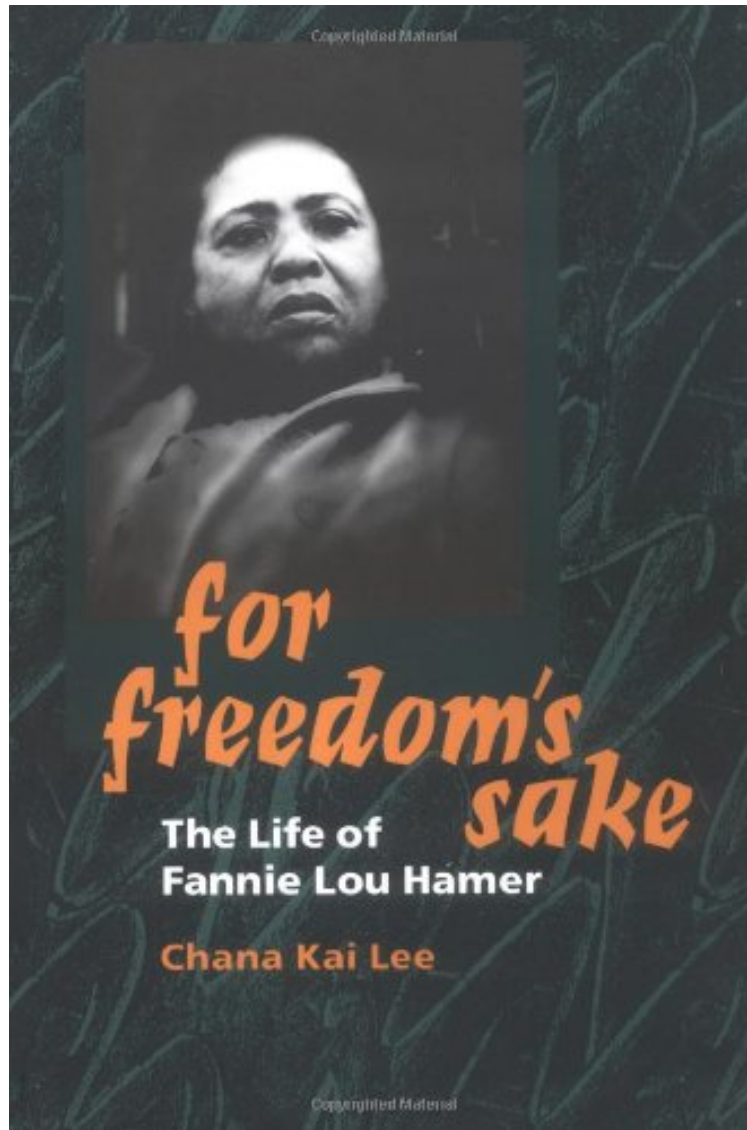


[Free download] For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer (Women in American History)

For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer (Women in American History)

Chana Kai Lee

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Chana Kai Lee : For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer (Women in American History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer (Women in American History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Intense Book You Can't Put DownBy Shawn M. WarsawickIn this 1999 work, Chana Kai Lee presents the life of the iconic Civil Rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer is new light.

Using a plethora of sources (both primary and secondary), Lee attempts to rescue Hamer from her role as civil rights icon and show the complexities of her life, the good and the bad, the tragedy and the triumphs. While it would be easy to fall victim to the desire to present Hamer in a triumphalist light, Lee does a remarkable job focusing on the costs of Hamer's struggle for equal rights without allowing the story to become a tale of woe. Lee used a variety of primary and secondary sources to create her narrative, as well as various manuscript collections located throughout the United States. Rather than comparing Fannie Lou to another activist, Lee looks at her life and how her character and involvement in the Civil Rights movement changed over time. Furthermore, the author notes she wanted to restore balance to the story of Fannie Lou's life, I have tried to suggest that returning that pain to Hamer's personal history gives us a more complete measure of what it meant to live her life. The great strength in Lee's work is its honest portrayal of a woman who meant so much to the Civil Rights Movement. As Lee herself said, she wanted to give a more complete measure of Hamer's life, showing both the achievements but also the pain, so we could understand what it was like to live the life Fannie Lou lived. (Lee, 180) There is no doubt she achieved her goal, as she delivered a well-written and balanced account of the life of one of the greatest figures of the civil rights movement. The only weakness is that, because of the amount of pain she lived through, it becomes easy to focus on just the negative, and not the positive aspects of her life and accomplishments. This is one book everyone should read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. poorly documented and a very sorry reading experience I don't have a suggestion for a better book on Fannie Lou Hamer. By C. Wilson This is a poorly written, poorly documented and a very sorry reading experience I don't have a suggestion for a better book on Fannie Lou Hamer. This is not the one to read. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. YOWZA By The Sassy Countess Who tells this kind of history? I would have never heard of her had I not had to purchase this book for my class. I am so proud to say that this was a required text. It should be! And, it should be everywhere.

A biography of Fannie Lou Hamer, one of the most important civil rights activists of the 20th century. It documents Hamer's lifelong crusade to empower the poor through collective action and the personal costs of her struggle to win a political voice and economic self-sufficiency for blacks in the segregated South.

From Publishers Weekly At the 1964 Democratic National Convention, Fannie Lou Hamer garnered the national spotlight when she and other members of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party attempted to unseat the entirely white official Mississippi delegation. Though the coup failed, and Hamer herself earned the wrath of Lyndon Johnson, she helped draw attention to the ways in which black Southerners were denied political power. At the time, Hamer had only been involved in the civil rights movement for two years; at the age of 47 she reemerged as a natural and vibrant leader who would go on to run (unsuccessfully) for the Mississippi State Senate. Lee's biography is less committed to exploring Hamer's personal life than to charting her growth as an activist and examining the profound impact of gender, sexuality, violence and poverty on the early civil rights movement. By focusing on these issues in Hamer's own life--the repeated rapes her grandmother endured, resulting in 20 illegitimate children, Hamer's own involuntary sterilization and the sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of the police--the book highlights the vantage point of African-American women in the fight for basic human rights in the South. Lee handles this difficult material sensitively, placing it in context of the economic and social complexities of Southern life. Never sentimentalizing her subject, Lee honestly discusses the movement's bitter internal struggles, Hamer's severe bouts with depression and her strong disagreements with white feminists. This biography vividly brings to light a crucial aspect of the civil rights movement that until now has not been given its due. (Sept.) Copyright 1999 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "Lee's biography is less committed to exploring Hamer's personal life than to charting her growth as an activist and examining the profound impact of gender, sexuality, violence and poverty on the early civil rights movement... Vividly brings to light a crucial aspect of the civil rights movement that until now has not been given its due." - Publishers Weekly "To relate the life of Fannie Lou Hamer accurately demands a fundamental understanding of the politics of class and gender, as well as race... Lee successfully negotiates the difficult terrain of this amazing woman's life with remarkable skill. Lee offers far more than a chronology of events, and thereby presents a rich picture of an extraordinary and complex figure." - Choice "Far more prominent in the historical record than in the history books, black women in the post-World War II freedom movements are the subject of exciting recent scholarship. Lee's portrait of Fannie Lou Hamer stands among the best of those works... This is the best book on a crucially important subject." -- Timothy B. Tyson, *Journal of American History* "Excellent biography ... [Lee's] most important contribution is her portrait of Hamer as a sensitive and sometimes troubled person, not just a symbol... A biography worthy of its subject." -- Paul T. Murray, *Multicultural* "Emerging from the lowliest rungs of Mississippi's segregated world, Fannie Lou Hamer became an icon of black protest during the 1960s... Lee's biography polishes the icon but also probes it to discover a flesh-and-blood woman whose frailties make her achievements -- and her tenacity -- all the more notable... This book will win recognition for ably showing Hamer as a warrior at once valiant and vulnerable." -- Robert Weisbrot, *American Historical* "Comprehensive research, lyrical yet accessible writing, and brilliant analysis come together in what constitutes the most definitive critical biography to date of famed civil rights activist Fannie

Lou Hamer... A biography that deserves to be emulated." -- Priscilla A. Dowden, *The North Carolina Historical* "This biography [of Hamer] is one of the best ways to experience this charismatic personality." - *The Socialist* "Lee's incisive biography breaks new ground on Hamer scholarship... A balanced account that advances Hamer scholarship... The result is more defining and dimensional, of a very human, but flawed figure, fiercely individualistic, yet a symbol for emerging social change in a critical, turbulent time in the South's history." - Dan Ruff, *Southern Historian* "Hamer emerges from the pages as a complex, sophisticated and truly revolutionary individual. This book will, no doubt, be a major contribution to the ongoing commentary on race, gender, and class relations in southern life." - *The Gaitherreporter* "An excellent analysis of Hamer's life and work. Lee's extensive research allows her to turn Hamer from a mythic icon of the civil rights movement into something more powerful: an ordinary woman who withstood obscene violence and resistance to fight for her rights." - Selika Ducksworth Lawton, *Michigan Historical* "A vivid and complex portrait of Hamer and her lifelong pursuit of political and economic freedom effectively situated in the major events and themes of her time." -- Emily J. Crosby, *The Southern Quarterly* ADVANCE PRAISE "Chana Kai Lee's accessible, elegant, and comprehensively researched biography of Fannie Lou Hamer reminds us that even cataclysmic changes in social relations start with the experiences, aspirations, and imagination of ordinary people. An unknown plantation field hand and timekeeper until her forties, Mrs. Hamer emerged as the quintessential rank and file activist and grass roots leader of the Mississippi Freedom Movement. Lee shows how the civil rights movement was not just a battle to end segregation, but rather functioned as a broad based battle against poverty, illiteracy, economic exploitation, and all forms of dehumanization and oppression. More than any other individual, Fannie Lou Hamer embodied the extraordinary changes provoked in U.S. society by the civil rights movement of the 1960s. In Chana Kai Lee, she has found a biographer worthy of her story."-George Lipsitz, author of *A Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* "Chana Kai Lee has written a remarkable biography of a remarkable woman. Of all the local people who guided and sustained the civil rights movement in reshaping the South and America during the second half of the twentieth century, Fannie Lou Hamer stands at the top... Lee has given us a brilliantly textured portrait of the public and private life of a wife, mother, civil rights organizer, and mentor to young people struggling for freedom. *For Freedom's Sake* provides a truthful and sensitive portrait of a poor, southern black woman who transformed herself and countless others, while at the same time experiencing intense personal disappointment and pain. Not merely a story of one woman's triumph and tragedy, Lee's revealing book presents a moving and perceptive study of the human condition."-Steven F. Lawson, author of *Running for Freedom: Civil Rights and Black Politics in America since 1941* "An extremely valuable addition to the historiography of the civil rights movement."-John Dittmer, author of *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* "Enlightening, moving, and inspirational."-Beverly Guy-Sheftall, author of *Daughters of Sorrow: Attitudes toward Black Women, 1880-1920*