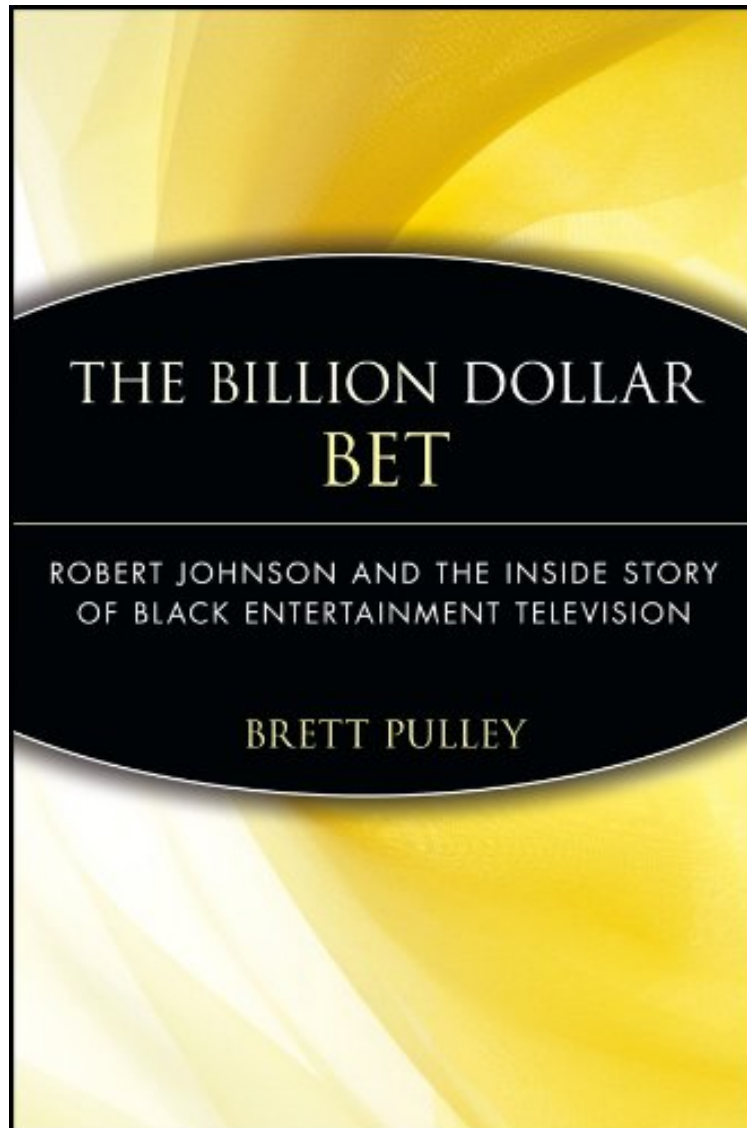


(Read ebook) The Billion Dollar BET: Robert Johnson and the Inside Story of Black Entertainment Television

The Billion Dollar BET: Robert Johnson and the Inside Story of Black Entertainment Television

Brett Pulley

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Brett Pulley : The Billion Dollar BET: Robert Johnson and the Inside Story of Black Entertainment Television before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Billion Dollar BET: Robert Johnson and the Inside Story of Black Entertainment Television:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. What Price Are You Willing To Pay For Success????By ElMy girlfriend's son was doing an assignment and I suggested he do it on Robert Johnson the first African American

Billionaire. I purchased this book and read it in a day. I felt this book was very well researched and I enjoyed it. Robert Johnson was all about money and success nothing else. He did not care how he got it whether it was dirty videos or cheating artists out of money. I will give him credit his network BET gave a lot of people chances such as D.L. Hughley, Monique, Ananda Lewis to name a few. Those were some people who we may have never seen had it not been for BET. I am a fan of business and I understand we all have to make sacrifices but some of his ways I think were wrong. He cheated on his wife from the beginning, even fired her because her show Teen Summit was not where he thought it should be. He paid the comics on ComicView a one time appearance fee and then had re-runs of the episodes all the time and never paid them any residual income. He sacrificed great positive shows to show videos that are raunchy and disrespectful. When he got closer to the top he broke down more and more people. As far as making money there is no denying, Robert Johnson knows business but the question to me is at what cost? If you are willing to portray images you may not necessarily agree with, cheat on your wife, fire people who were there from the beginning of your journey, lose your family all for money and success then Robert Johnson maybe a great role model for you. I respect Robert Johnson in the fact he made lots of money and has success but with anything in life there is a cost... So What Price Are You Willing To Pay For Success????? 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "Smackin Stackin" By Dextra L. Suggs Like most billionaires, Bob Johnson's rise bruised a lot of egos. I'm sure this unsupported biography missed a few things; nonetheless, Johnson achieved a level of success few will know. He'll go down in history as the first self made African America male billionaire. Like it or not, he made it big. He created a product others liked and made a fortune with it. And he did it from humble beginnings. He did it with discipline, drive, delayed gratification and a few well placed connections. This book is certainly no classic; however, it is a quick and easy inspirational rags to riches read that reaffirms the good ole American promise: success is attainable for those willing to work for it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book By michael escobedo Very detailed on the life of Robert Johnson from the beginning to end. Illustrated so well I felt I was part of his life and pursuing his same passions. Fighting for what he believed in and hoping he would achieve those goals. The finished with his goals being accomplished but we still have to wait on if all his dreams will be accomplished.

Praise for The Billion Dollar BET "In a gripping narrative that is both inspirational and cautionary, Brett Pulley tells us how Robert Johnson built Black Entertainment Television into a billion-dollar media empire. In a remarkable feat of reporting, without Johnson's cooperation, Pulley shows what it really takes to get ahead in America today, and in doing so provides as valuable a cultural as business history." --James B. Stewart Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author of *Disney War*, *Den of Thieves*, and *Heart of a Soldier* "Like or dislike? Agree or disagree? Bob Johnson's richly varied and fascinating life presses you against the window that Brett Pulley opens widely." --Bernard Shaw retired CNN anchor "Through his BET network, Bob Johnson reached the pinnacle of capitalism, the billionaire boys club, in the spirit of legions of driven, American moguls . . . Veteran business journalist Brett Pulley peels back the layers of this fascinating and complex entrepreneur." --Teri Agins Senior Special Writer, the Wall Street Journal, and author of *The End of Fashion: How Marketing Changed the Clothing Business Forever*

From Publishers Weekly Against overwhelming odds, BET founder Robert Johnson blasted through social and economic barriers using his intelligence and charm, first establishing himself in the realm of Washington politics and later in the media business. One might think his rags-to-riches story would be incredibly uplifting. But in this unauthorized biography, Pulley (a senior editor at *Forbes* and well-known expert on the business of entertainment) reports that Johnson's methods were anything but noble. Though he created the first black-owned and -operated cable company, Pulley says, Johnson had little interest in raising the quality of the programming that BET offered to the black community, despite that community's loyalty to his channel. (In Canada, blacks even lobbied to have BET carried on their cable systems.) From the very start, Pulley argues, Johnson's goal was to become a billionaire, period. And he realized his dream when he sold his company to Viacom in 1999. Along the way he shed friends, associates and even family members who ceased to be useful in carrying out his business plans, Pulley says, and he also refused to compensate (or even to thank) many of those who helped him in moving forward, including the man who gave him the business plan that he used to find his original investors. Pulley's research in this volume is quite impressive; he interviewed all of Johnson's most important BET colleagues. And though his prose occasionally leans towards the purple, overall the book is written in a clean, easy-to-follow style. His eye-opening biography will make many readers view Johnson in a new way, and may leave some hoping that there is another side to this cynical story. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Still at BET Helm, Johnson Turns to Sports and Hotels" (*Washington Post*, May 17, 2004) Those interested in business are not the only ones who will welcome *The Billion Dollar BET* (Wiley; 24.95). Robert Johnson's rise from humble beginnings in Hickory, Miss and Freeport, Ill to bone a fide American billionaire is packed with all the elements of great stories. In addition to a healthy dose of drive and determination, there is a large helping of alleged backstabbing, extramarital affairs, corporate meltdowns and showdowns. Regardless of how some folks feel about BET, author Brett Pulley couches Johnson's accomplishments in the historical context of both black American

history and the cable industry. Like it or not, Johnson is a trailblazer. He is also proof positive of just how far hard work and tremendous opportunity can take you. Most surprising to some maybe Johnson's own grandiose ideas of what BET might have become. Like many of his critics, Johnson himself envisioned a channel with original and educational programming. Economic realities, however, led him to make music videos. Yes, this type book is a far cry from the girlfriend fare that dominates black book shelves, but, if given a chance, it can be just as titillating. --Ronda Racha Price (Upscale, April 2004)

The rags-to-riches rise of the nation's first black billionaire is a great story no matter how you tell it. And *The Billion Dollar BET* (John Wiley Sons, \$24.95), by Forbes senior editor Brett Pulley, is filled with enough sex, villains, and betrayal to make it a guilty pleasure. At the center of the drama is Bob Johnson, who built a \$15,000 bank loan into a media empire. Johnson refused to cooperate for the book, but Pulley had extensive access before deciding to write. Plenty of other key players (even Johnson's former wife of 32 years) were willing to dish on everything from 4 a.m. phone calls from the boss to his extramarital affairs. What makes Johnson's life more than fodder for an E! True Hollywood Story, however, is the intersection of race and business. Johnson constantly reminds detractors that "the 'E' in BET does not stand for enlightenment or education but entertainment." Many hoped that Johnson, the first African American with such control over TV, would take a higher road. Pulley does address the issue, but one wishes he had spent even more time on the tensions black executives face balancing financial concerns and responsibility to the race. (Fortune, March 22, 2004)

From the Inside Flap

The American dream is still alive, and if you don't believe it just take a close look at Robert L. Johnson, the founder of Black Entertainment Television (BET) and a man who has traveled the classic American journey from humble origins to unimaginable wealth. Born to a poor family in Mississippi, Johnson, the son of factory workers and the only one among his ten siblings to attend college, parlayed a \$15,000 loan in 1979 into Black Entertainment Television, one of the cable industry's richest franchises. Written by award-winning journalist Brett Pulley, *The Billion Dollar BET* is the first-ever in-depth look at one of the most enigmatic and important entrepreneurs of our time. This revealing book offers a colorful portrait of a brilliant and relentlessly focused businessman, whose life is a window into race, culture, and capitalism. From Johnson's rural Mississippi roots and early years in blue-collar Illinois, to his graduate life at Princeton University and career as a cable industry lobbyist on Capitol Hill, *The Billion Dollar BET* traces his inspired climb to the top and his often controversial tenure at the helm of one of the most influential media outlets in the country. You'll discover how Johnson won the support of media titans John Malone and Sumner Redstone, and watch as BET begins to take on far greater social significance than even Johnson could ever have imagined. You'll also learn how Johnson handled pivotal events in the company's history, such as the public attacks on BET's program content and the decision to sell the firm to media giant Viacom. Much more than a corporate analysis of profits and losses, *The Billion Dollar BET* is a story about savvy, vision, timing, determination, failure, scandal, love, and sex—all the things that occur behind the scenes as a company and its leader grow up. It reveals an ambition and fiery determination that burned so hot that friendships were shattered, family relationships destroyed, and hearts broken. Filled with revealing anecdotes and never-reported details of Johnson's life and business acumen, *The Billion Dollar BET* is a classic American business tale. This is the story of the greatest \$15,000 bet ever made. It is the story of Robert Louis Johnson and the billion-dollar empire that he built.