black consumer periodicals they inhabited, and also offered an aspirational model whom less successful readers could become if they used American Express products. More broadly, the couple symbolized the achievements of a growing Black professional class, with the nondescript high-rise office building behind the couple becoming a stand-in for "corporate America."¹⁰⁰ This sentiment was reinforced by the text below the advert's image, which declared that "Today's Leadership was Dr. King's dream." Expanding on this statement further, the advert explicitly positioned its two Black professionals as the heirs to King's activism, who "through study and hard work ... have prepared themselves to take their rightful places in society."¹⁰¹



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Fig 12.

By framing Black corporate leadership as the culmination of King's dream, American Express transformed his radical critique of American society into an embrace of consumer capitalism.¹⁰²

Through such images and rhetoric, IBM, American Express, and other advertisers uncritically positioned themselves as key advocates for African American economic advancement and facilitators of the move towards a "colorblind" society during the years following King's death. That corporations would seek to repurpose or selectively quote King's words for their own benefit is hardly a surprise, and the image of a "sanitized

colorblind individualist King" is one that for many corporations appeared to best reconcile their own self-interest with the minister's place in American popular memory.¹⁰³ However, by offering ambitious Black professionals a "chance to live out their dreams," American companies explicitly masked the legal enforcement of civil rights legislation and workplace integration in the language of corporate benevolence and social responsibility.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, they rejected a radical interpretation of King's activism—one rooted in a critique of American corporate capitalism and economic injustice, and the relationship between the two—and instead, framed the integration of corporate America as the true realization of his life's work.

Unfortunately, as a range of scholars have demonstrated, Black professional advancement did not necessarily lead to declining instances of racism or racial discrimination within the American workplace. Evidence for continuing patterns of racial discrimination can be seen at many of the same companies which printed King-themed commemorative advertisements in *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony*. In particular, features from AT&T and IBM, which appeared to promote colorblind ideologies, can be read as a study in hypocrisy. Over the previous two decades both companies had come under scrutiny from the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, which had been established in 1965 to help enforce civil rights law. In 1980 the EEOC launched a legal case against IBM charging that "[B]lack professionals were locked into certain levels of the corporation's structure and that [W]hite professionals earned higher wages and quicker promotions."¹⁰⁵ At AT&T, technological changes and company layoffs disproportionately affected African Americans and contributed to "the continuation of company racism and sexism."¹⁰⁶

Such persistent patterns of racial discrimination stood "in stark contrast to President Reagan's avowal that America in the 1980s is color- and gender-blind."¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Reagan's appeals to "colorblindness" drew fierce criticisms from civil rights activists such as National Urban League president John Jacobs, who described the President's misappropriation of King's words as "obscene" and contended that "if the Administration wants to be a 'Rambo'-like destroyer of civil rights gains, it should not pretend that its efforts are good for [B]lack citizens or that they reflect the color-blind society we have yet to become."¹⁰⁸ At the same time, Reagan's economic politics and efforts to slash welfare and affirmative action programs directly contributed to a widening gap between an upwardly mobile Black middle-class and a poor urban Black underclass who remained "socially and economically isolated from the American mainstream."¹⁰⁹ By using King-themed commemorative features to celebrate the gains made by African Americans over the two decades since his death, corporate advertisers downplayed such continuing problems. Instead, they largely emphasized the "many bright victories" achieved by King to offer a "middle-class beautification of history" that sought to reconcile King's words with their own interests.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

By the beginning of the 1990s, an average of 14 King-oriented adverts were appearing in each January issue of *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise*. The ubiquity of such features, and the enthusiasm with which corporate advertisers embraced the King holiday, both reflected and helped to reinforce a dramatic shift in King's public standing which had taken root over the preceding two decades, as the minister was elevated to a position as one of the nation's most revered historical figures. They also highlight the newfound value placed on African American consumers by major North American corporations. The influence of landmark studies by Black public relations executives such as D. Parke Gibson, coupled with the growing financial power of Black America and the rise of an upwardly mobile Black middle-class, had helped to transform the relationship between corporate America and the nation's Black communities during the years following King's death. The activist's oversized role as a symbol for Black historical achievement meant that advertisers utilized the King holiday as a means of showcasing their understanding of and sensitivity to Black consumers and the African American community writ large.¹¹¹

Yet as the engagement of corporate advertisers with both the King holiday and the minister's political and activist legacy began to deepen, the cumulative impact and interpretative scope of the commemorative advertising features published in Black magazines such as *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise* became increasingly complex. As this article has shown, through their "commemoration" of King's life and activism, the features created by corporate advertisers did not inhabit a uniform political or ideological position, and could be interpreted in different ways, depending on the beliefs of those who read them. In this way, such advertisements are emblematic of the multivalent ways in which King's activism—and the meaning of the King holiday itself—continued to be debated by a range of competing political and media interests. For civil rights activists and progressive scholars, the King holiday was an opportunity to reiterate his "deep political radicalism" and to agitate against his deification as a martyr of the movement.¹¹² This message was reiterated by a small number of advertisers, who crafted features that spoke to King's diasporic vision for Black liberation and which appeared to draw attention to political radicalism. In doing so, such features complemented efforts to interpret King's legacy through the lens of "critical memory."¹¹³

However, such content was outweighed by features which chose to celebrate King's life in vague and depoliticized terms, or which presented King not as a race-conscious radical activist but as a spokesperson for colorblindness and corporate capitalism. Through appeals to "brotherhood," or by categorizing King as "a man who didn't see the world in black and white," advertisers downplayed the central and enduring significance of race to King's understanding of the American democratic project; a misreading that was more crudely capitalized on by conservative politicians such as Reagan. Similarly, by embracing the integration of corporate America and the achievements of middle-class Black professionals during the 1970s and 1980s as the realization of King's "dream," advertisers

marginalized King's anti-capitalism and positioned themselves as key facilitators of African American advancement. This stance ignored the continued barriers facing upwardly mobile Black Americans—including many erected by the very same companies whose adverts appeared in *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony* during this period—and the widening gap between middle- and working-class Black Americans—a direct product of the same policies the Reagan administration justified through colorblind ideologies.

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Footnotes

- 1.** "McDonald's," *Ebony*, January 1986; "McDonald's," *Black Enterprise*, January 1986.
- 2.** David Hoffman, "King Is Saluted as President Signs Holiday into Law," *Washington Post*, November 3, 1983.
- 3.** Bill Mandel, "The Myth-Makers Have Taken Over Martin Luther King," *San Francisco Examiner*, January 19, 1986.
- 4.** Marcia Chatelain, *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America* (New York: Liveright, 2020), 189–193; D. Parke Gibson, *The \$30 Billion Negro* (London: Macmillan, 1969).
- 5.** While definitions of CSR differ, at their heart is an emphasis on businesses' responsibility *to and for* society—to be accountable for their actions, and to contribute to greater societal good, be this educational, ethic, environmental, etc. See Jeremy Moon, *Corporate Social Responsibility* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2014).
- 6.** For more examples of Black history-themed corporate advertising see Judy Foster Davis, "Realizing Marketplace Opportunity: How Research on the Black Consumer Market Influenced Mainstream Marketers, 1920–1970," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 5, no. 4 (November 2013): 471–493; E. James West, *Ebony Magazine and Lerone Bennett Jr.: Popular Black History in Postwar America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2020).
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- 13.** Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "The Civil Rights Movement and the Politics Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005); Cornel West, ed., *The Radical King* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015).
- 14.** Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.
- 15.** Nicholas Laham, *The Reagan Presidency and the Politics of Race* (Westport: Praeger, 1998), 75.
- 16.** "IBM," *Black Enterprise*, January 1987.
- 17.** Frank Newport, "Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Gallup*, January 16, 2006.
- 18.** Frank Farley, "Martin Luther King, Jr., A Hero for All Time," *Psychology Today*, January 18, 2013; Jeffrey Jones, "Americans Divided on Whether King's Dream Has Been Realized," *Gallup*, August 26, 2011.
- 19.** Chappell, *Waking from the Dream*.
- 20.** Sheldon Appleton, "Martin Luther King in Life ... and Memory," *The Public Perspective* 6, no. 1 (February/March 1995): 14.
- 21.** Clay Risen, *A Nation on Fire: America in the Wake of the King Assassination* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2009); Peter Levy, *The Great Uprising: Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- 22.** Matthew Dennis, "The Invention of Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday," in *We Are What We Celebrate: Understanding Holidays and Rituals*, ed. Amitai Etzioni and Jared Bloom (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 180.
- 23.** Devorah Heitner, *Black Power TV* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 2; Noliwe Rooks, *White Money/Black Power* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006).
- 24.** Joseph Tilden Rhea, *Race Pride and the American Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 114.
- 25.** "What Has Mr. Nixon Ever Really Done for You?" *Ebony*, November 1972; "Carter Supports MLK Holiday," *Politico*, January 14, 2014.
- 26.** "Birthday Celebration for M.L.K.," *Ebony*, March 1981; West, "A Hero to be Remembered."
- 27.** "Remarks Upon Signing the King Holiday Bill," November 2, 1983, <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/remarks-signing-bill-making-birthday-martin-luther-kingjr-national-holiday>
- 28.** *Ebony*, November 1972, 29.
- 29.** "The Corporate Attitude," *Dollars & Sense*, 1987, Box 1134, Tobacco Institute Records.

30. The past two decades has seen a flurry of new scholarship on Black consumers and on the relationship between race and the marketplace in postwar America. For a primer see Robert Weems, *Desegregating the Dollar: African American Consumerism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Jason Chambers, *Madison Avenue and the Color Line: African Americans in the Advertising Industry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2008); Guillame Johnson et al., *Race in the Marketplace: Crossing Critical Boundaries* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Brenna Wynn Greer, *Represented: The Black Imagemakers who Reimagined African American Citizenship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

31. Stacy Kinlock Sewell, "The 'Not-Buying Power' of the Black Community: Urban Boycotts and Equal Employment Opportunity, 1960–1964," *Journal of African American History* 89, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 135.

32. The phrase "long, hot summer" was first associated with the summer of 1967, when continued frustrations over widespread poverty and unemployment, continuing municipal neglect, and the mistreatment of racialized urban communities by largely White police forces, led to violent racial confrontations in more than 150 towns and cities across the United States. More broadly, scholars have used the phrase "long, hot summers" in reference to the wave of urban unrest which gripped the country during the second half of the 1960s. For more on this topic see Michael Flamm, *In the Heat of the Summer: The New York Riots of 1964 and the War on Crime* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); Peter Levy, *The Great Uprising: Race Riots in Urban America during the 1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Eric Tang, *Fire in the Streets: The Long Hot Summer of '67, the Kerner Commission, and Racial Liberalism in America* (London: Verso, 2020).

33. Chambers, *Madison Avenue*, 192.

34. Chatelain, *Franchise*, 14; "Introduction," 4–6 in "The Business of Black Power: Community Development, Capitalism, and Corporate America," ed. Laura Warren Hill and Julia Rabig, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2012).

35. For more on King's critique of American capitalism see Thomas Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Sylvie Laurent, *King and the Other America: The Poor People's Campaign and the Quest for Economic Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

36. David Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 213.

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38. Jeanne M. Logsdon and Audrey J. Murrell, "Beyond 'I Have A Dream': Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Contributions to Management Scholarship and Practice," *Business & Society* 47, no. 4 (December 2008).

39. James Jones, David Wilson, and Peggy Jones, "Toward Achieving the 'Beloved Community' in the Workplace," *Business & Society* 47, no. 4 (December 2008): 457.

40. Gibson, *\$30 Billion Negro*; Davis, "Realizing Marketplace Opportunity," 484–5.

41. "Leading Firms Getting on the Negro History Bandwagon," *Chicago Defender*, December 31, 1966.

42. Chambers, *Madison Avenue*, 93.

- 43.** "American Airlines," *Black Enterprise*, June 1974.
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- 45.** "Seagram," *Ebony*, December 1972.
- 46.** "1972 Press Release," Seagram Museum Collection, Hagley Museum and Library; "1973 Seagram Black History Calendar," Seagram Museum Collection, Hagley Museum and Library.
- 47.** "Ford Makes Grant," *New York Times*, December 29, 1969.
- 48.** "Seagram," *Ebony*, December 1972.
- 49.** Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- 50.** "Joe Black Gets Greyhound Post," *Afro American*, September 8, 1962; "Name Joe Black a Greyhound, Inc. Vice President," *Jet*, June 1, 1967.
- 51.** Martha Jo Black and Chuck Schoffner, *Joe Black: More than a Dodger* (Chicago: Academy, 2015), 249.
- 52.** Joe Black, *Ain't Nobody Better Than You: An Autobiography of Joe Black* (Scottsdale: Self-published, 1983).
- 53.** "Greyhound," *Ebony*, February 1971; "Greyhound," *Ebony*, February 1976.
- 54.** "Greyhound," *Ebony*, January 1976.
- 55.** "Greyhound," *Ebony*, January 1976.
- 56.** "Joe Black's Job: Attract Business," *Afro American*, April 14, 1970.
- 57.** "Birthday Celebration for M.L.K." *Ebony*, March 1981; "Greyhound," *Ebony*, January 1981.
- 58.** "Greyhound," *Ebony*, January 1982.
- 59.** Baker, "Critical Memory," 4.
- 60.** Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).
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- 66.** "IBM," *Black Enterprise*, January 1985.

- 67.** Michael Eric Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Free Press, 2000), 51.
- 68.** "IBM," *Black Enterprise*, January 1985.
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- 71.** "Burger King," *Ebony*, January 1987.
- 72.** Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: Vintage, 1967).
- 73.** "Marketing the World," *Black Enterprise*, January 1995.
- 74.** For more on the efforts of the King estate to privatize King's intellectual property and commercialize his legacy see Daniel Fleming, "'I Have A Copyright': The Privatization of Martin Luther King's Dream," *Journal of African American History* 103 (2018): 369–401.
- 75.** "Burger King," *Ebony*, January 1987.
- 76.** Sarah S. Lochlann Jain, "Come Up to the Kool Taste: African American Upward Mobility and the Semiotics of Smoking Menthols," *Public Culture*, 15, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 300.
- 77.** "African Americans and Tobacco Use," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/african-americans/index.htm>.
- 78.** "Merit Ethnic Research Report, February 1980," Box 4093, Philip Morris Records; "Inter-Office Memo, October 13, 1981," Box 4186, Philip Morris Records.
- 79.** "K. Michael Irish to Marty Markowitz, June 21, 1983," Box 9725, Philip Morris Records; "Philip Morris History Draft, Undated," Box 8091, Philip Morris Papers.
- 80.** "Philip Morris," *Black Enterprise*, January 1991.
- 81.** Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights*.
- 82.** Keith Miller, *Martin Luther King's Biblical Epic: His Final, Great Speech* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), 14.
- 83.** "Combining Social Consciousness and Business Acumen," *Dollars & Sense*, Box 1134, Tobacco Institute Records.
- 84.** "Philip Morris," *Black Enterprise*, January 1991.
- 85.** Sarah Florini, *Beyond Hashtags: Racial Politics and Black Digital Networks* (New York: New York University, 2019), 105.
- 86.** Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement," 1234.
- 87.** West ed., *The Radical King*, xii.
- 88.** "7Up," *Ebony*, January 1986.

- 89.** Baker, "Critical Memory," 4.
- 90.** Florini, *Beyond Hashtags*, 104; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in Contemporary America* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 2.
- 91.** Justin Gomer and Christopher Petrella, "Reagan Used MLK Day to Undermine Racial Justice," *Boston Review*, January 15, 2017.
- 92.** Justin Gomer and Christopher Petrella, "Reagan Used MLK Day to Undermine Racial Justice," *Boston Review*, January 15, 2017.
- 93.** Howard Kurtz, "King Cited in Defense of End to Hiring Goals," *Washington Post*, January 16, 1986.
- 94.** "AT&T," *Ebony*, January 1988.
- 95.** "AT&T," *Ebony*, January 1987.
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- 97.** Bonaparte, "Meeting the Movement."
- 98.** "IBM," *Black Enterprise*, January 1988.
- 99.** Baker, "Critical Memory," 4.
- 100.** "The New Black Middle Class," *Ebony*, August 1987.
- 101.** "American Express," *Ebony*, January 1989.
- 102.** "The New Black Middle Class," *Ebony*, August 1987.
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- 104.** "American Express," *Ebony*, January 1989.
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- 107.** Robert Gregg, "The New African American Middle Class," *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 46 (November 14–20, 1998): 2933; John Fernandez, "Racism and Sexism in Corporate America" in *Ensuring Minority Success in Corporate Management*, ed. Donna Thompson and Nancy DiTomaso (New York: Plenum Press, 1988), 71.
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- 110.** Baker, "Critical Memory," 4.
- 111.** "Inter-Office Memo, October 13, 1981," Box 4186, Philip Morris Records.
- 112.** Dyson, *I May Not Get There*, 28; Fairclough, "Was Martin Luther King a Marxist."

Additional Information

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