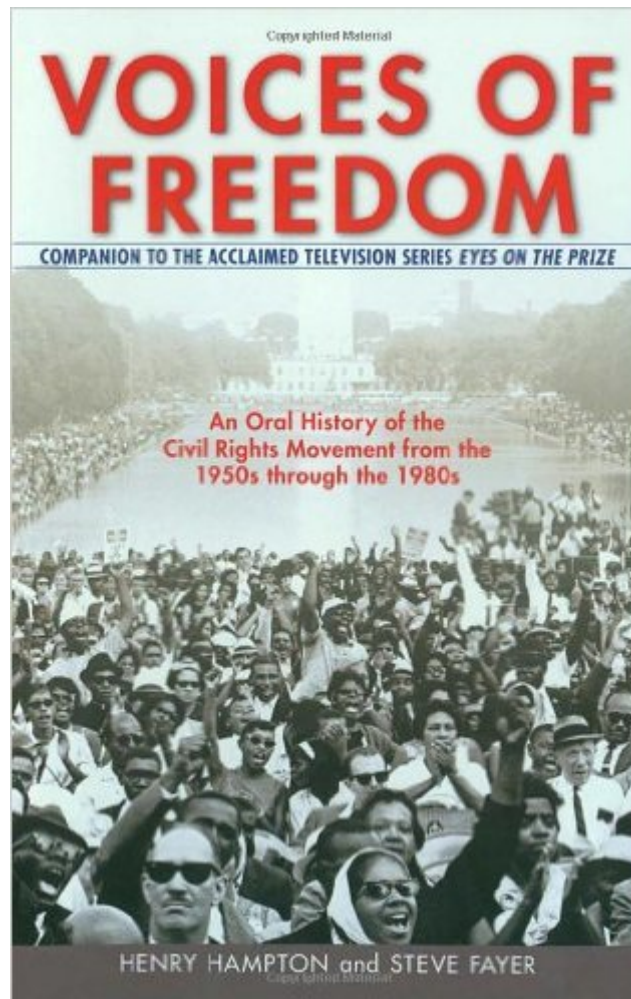


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# Voices Of Freedom: An Oral History Of The Civil Rights Movement From The 1950s Through The 1980s



## Synopsis

In this monumental volume, Henry Hampton, creator and executive producer of the acclaimed PBS series *Eyes on the Prize*, and Steve Fayer, series writer, draw upon nearly one thousand interviews with civil rights activists, politicians, reporters, Justice Department officials, and hundreds of ordinary people who took part in the struggle, weaving a fascinating narrative of the civil rights movement told by the people who lived it. Join brave and terrified youngsters walking through a jeering mob and up the steps of Central High School in Little Rock. Listen to the vivid voices of the ordinary people who manned the barricades, the laborers, the students, the housewives without whom there would have been no civil rights movements at all. This remarkable oral history brings to life country's great struggle for civil rights as no conventional narrative can. You will hear the voices of those who defied the blackjacks, who went to jail, who witnessed and policed the movement; of those who stood for and against it—voices from the heart of America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starting with the murder of Emmett Till and ending with the political activism in the 80s, this book gives a moving overview of the civil rights movement. Each of the 31 chapters first gives a short summary of the events and then redraws the situation with eye-witness accounts. Many activists like Coretta Scott King, Harry Belafonte and members of the Black Panther Party, to name a few, give intriguing details. This moving book is easy to read and especially recommended for young people who need first hand information about the movement. Really recommended!

VOICES OF FREEDOM: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT FROM THE 1950S THROUGH THE 1980s shows readers the steps that were taken to achieve equal rights for African Americans and all American citizens. All of the important actors, activists, politicians, and average individuals who attempted and succeeded to change a society that had been blinded for hundreds years, are mentioned and heard who helped many American citizens to gain the respect they rightfully deserved as citizens and human beings of the United States of America, and not ambiguous written clauses of the US Constitution referring to property. Henry Hampton and Steven Fayer along with Sarah Flynn compile a host of significant people of the civil rights era of the 1950s to 1980s. With their testimonials and eyewitness accounts they share their collective memories of the past to clarify misconceptions and misinterpretations that involved the activism that existed to spearhead the civil rights movement. They also revealed the disjointedness and lack of effort to keep the momentum going and the bureaucratic ramblings that slowed and deadlocked the movement during the late 1960s. Key figures and activists are mentioned, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and his many cohorts who led the way toward a peaceful and non-violent movement as did the Black Panthers who were portrayed as militants, and whose history has been misconstrued with controversy. Indeed, both movements shared a common goal, which was to achieve freedom and equality. The book begins with one of the major incidents that jump started the civil rights movement in the 1950s, the Emmett Till incidence in 1955. Other monumental events proceed, such as the discussion and explanation of Brown v. Board of Education, the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56, the Little Rock Crisis, the March on Washington in 1963 and a list of other significant events. The book ends with issue of Affirmative Action that occurred in Atlanta from 1973-1980. Thoughts come to mind while reading about these events -- some things change, and some things never stop being an issue. The Civil Rights Movement has not gone away. Every decade in American history has had a movement led by average citizens who wanted to make a change. But books such as VOICES OF FREEDOM helps readers identify the movers and shakers of American society who helped bring the truth of freedom and democracy, which are embedded in the Declaration of Independence as well as the Constitution of the United States, as a reality. Possibly now may be a good time to revisit these voices of freedom.

This is a fine collection of oral history. It is well arranged and therefore easy to follow the main historical narrative. For the researcher it is essential for the general public it is perhaps under edited. It also suffers from a rather sanitised view of history - more interviews from the opponents of civil

rights, more information on Martin Luther King's indiscretions (which are not even mentioned) would create a rounder picture of the truly great man. I recommend this book because it is in the words of the people who made history, but maybe a little more of the fury and dirt would take us closer to the real events. Maybe because it was the source of a PBS TV series it suffers from the need to be over clean. But it remains a wonderful and often moving tribute to those incredible men and women who risked so much to create something like racial equality in the land of so called opportunity...

Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer have collected a small sampling of civil rights oral history that has yet to be duplicated in a modern book on the era. They have included all of the key figures involved in the movement, Dr. King and Malcolm X, along with Stokely Carmichael, John Lewis and Andrew Young. What they have also done is give readers the non-famous persons perspective on the various events surrounding the movement. This has been invaluable to me in my research and a truly enjoyable read. It should be a must read for everyone!

This is a companion to the PBS series, Eyes on the Prize. First-person statements give a picture that expands on the DVDs. Members of the Little Rock Nine recall events and tell their experiences during and after integrating Central High. Orval Faubus talks about school integration from his perspective. Mamie Till Bradley Mobley, Curtis Jones (Emmett Till's cousin), Myrlie Evers and others add to the horrific story we've become familiar with. Similarly, eyewitnesses for the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Mississippi Freedom Summer, the March to Selma, the Black Panther party, and many more share their recollections. This is not a book to be read casually and set aside. Rather, if you are looking for an in-depth treatment of times that changed our nation for the better and if you want to better understand the struggle, you will return to this book countless times.

I used the stories in this book to bring the civil rights movement alive in the classroom. Students loved hearing the voices and stories and it brought a better understanding of the struggles that people went through to gain the rights that students have today.

Fantastic, relevant, engrossing. Important and balanced information and first-hand accounts.

If you haven't read "Voices of Freedom" you are missing out on a great read and some important history. Although most people know about the civil rights movement, this book goes beneath that and gets the stories from the people that were actually there, living in it everyday. I learned so much

from this book than what was taught in school's history classes. It's extremely powerful to hear the emotions and stories from the people who's lives were affected by this movement. I highly recommend this book to everyone and will be sure my son reads it when he is older.

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