

The Children

By David Halberstam

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A remarkable true story of heroism, courage, and faith

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The Children By David Halberstam Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Like the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, the civil rights movement has achieved mythical status in America--an epic tale of heroes and martyrs; of sacrifice, honor, and courage in the face of overwhelming odds; of ideals worth dying for in a time and place where death was an all-too-real possibility. In *The Children*, prize-winning journalist and author David Halberstam goes back in time to the beginnings of the civil rights movement in Nashville, Tennessee, tracing both the lives of the individuals who initiated it and the growth of the movement itself into its present-day status.

Every epic must have its hero, and *The Children* has James Lawson, a young, African American divinity student whose tactics in civil disobedience were learned at the knees of Mahatma Gandhi's followers during a three-year stint as a missionary to India. When he returned to the States and was accepted into the all-white Vanderbilt Divinity School, Lawson began teaching workshops to Nashville's African American youth designed to equip them for the equal-rights struggle, a battle Lawson believed could be won only with nonviolent tactics. Halberstam chronicles the fight against racism with the insight that comes from witnessing it first-hand. As a young journalist for the *Tennessean* in Nashville, he covered the rise of the civil rights movement, and in *The Children* he draws on many of his writings from the era. From accounts of lunch-counter sit-ins to the freedom rides, Halberstam's book covers the map of the crusade for racial equality, serving as a poignant reminder that heroes come in all ages, colors, and characters.

From Publishers Weekly
This re-creation of the early days of the civil rights movement by Halberstam (The Fifties) is at once intimate and monumental. By focusing on a small group of young African Americans who attended the Reverend James Lawson's workshop for nonviolent demonstrators in Nashville in 1959, then went on to play active roles in the movement, he hits the high points of the civil rights struggle and makes them immediate: the Nashville sit-ins; the founding of SNCC and CORE; the Freedom Rides; Bull Connor's attacks in Birmingham; the Klan in Memphis; the first singing of "We Shall Overcome"; the voter registration campaign; Bloody Sunday in Selma; and the march to Montgomery. As the group moves out of Nashville and encounters others in the movement, the book expands with the complexity, but fortunately not the imposed tidiness, of a Victorian novel. While some of the young people's names are familiar (e.g., Marion Barry, John Lewis), most are not, but the portraits of them and the society they lived in and challenged is richly detailed. Halberstam examines the subtle frictions within the movement (middle-class vs. poor, lighter-skinned vs. darker, male vs. female), as well as the often violent struggle against segregationists. A number of brief, informative essays are sandwiched in: on the sociology of all-white Vanderbilt University; the eccentricities of the Nashville newspapers; a history of city politics in Washington, D.C.; the role of the Kennedy Justice Department. Martin Luther King Jr. plays a minor part in this history because the subject is indeed the "children"?the young adults in their late teens or early 20s in 1960, the early idealists who experienced violence in the streets and saw their movement itself turn segregationist (whites were forced out). The last third of the book follows the professional development of the children into adulthood: there was a congressman, a major, several doctors and college professors, a high school teacher and a political gadfly. This book need not have been as long as it is. But it is a masterful achievement in reporting, research and understanding. In a concluding author's note, Halberstam writes of his own experiences as a young reporter covering the civil rights beat. Photos not seen by PW.
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From Library Journal

The story of several young black students ("the Children") who became Civil Rights leaders, as told by a Pulitzer Prize winner who has been covering them since he was a 25-year-old reporter in Nashville.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bruce England:

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children right up until adult are different content. As we know that book is very important for all of us. The book The Children ended up being making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is quite advantages for you. The publication The Children is not only giving you far more new information but also to get your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship while using book The Children. You never experience lose out for everything should you read some books.

Anthony Doucet:

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Hector Hartung:

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Sheila Nathan:

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