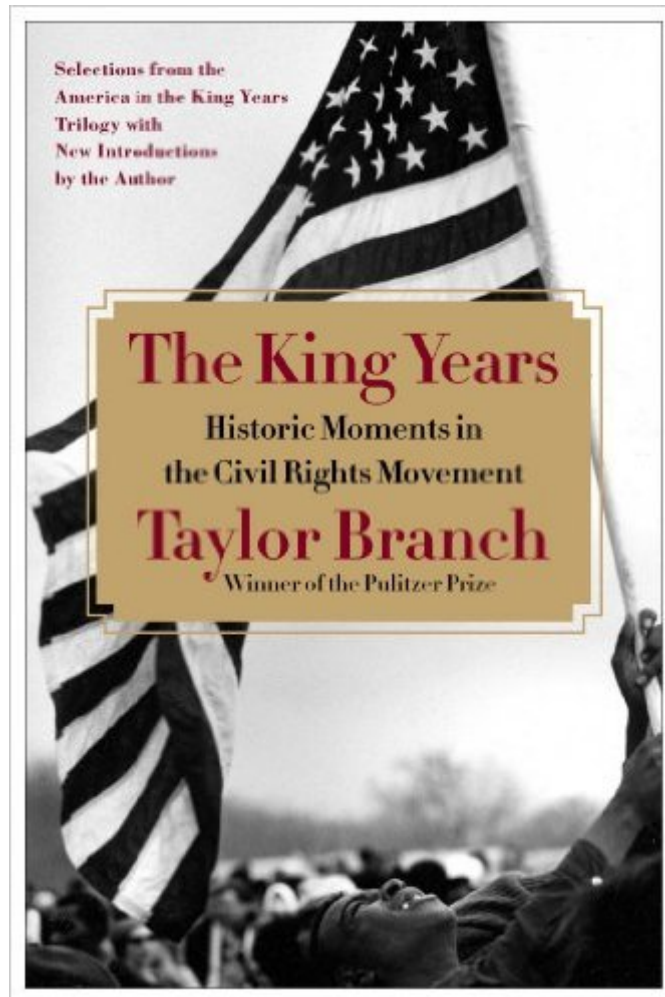


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# The King Years: Historic Moments In The Civil Rights Movement



## Synopsis

The essential moments of the Civil Rights Movement are set in historical context by the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the magisterial America in the King Years trilogy—*Parting the Waters*; *Pillar of Fire*; and *At Canaan's Edge*. Taylor Branch, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning America in the King Years trilogy, presents selections from his monumental work that recount the essential moments of the Civil Rights Movement. A masterpiece of storytelling on race and democracy, violence and nonviolence, > delivers riveting tales of everyday heroes whose stories inspire us still. Here is the full sweep of an era that transformed America and continues to offer crucial lessons for today's world. This vital primer amply fulfills Branch's dedication: "For students of freedom and teachers of history."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is an excellent compilation from Taylor Branch's well researched and written trilogy of books on the civil rights movements and Martin Luther King. The following are notes for students of American history, the civil rights movement, and politics: Martin Luther King, being a respected local minister, was drafted to lead a protest committee. He had to give an impromptu speech at a banquet. He spoke how all there were American citizens and how deplorable it was that a good citizen, Rosa Parks, could be arrested for being Black and refusing to give her seat on a bus to a white person. He mentioned they were all Christians and were peaceful. The only weapon they had, King declared, was non-violent protest. He declared, to great applause, "if we are wrong, the

Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong." King met with Bill Graham to discuss how King's speaking crusade could resemble Graham's crusades and reach out to whites. King went to India to learn about the non-violent protest tactics that Mahatma Gandhi had used. King observed that the non-violent protest of racial discrimination at lunch counters, seatings conducted by the Nashville Christian Leadership Conference. Photographs of a white man hitting a Black woman's head with a baseball bat while the police did not intervene, as well as one of football star David "Deacon" Jones sadly holding a Black woman who had been knocked down by a police fire hose, made the newspapers. The contrast of peaceful protestors and their white attackers startled public sensibilities. Sen. John Kennedy's telephone call of sympathy for King while jailed protesting may have helped elect Kennedy President, swinging Black votes away from their then Republican base.

In 200 words, complete this thought: "If Martin Luther King Jr. came back to life and saw the United States today, he'd ...." My response would be along these lines: "... be assassinated within a year." But we have a black President! Yes, we do. We also have a gun lobby determined to make gun manufacturers richer than Goldman bankers. (Last time the killer used a 30.06 Remington Gamemaster that delivered 2,370 pounds of force on impact, more than enough to kill a rhino. Today, we'd call that a toy.) And we have a self-appointed militia of nutbags who actually believe we're on the verge of a race war and are determined to be on the winning side. King could travel in the Popemobile and it wouldn't matter --- there is no limit to the kind of hate that's been ginned up in this country. But, you may say, King's philosophy lives on. Seriously, is there anyone of stature with a microphone who's talking about non-violence? Political leaders as moral examples? We have politicians who see it as a badge of honor to amp up their language --- they grin as they talk about pushing our economy over a cliff. TV pundits? Don't start. And then there's Taylor Branch. In 1988, he published "Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63." I sat down one weekend and didn't get up until I'd read all 900 pages. Branch went on to complete a trilogy about King. When he was done, the project had taken 24 years and he'd written 2,306 pages. I revere King and I stopped after the first volume. Now? Nobody's going to read 2,306 pages about King. Even if you believe, as Branch does, that "King's life is the best and most important metaphor for American history in the watershed postwar years," you're not about to read 2,306 pages about him.

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