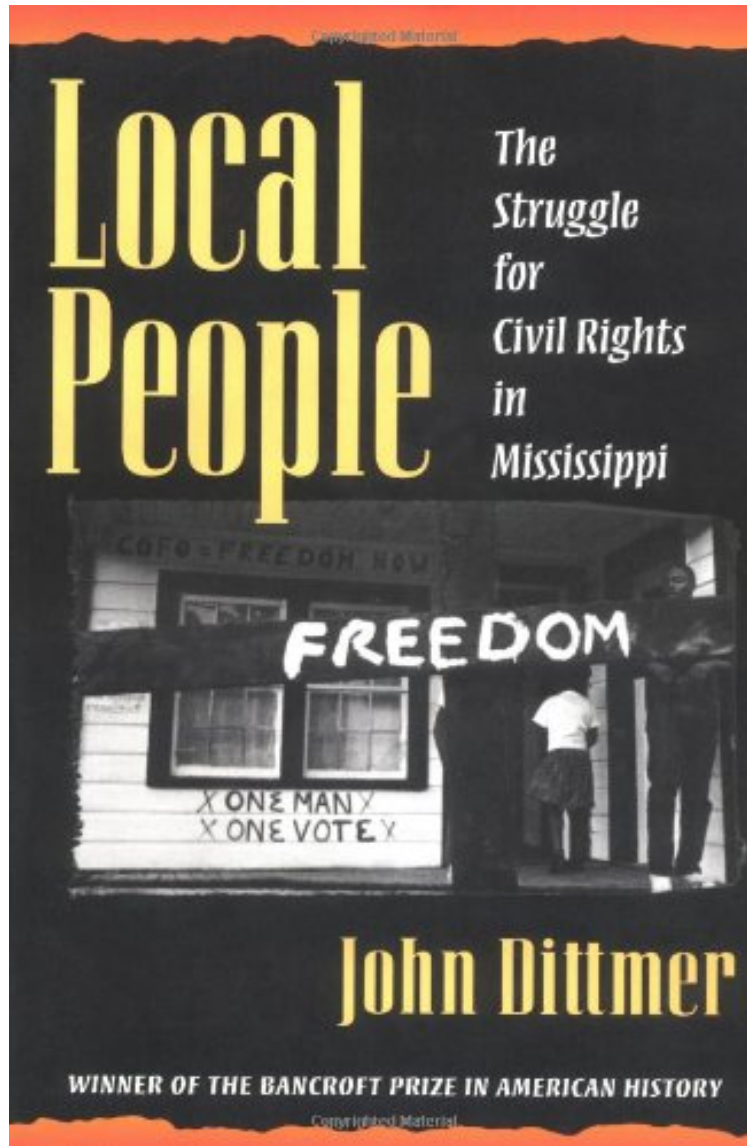


(Download ebook) Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Blacks in the New World)

Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Blacks in the New World)

John Dittmer

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John Dittmer : Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Blacks in the New World) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Blacks in the New World):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Its The Little PeopleBy showmegradIt really is the little people that

make things happen at the local and state level and those movements sometimes have remarkable and profound effect on the course of history. Clearly in regards to the fight for civil rights by Black Americans in Mississippi in the 50s and 60s, that seemed to be the case. Dittmer does not sugar coat it all either, he lays out very clearly in his concluding chapter that there is still work to be done, for true equality in the American politic and social system to be achieved.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Brenda TurnerGreat Product!! Great Service!!0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy James N.Product was satisfactory in every way

For decades the most racially repressive state in the nation fought bitterly and violently to maintain white supremacy. John Dittmer traces the monumental battle waged by civil rights organizations and by local people, particularly courageous members of the black communities who were willing to put their lives on the line to establish basic human rights for all citizens of the state. *Local People* tells the whole grim story in depth for the first time, from the unsuccessful attempts of black World War II veterans to register to vote to the seating of a civil rights-oriented Mississippi delegation at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Particularly dramatic - and heartrending - is Dittmer's account of the tumultuous decade of the sixties: the freedom rides of 1961, which resulted in the imprisonment at Parchman of dozens of participants; the violent reactions to protests in McComb and Jackson and to voter registration drives in Greenwood and other cities; the riot in Oxford when James Meredith enrolled at Ole Miss; the cowardly murder of long-time leader Medgar Evers; and the brutal Klan lynchings of civil rights workers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman during the Freedom Summer of 1964. Dittmer looks closely at the policies and actions of the Kennedy administration, which, bowing to Mississippi's powerful senators John Stennis and James Eastland, refused to intervene even in the face of obvious collusion among local officials and vigilantes. Through oral history accounts readers will come to know many of the local people and grass-roots organizers who worked, and in some cases gave their lives, for the cause of civil rights. Among those whose stories are told are Fannie Lou Hamer, the Sunflower County sharecropper who helped found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party; Victoria Gray and Annie Devine, who with Mrs. Hamer challenged the seating of Mississippi's congressional delegation in 1965; Bob Moses of SNCC, the most significant "ou

From Publishers Weekly Dittmer's stirring history of the struggle for racial justice in Mississippi tells the story in all its grim, often shocking detail. He delivers a damning indictment of the Kennedy administration for its half-hearted policies and failure to enforce the Supreme Court's ban on segregation. White churches, the author shows, consistently opposed black demands for equality and offered no leadership during the crucial 1960s. After 1966, he contends, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) had little impact on the Mississippi movement, whereas the grass-roots Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party made strides in black empowerment. Along with key figures, such as Medgar Evers and James Meredith, Dittmer, a DePauw history professor, profiles dozens of unsung heroes. He also demonstrates that women played a dominant role in the black freedom campaigns of the '60s. His assessment of gains and setbacks to date ("More than half the state's black children . . . were living below the poverty line in 1990") will jolt readers. Photos. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Superbly realized history of the civil rights struggle in Mississippi in the 1960s. Dittmer lays in the background by giving an account of postwar voting registration efforts and then the rising tide of hope and violence that followed *Brown v. Board of Education*. Dittmer knows a number of the principals and has lived for many years in Mississippi; he is also a sure stylist. So his accounts of events such as the lynchings of James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman move one to outrage all over again. He is not quite up-to-date on Byron De La Beckwith, convicted murderer of Medgar Evers, but perhaps that detail will be taken care of by press time. John Mort From Kirkus sA historian who taught for 12 years in Mississippi presents a thorough and sensitive study of the struggle for civil rights in what was at the time the nation's most racially repressive state. Dittmer (*History/DePauw Univ.*; *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920*, not reviewed) moves chronologically from WW II to 1968, mining a rich variety of sources to describe the numerous incremental battles in towns around the state. White Mississippi in the 1950s bolstered its "siege mentality" with harsh new laws blocking racial reform; while many in the black middle class were afraid to rock the boat, activists like the NAACP's Medgar Evers galvanized young people to wage sit-ins. Civil rights groups like CORE and SNCC joined in; organizers like SNCC's legendary Robert Parris Moses learned the importance of working closely with local communities. In 1962, the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) formed a united front of protest groups; its dual goals--quiet local grass-roots organizing and national publicity to gain federal protection--were, the author notes, contradictory. With the Kennedy administration sluggish on civil rights, COFO organized "Freedom Summer," the 1964 education and voter registration project involving many white volunteers; Dittmer ably describes the project's successes and tensions. He also covers the historic efforts of the insurgent Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic presidential convention and the effects of the mechanization of cotton farming and the abortive War on Poverty. Dittmer concludes that the Mississippi movement, like other major American social movements, hit a cycle of compromise in which much political change was accomplished while fundamental economic change was deferred. Though some black activists

attribute the movement's decline to the white influx during "Freedom Summer," Dittmer suggests that rapid social changes nationally also weakened the movement's cohesion. More such analysis of larger issues would have been welcome, but the book's strength is in the details. -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.