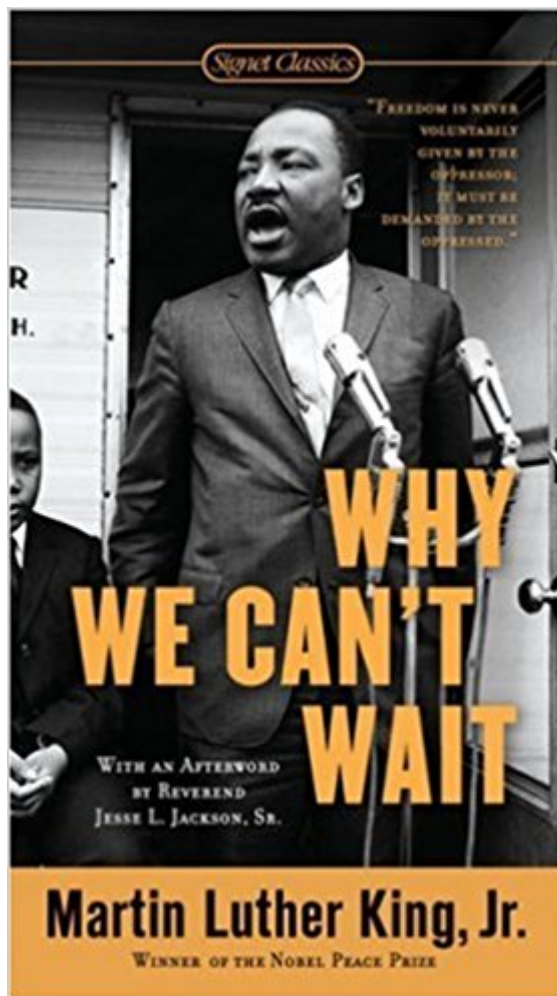


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Why We Can't Wait (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

Martin Luther King's classic exploration of the events and forces behind the Civil Rights Movement—including his "Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963." "There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair." In 1963, Birmingham, Alabama, was perhaps the most racially segregated city in the United States. The campaign launched by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Civil Rights movement on the segregated streets of Birmingham demonstrated to the world the power of nonviolent direct action. In this remarkable book—winner of the Nobel Peace Prize—Dr. King recounts the story of Birmingham in vivid detail, tracing the history of the struggle for civil rights back to its beginnings three centuries ago and looking to the future, assessing the work to be done beyond Birmingham to bring about full equality for African Americans. Above all, Dr. King offers an eloquent and penetrating analysis of the events and pressures that propelled the Civil Rights movement from lunch counter sit-ins and prayer marches to the forefront of American consciousness. Since its publication in the 1960s, *Why We Can't Wait* has become an indisputable classic. Now, more than ever, it is an enduring testament to the wise and courageous vision of Martin Luther King, Jr. Includes photographs and an Afterword by Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

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Customer Reviews

“No child should graduate from high school without having read this book. In telling the story of the third American Revolution, it is as integral to American history as the Declaration of Independence.”
• Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was born January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, the son and grandson of pastors. He graduated from Morehouse College and Crozer Theological Seminary, becoming at age 25 pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. He subsequently earned his Ph.D. from Boston University. In 1957 he and other civil rights leaders founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization he led until his death. A proponent of Gandhian principles of non-violence, he led many protests and demonstrations for civil rights, including the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 29, 1963, where he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. Winner of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, he continued to fight for civil rights, the eradication of poverty and the end of the Vietnam War. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, TN. Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., is the founder and president of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, an organization committed to fighting for social, political, and economic justice for people of all races, genders, and creeds. A two-time candidate for President of the United States, Rev. Jackson has been called the “conscience of the nation.” Rev. Jackson is also renowned for his efforts around the world to spread the promise of democracy, human rights, and peace. Rev. Jackson and his wife, Jacqueline, reside in Chicago and are the proud parents of five children.

One of the best books I’ve ever read! I have been purchasing books on black history to get a firm idea on what really happened since this information isn’t taught in school. The details about how each event was perfectly calculated to have the most effect is the most interesting thing about this book to me. Such an inspiration and I have learned so much, Please buy this book and educate yourself.

This book will expose and explain all of American history that is deliberately being withheld from school curriculum. If you read this book you will suddenly become aware of why modern day society has reached its epidemic levels. This book will thrust you into activism. Dr. King was an intellectual far beyond his years. We have to be concerned with all humanity. My life is changed forever after reading this book!

100 years from now this book will be more important than it is now "50 years" after Dr. King wrote it. White liberals, including white Christians, still "don't get it" and need to reflect on the deep, deep sense of injustice underlying all Dr. King says, and had earlier summarized in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (appended). Conservatives and "apolitical" pop culture devotees need to take a real, hard look at what is truly important -- and how the common good or common bad affects all! Black young people and all people of whatever color need to be brought face to face with the reality of what 100 years of "blow back" following the Civil War's passage of the 13th and 14th amendments, blow back including what the frightful "Jim Crow" era and segregation had "accomplished" -- and then stand astonished at what Dr. King and his colleagues and followers found and effectively used to answer that seeming victory of racism and hatred: "nonviolence," that is, nonviolent resistance to injustice whether "legalized" or not, and the willingness to pay the price of nonviolent resistance. Having lived through these last 50 years one wonders at the extent of the victory of Dr. King's movement -- and realizes he truly deserves to stand with the "founders" of this nation, just as Lincoln does "fourscore and ten" years after the signers of the Declaration of Independence. "All men... are created equal... are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights..[including]. life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness...." Pursuing that with a tenacity rarely equaled alone makes Dr. King a truly great American. But *Why We Can't Wait* is not only our most important statement of the Civil Rights Movement. It is also, theologically, the best statement have yet to Christians (and, yes, I would include all people of good will) as to how to act until Christ comes again.. One can see the seeds of future struggle -- to bring some old issues to completion but to also address old/new oppression: against all the poor, a host of others caused by war, the way class (economic especially) slams hard against earlier victories, and more. But these are noticed in embryo here. Dr. King writes *Why We Can't Wait* thinking of an earlier time, he writes during a time at which his influence had achieved a kind of peaceful peak (the hell of 1968 with overt opposition to the Vietnam War, overt support for the poorest of the poor and.... his assassination... lay ahead). *Why We Can't Wait*. doesn't summarize Dr. King and his legacy, but it does provide us with a center point, not only for Dr. King's life but one that could provide a centering point for every true American.

I being a young child in the 60's and living in the north did not come to realize or feel the hate between blacks and whites. I just knew that those friends of mine in school that were black were bussed into school from the north side of town and none of them lived in my neighborhood. Of course as grew older I came to know the struggles felt in the south by the blacks and the

segregation issue. This book is a straight forward detailing of the summer of 1963 in Birmingham, AL and the 'peaceful' marches that won the black community the attention they needed for the laws already on the books to be enforced giving them equality. It is written profoundly and without hate in it's context. I believe, if Martin Luther King Jr. were alive today, he would be the next truest candidate for the Presidency of the United States. The man spoke true and with God in his heart and loved all man kind. It's a great read to understand the times and struggles but also a great eye opener to the ideals behind winning with nonviolent actions.

I graduated from high school 23 years ago in the mid 90s. I took an 'honors' social studies class and it did nothing to stimulate interest in history as this little gem. This is a readable primary source! I had my 6th and 8th grade sons read this this last month and would recommend this to anyone who wants to hear about this struggle from a man who was in the center of it!

odd to be reading this 50 yrs after the fact. I can remember some of the events, but through the filter of a child's mind hf

I was raised to respect Dr Martin L. King. In a lot of black households, Dr Kings picture is right next to a picture of Jesus! People of my parents generation and before went through a lot to secure basic human rights- rights guaranteed by our constitution. Why is Martin a great man? He decided at 26 years old to lead a movement against the practice of JIM CROW that lasted almost 100 years after the civil war! He KNEW that this decision could lead to his death! The 13,14 and 15 admements didn't give blacks economic or political parity. It was so bad, especially in the south, that millions of blacks left their homes to find a better life up north- my grandfather being one of them. Martin could of lived a comfortable life but he saw injustice everywhere and he did something about it! My life and millions like me are better off because of this man! This book explains his view points in beautiful detail and why he couldn't stop the march to progress. His life and unfortunate death opened the way for any oppressed group to recieve equal treatment under the law. This isn't just black history; this is American history!!

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