

The Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement

Lance Hill

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Civil Rights Movement



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Lance Hill : The Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A well-written and informative account of how the Second Amendment works in realityBy Gary MauserThis is a well-written and informative account of how real people living

in the Deep South dealt with life-threatening events in their lives. Buy this book if you want to understand the decisions they made were shaped by the culture of the US South -- both black and white cultures share a lot more than most people realize. They are Americans and understand the deep importance of the Second Amendment. I strongly recommend this book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This details what the average citizen may need to do when the local or state law enforcement won't protect your rights and what it is like to live, as a minority, during that type of time (and 'minority' may change as the winds of political strength changes). The movie about the same topic gives you only a taste. Enlarge your mind. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Book for Every American By I. King This is an historical treasure that every person needs to read (and African-Americans more so) in order to understand how very important gun rights are for us in this country. People are far too eager to let the government "control" everything without knowing what they're giving up. This book covers a very crucial part of this country's history and should not be ignored.

In 1964 a small group of African American men in Jonesboro, Louisiana, defied the nonviolence policy of the mainstream civil rights movement and formed an armed self-defense organization--the Deacons for Defense and Justice--to protect movement workers from vigilante and police violence. With their largest and most famous chapter at the center of a bloody campaign in the Ku Klux Klan stronghold of Bogalusa, Louisiana, the Deacons became a popular symbol of the growing frustration with Martin Luther King Jr.'s nonviolent strategy and a rallying point for a militant working-class movement in the South. Lance Hill offers the first detailed history of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, who grew to several hundred members and twenty-one chapters in the Deep South and led some of the most successful local campaigns in the civil rights movement. In his analysis of this important yet long-overlooked organization, Hill challenges what he calls "the myth of nonviolence--the idea that a united civil rights movement achieved its goals through nonviolent direct action led by middle-class and religious leaders. In contrast, Hill constructs a compelling historical narrative of a working-class armed self-defense movement that defied the entrenched nonviolent leadership and played a crucial role in compelling the federal government to neutralize the Klan and uphold civil rights and liberties.

"This is a significant book." "The North Carolina Historical" "An engaging writer, Hill has written a graceful book that fills an important gap in civil rights scholarship." "Florida Historical Quarterly" "Hill's ground-breaking, historical narrative adds not only to Southern historiography, but to that of the United States as well." "Louisiana History" "This well-argued revisionist text should spur useful debate and encourage others to recast traditional civil rights-era narratives." "The Journal of American History" "Hill has written a masterful account of a vital, understudied organization. This will undoubtedly be "the" book on the Deacons for a long time." "The Journal of Southern History" "An engrossing, well-written study." -- "Journal of American Studies" Hill's ground-breaking, historical narrative is exhaustively researched. . . . His scholarly reconstruction adds not only to Southern historiography, but to that of the United States as well.--Louisiana History Grapples with a topic of great importance. . . . Challenges historians to continue to rethink black freedom movements in relationship to gender and manhood; the divergent strategies of civil rights organizations; the role of indigenous working-class blacks; the importance of our collective memory or amnesia as well as how we choose to remember those civil rights movements themselves.--Journal of Social History Hill has written a bold and provocative book challenging the prevailing civil rights narrative. . . . This reviewer recommends this book highly and welcomes the debate it will generate.--Historian This is a significant book. Hill tells a compelling story of an important organization at a critical juncture of the Freedom movement. . . . Hill raises important questions for his study and others that will follow. This is not a timid book, and Hill deserves considerable credit for venturing into territory where the historiography is still shifting and unsettled. He is not afraid to take on big questions, nor important analyses. His emphasis on the class implications and the timeliness of the self-defense strategy at this stage of the movement seem especially vital.--The North Carolina Historical [A] ground-breaking, historical narrative. . . . [Hill's] scholarly reconstruction adds not only to Southern historiography, but to that of the United States as well.--Louisiana History Lance Hill's book is the first full account of the [Deacons for Defense] and fills a major lacuna in the history of the era and the movement. It is also a welcome corrective to the school of civil rights historians who try to fix this multipronged, protean movement into the static polarities of nonviolence and violence, liberal integration and radical separatism. . . . Hill has done a service by rescuing the Deacons from oblivion.--The Nation A compellingly detailed and gripping historical narrative. . . . Hill combines hands-on research . . . with an intimate and engaging narrative style. . . . Without his book, the history of the civil rights movement is indeed incomplete.--New Orleans Tribune [Hill's] thorough and original history of the Deacons for Defense and Justice

. . . is more than an impressive account of a now-obscure group that left no written records. The Deacons for Defense is also a forceful . . . challenge to the shelfful of civil rights histories that tell a story in which nonviolence was indeed an essential and defining quality of the Southern movement's success. . . . An important corrective to popular simplifications. . . . Highly valuable.--David J. Garrow, Chicago Tribune Hill . . . brings to life this forgotten story-- which traditionally has been overshadowed by the non-violence movement, and often suppressed by African-Americans. . . . A fascinating and dramatic book. . . . Hill makes a persuasive case that many of the most important victories in the civil rights movement came as a result of the Deacons and the measures they took and advocated. . . . A must-read for historians and anyone interested in the civil rights movement.--New Orleans Times-Picayune This refreshing and illuminating account documents how militant black men, most of them working class and many of them military veterans, used armed self-defense to supplement nonviolent direct action. Lance Hill treats their struggle with the analysis and respect it deserves and opens a new window into freedom movement history.--Michael Honey, University of Washington Hill's history of the Deacons for Defense and Justice is a timely addition to the literature on the African American freedom struggle in the South. Hill joins the ranks of those historians . . . who have begun to uncover the ways that the black community consistently espoused and frequently exercised the right to defend self, family, and property, even in the midst of a civil rights campaign that was publicly committed to nonviolent direct action tactics. . . . An engaging writer with a nice sense of drama and a good ear for the telling anecdote, [Hill's] depiction of the Movement in Bogalusa is particularly compelling. . . . Hill has written a graceful book that fills an important gap in civil rights scholarship.--Florida Historical Quarterly The book both demands and rewards contemplative consideration of its author's views on the differences between cultural and political resistance, on the degree to which nonviolence and black power shared core values and goals, and on the historical continuity of an African American radical tradition. This well-argued revisionist text should spur useful debate and encourage others to recast traditional civil rights-era narratives.--The Journal of American History An engrossing, well-written study.--Journal of American Studies This is a fascinating account of an unrecognized chapter in civil rights history, but at its heart is more than just the story of how some communities resorted to violence. It also shows the imperative of working-class political mobilization being organized by working class people themselves. . . . The Deacons for Defense is a welcome challenge to the nonviolent mythology and orthodoxy that serve as the basis of civil rights history's mater narrative. Hill's work blows the lid off that cover story, persuasively arguing that the 'will to coerce change rather than win consent from one's enemies' is that era's real legacy.--Brooklyn Rail Hill has written a masterful account of a vital, understudied organization. This will undoubtedly be the book on the Deacons for a long time, and it addresses issues relevant not simply to movement scholarship but also to southern history, African American history, and American history more generally. Hill reminds us that King's fateful choice to preach nonviolence was just that--a choice that had consequences for both the man and the movement and that continues to shape American race relations.--Journal of Southern History From the Inside Flap Hill offers the first detailed history of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, a black self-defense organization particularly influential in Louisiana and Mississippi from 1964 to 1967. Frustrated with the policy of nonviolence espoused by Martin Luther King Jr., the Deacons sought a new form of armed resistance to constant threats of violence from whites.