

Foot Soldiers for Democracy: The Men, Women, and Children of the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement



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Drawn from the rich archives of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, this collection brings together twenty-nine oral histories from people of varying ages and occupations who participated in civil rights activism at the grassroots level. These highly personal narratives convey the real sense of fear and the risk of bodily danger people had to overcome in order to become the movement's foot soldiers. The stories offer testimony as to how policing was carried out when there were no cameras, how economic terrorism was used against activists, how experiences of the movement differed depending on gender, and how youth participation was fundamental to the cause. Participants in the struggle ranged from teachers, students of all ages, and domestic workers to elderly women and men, war veterans, and a Black Panther leader. This volume demonstrates the complexity and diversity of the spirit of resistance at a formative moment in American history.

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