



# **In Search of Federal Enforcement: The Moral Authority of the Fifteenth Amendment and the Integrity of the Black Ballot, 1870-1965**

*Vanessa A. Holloway*

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*In Search of Federal Enforcement* is a call to investigate the history of federal oversight to secure and preserve black Americans' voting rights over a ninety-five-year interregnum. This book satiates the reader's harboring curiosity as to why the national government was culpably negligent in protecting the exercise of the franchise for black Americans until the 1965 Voting Rights Act. As Holloway explains, much of this problem stemmed from Southern Democrats operating in tandem with the power of private actors to circumvent the Fifteenth Amendment. This mutual-advantage partnership codified disfranchisement, safeguarded the interests of recalcitrant Southern states and localities, and defended local systems of privilege. In the pages of this timely study, Holloway lays bare the abject failure of the national government and critically evaluates how the Southern status quo stimulated chaos at the national level. Despite market paradigms, *In Search of Federal Enforcement* confronts this historical conundrum and offers keen observations about voting manipulations and electoral abuse by both incumbents and private actors.

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