

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS

BOOKLIST TOP TEN SERIES 2006



**Carter G. Woodson Award Book

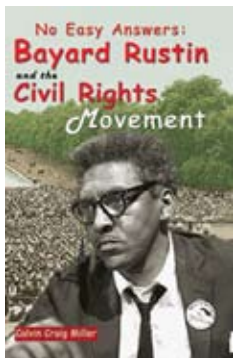
Booklist

February 1, 2005

Miller, Calvin Craig. No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement. 2005. 160p. illus. index. Morgan Reynolds, lib. ed., \$24.95 (1-931798-43-5). 323. Gr. 7-10.

In a clear, compelling narrative, Miller combines the life story of a great social activist with the history of the struggle for civil rights in the U.S. The politics are exciting, with details of the radical campaigns in the 1940s and 1950s, Rustin's impassioned call for nonviolent protest, and his role in organizing both the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the 1963 March on Washington. Rustin, a global peace leader who traveled to India and many African countries, returned from abroad to serve on a prison chain gang for his

activism. His personal story is just as moving as his political one: his homosexuality played a large role in his being banished from the limelight. The illustrations seem cramped, but the type is spacious, and readers will find chapter notes for direct quotes and a time line, as well as a bibliography a list of Web sites they can use to find out more. --Hazel Rochman



**Carter G. Woodson Award Book

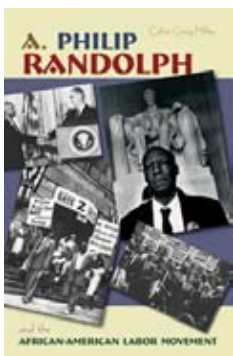
School Library Journal

June 2005

MILLER, Calvin Craig. No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement. 160p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. PLB \$24.95. ISBN 1-931798-43-5. LC 2004018518.

Gr 9 Up—Until recently, Rustin has gotten short shrift when people recall leaders of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. He organized the 1963 March on Washington and worked closely with Dr. King as his mentor and instructor in Gandhian nonviolent tactics. He urged King to create an organization to further the aims of black civil rights after the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Miller captures this important figure's fascinating life, bumps and all. He does this by exploring perhaps one of the central issues in Rustin's life—his homosexuality. Because the author has chosen to focus on this aspect of the man

that is often glossed over or ignored, his book is an excellent starting point for students to learn about an almost forgotten leader. --Carol Jones Collins, Columbia High School, Maplewood, NJ



VOYA

August 2005

Notable Americans/Civil Rights Leaders. Morgan Reynolds, 2005. 160p. PLB \$24.95. Index. Illus. Photos. Biblio. Source Notes.

Chronology.

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Miller, Calvin Craig. A. Phillip Randolph and the African American Labor Movement.

978-1-931798-50-8.

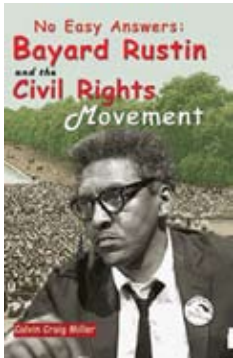
Miller, Calvin Craig. No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement.

978-1-931798-42-5. **Carter G. Woodson Award Book

These biographies of two pivotal figures in the civil rights movement are easy for middle school students to read, containing all the basic facts. They pale, however, in comparison to other works available in terms

of scholarship, such as Catherine Reef's biography of Randolph in the African American Biography series (Enslow, 2001) or Sally Hanley's in the Black Americans of Achievement series (Chelsea House, 1988). Miller's smooth narrative style, however, weaves the personal stories of these two men together with the pivotal elements of their experiences and the larger political events of the time. Each opens with a seminal moment in the movement and then tells the story of how each man came to be a civil rights activist. Randolph's origins with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and his political writing in *The Messenger* as well as Rustin's ardent pacifism and his adoption of Ghandi's nonviolence tactics are described in detail against the backdrop of the depression, World War II, and the turmoil of the following two decades.

The books do not avoid difficult issues but are prone to making sweeping generalizations for the sake of brevity and reading level. Rustin's homosexuality is discussed in terms of his long obscurity as he worked in the background so not to harm the movement with questions about his sexuality and his arrest for a homosexual act, but the word homosexuality is not in the index. Rustin's early communism and Randolph's socialism are included as well, with brief and general descriptions of what each political system means and how it attracted those pushing for racial equality in the United States. These men are not presented as flawless or perfect heroes either and descriptions of tactical disagreements among high-profile figures in the movement and betrayals from other prominent African American leaders make the events vivid and realistically portrayed. Each book concludes with the 1963 march on Washington, D.C., for which these men shared the cover of *Life* magazine. Martin Luther King Jr. is featured more in the Rustin biography as they were closer in age. The time lines are brief, capturing only major events, but photographs include depictions of the Jim Crow figure that became symbolic of racist laws, artwork from the Harlem Renaissance, and signs that detail the extent of segregation in American life at the time. These books are easy-to-read supplemental biographies for collections where students do reports on famous figures of the civil rights movement, but if rigorous scholarship or detailed analysis of the political climate is required, they alone will not suffice. –Hillary Theyer.



****Carter G. Woodson Award Book**

Children's Bookwatch
March 2005

An excellent biography recommended picks for grades 4-6. Calvin Craig Miller's *No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin & The Civil Rights Movement* tells of the grandson of a former slave who was drawn to the world of the Harlem Renaissance, there to become an organizer working for civil rights. His passion for nonviolent protest was thwarted when he was prosecuted for a homosexual encounter and many movement leaders deserted him; yet his role in organizing the 1963 March on Washington proved pivotal in changing a nation, and Miller at last returns Rustin's story to the historical attention it deserves.



School Library Journal
December 2005

BOHANNON, Lisa Frederiksen. *Freedom Cannot Rest: Ella Baker and the Civil Rights Movement*. 176p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. PLB \$24.95. ISBN 1-931798-71-0. LC 2005007156.

Gr 7 Up –Bohannon's biography joins Joanne Grant's 1998 work on the same subject. Both authors wrote about a life long neglected, but worth telling about. Baker was a major player in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. She was the principal organizer of SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. A selfless fighter for the rights of black Americans, her achievements have often been overlooked. The fact that she was a woman in male-dominated organizations certainly did not help. Lately, however, she has, like Bayard Rustin, become the subject of more critical scrutiny. Grant had the great advantage of knowing and working with Baker, and her biography has an almost elegiac

quality. Bohannon is more objective and makes good use of vintage photographs, artwork, and text boxes that further explain historical events. For teens, her biography might be a good place to start to get a good overview of Baker's life and the times in which she lived. For readers who want a more detailed view of Baker's accomplishments, Grant's book is the logical next step. –Carol Jones Collins, Columbia High School, Maplewood, NJ



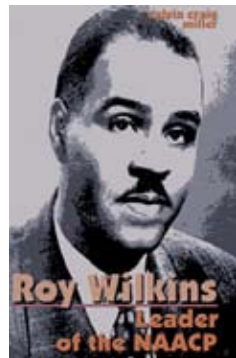
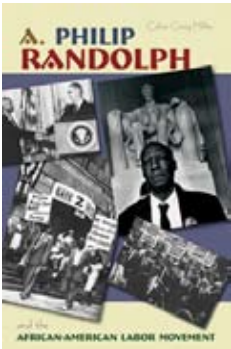
AfroAmericanHeritage.com

BOHANNON, Lisa Frederiksen. *Freedom Cannot Rest: Ella Baker and the Civil Rights Movement*. 176p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. ISBN 978-1-931798-71-0. LC 2005007156.

5 Stars

As with most women in the Civil Rights Movement, the work of Ella Baker has been largely overlooked. Yet she worked tirelessly behind the scenes organizing, raising money, and raising awareness. She often traveled alone, which was dangerous for any woman in the early part of the 20th Century, and especially so for a black woman. She worked closely with mainstream organizations such as NAACP and the SCLC, but distrusted their topdown leadership style and often clashed with that leadership. She believed in group-centered leadership, and cultivated that approach as an advisor to youth organizations such as SNCC. This book is clearly written and amply illustrated with period photos and

artwork. In addition to being a compelling biography of Ella Baker, it also provides a concise overview of the Civil Rights Movement, particularly with regard to the various approaches and factions within the movement. It's about time that the women's voices of that era are heard, and this latest title from Morgan Reynolds is a great place to begin.--Gerri Gribi



The Horn Book Guide
2005

Miller, Calvin Craig A. *Philip Randolph and the African-American Labor Movement* 160 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 1-931798-50-8 \$26.95

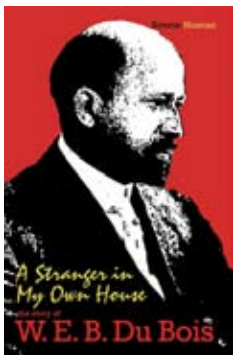
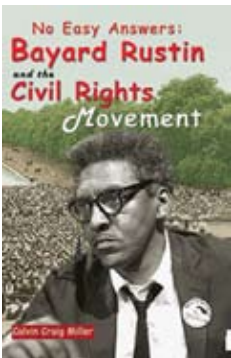
Miller, Calvin Craig *No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* 160 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 1-931798-43-5 \$26.95

**Carter G. Woodson Award Book

Miller, Calvin Craig *Roy Wilkins: Leader of the NAACP* 176 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 1-931798-49-4 \$26.95

Portraits of Black Americans series.

These well-rounded overviews of important civil rights leaders focus primarily on their accomplishments as influential activists and consider the contributions each made to the movement as a whole. Though informative, the writing is dry and unremarkable. The dull design features archival photographs and illustrations. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. ES



The Horn Book Guide
2005

Hinman, Bonnie *A Stranger in My Own House: The Story of W. E. B. Du Bois* 176 pp. Morgan LE ISBN 1-931798-45-1 \$26.95

(3) YA Despite a slight bias in favor of Du Bois's philosophical and political ideologies regarding race relations in America, this well-written biography presents an intelligent interpretation of his relationship with his contemporary, Booker T. Washington. A readable text and color, sepia, and black-and-white illustrations chronicle Du Bois's scholarship and activism as he championed education, socialism, and finally Pan-Africanism. Sources, timeline, websites. Bib., ind. CHD



School Library Journal

July 2005

HINMAN, Bonnie. *A Stranger in My Own House: The Story of W. E. B. Du Bois*. 176p. maps. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. PLB \$24.95. ISBN 1-931798-45-1. LC 2004026460.

Gr 6-10- The long, complex life of this scholar and controversial civil rights leader is examined in this serviceable biography. Hinman offers insights into the background, beliefs, and conflicts that shaped and defined Du Bois. Beginning with his impoverished but sheltered upbringing in western Massachusetts, she describes his experiences at Fisk University in Tennessee, where he learned firsthand about the racism, social injustice, and economic disparity that plagued the vast majority of African Americans in the late 19th century. Becoming a social scientist, he began to research African Americans, assuming that documentation of their social problems would inspire change and eventually erase

"the color line," but soon realized that more aggressive tactics were needed. The author recounts how Du Bois became a founding member of the NAACP, explaining that his ideas about how to achieve equality for his people were often at odds with that organization and frequently generated public controversy. She also covers his interest in Pan-Africanism, his support of communist governments, his disillusionment with American capitalistic society, and his move to Ghana during his final years. The engaging, informative, balanced text is enhanced with documentary photographs and illustrations. Family relationships and hardships are described, but the focus is on Du Bois's intellectual pursuits, outspoken beliefs, and political conflicts. An accessible and valuable addition. -Gerry Larson, Durham School of the Arts, NC



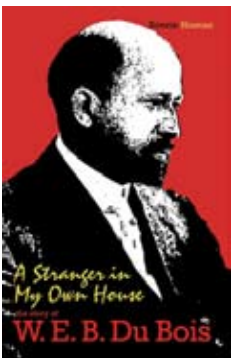
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

June 2005

Hinman, Bonnie *A Stranger in My Own House: The Story of W. E. B. Du Bois*. Morgan Reynolds, 2005 176p illus. with photographs ISBN 1-931798-45-1 \$24.95 Ad Gr. 7-10

W. E. B. Du Bois is a controversial figure in American history, clashing with such major figures as Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey over the best way to serve the interests of equality and civil rights for African Americans. Hinman traces the development of Du Bois' ideology from his roots in a small, relatively integrated New England community, to his eye-opening fascination with the high-society manners of his paternal grandfather, to his education at Fisk, Harvard, and the University of Berlin. His Marxist studies in Berlin confirmed his belief that the problems of the color line stemmed more from economic disparity than anything else, and he thus advocated for voluntary segregation and economic self-sufficiency for blacks in America, unpopular stances with other leaders of

the time. Eventually, Du Bois left America for Ghana, dying there amid work on a multi-volume history of the African people. Du Bois' political beliefs were complicated and, as Hinman admits, confusing, mostly because he advocated democracy as a political system and communism as an economic one. His most substantial legacy is his groundbreaking and still vibrant scholarship; Hinman is less successful in communicating the critical importance of the paradigm shift that his studies inaugurated than she is at pointing out his conflicts with other political figures of the time. As Du Bois' life was long, varied, and active, the biography may be a daunting one for many readers, especially since its rather dry accounting of his political and scholarly activities have little accent on the passion underlying them. Nonetheless, Du Bois is an important and complicated figure, and this overview will help young people understand his legacy. A timeline, bibliography, source notes, and index are included. KC



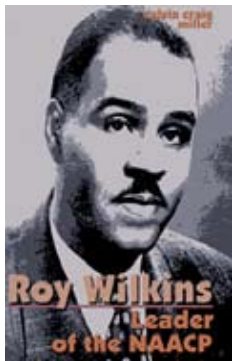
Booklist

March 15, 2005

Hinman, Bonnie. *A Stranger in My Own House: The Story of W. E. B. Du Bois*. Apr. 2005. 176p. illus. index. Morgan Reynolds, lib. ed., \$24.95 (1-931798-45-1).

Gr. 9-12. This begins with a vivid portrayal of W. E. B. Du Bois's youth in a western Massachusetts town, where he grew up relatively sheltered from racial prejudice. As an adult, he became a sociologist, historian, professor, writer, editor, speaker, social activist, and a founding member of the NAACP. Believing in the power of education and knowledge to end racial injustice in American society, he had the courage to take unpopular positions and even to speak out against other African American leaders when he believed that they were mistaken. In portraying Du Bois, Hinman provides a personal story that also

enlightens readers about history and social changes in America throughout his subject's long life, from Reconstruction to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Reproduced in color, the many illustrations include period paintings, documents, and photos. A time line, source notes, a bibliography, and a list of Internet sites are appended. A well-balanced addition to the Civil Rights Leaders series, this provides both detail and perspective. –Carolyn Phelan



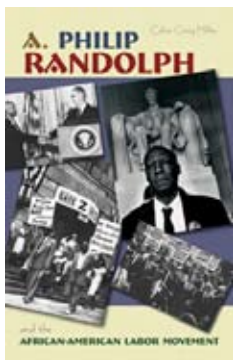
Children's Bookwatch

June 2005

Morgan Reynolds 620 South Elm Street, #223 , Greensboro , NC 27406 \$24.95 Each www.morganreynolds.com

Two new biographies for teen readers are highly recommended picks, standing out from the wealth of biographies about the same folks, and adding depth and political perspective to the focus. Roy Wilkins: Leader Of The NAACP by Calvin Craig Miller provides 176 pages of detail covering the life of Wilkins, who joined the NAACP and became an active crusader against discrimination, dedicating his life to nonviolent confrontations. While Wilkins was one of the most important leaders of the civil rights movement at its height, this is one of the few teen biographies to give him a full, in-depth and detailed analysis. Highly

recommended. A Stranger In My Own House: The Story Of W.E.B. Du Bois by Bonnie Hinman joins other biographies for this age group with a difference: it focuses on his basic convictions that political and economic equality equaled a voluntary segregation as a means to achieving these goals. Chapters follow his press for the liberation of blacks around the world, and reveal the foundations for many of his controversial beliefs. Also an important guide.



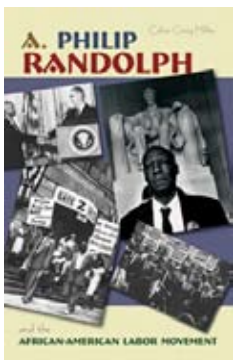
School Library Journal

May 2005

MILLER, Calvin Craig. A. Philip Randolph and the African-American Labor Movement. 160p. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. Tr \$24.95. ISBN 1-931798-50-8. LC 2004023706.

Gr 7 Up–Randolph lived a long, fascinating life, characterized by his single-minded drive to achieve racial equality for African Americans. In the course of 40 years, he faced down two U.S. presidents, defeated a powerful railroad company, and was the force behind the 1963 March on Washington. Miller depends heavily on existing scholarly and popular Randolph biographies. He tells the story in much the same way as it was told before, such as in Catherine Reef's A. Philip Randolph: Union Leader and Civil Rights Crusader (Enslow, 2001) and Lillie Patterson's A. Philip Randolph: Messenger for the Masses (Facts On File, 1995). Still, for readers with no knowledge of the subject, the overview approach

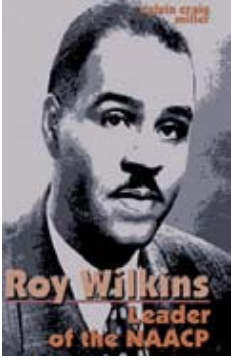
makes Randolph and his achievements more accessible, and the book is certainly enhanced by the archival photographs of pivotal moments in the man's life and times.–Carol Jones Collins, Columbia High School, Maplewood, NJ



Booklist

February 15, 2005

Miller, Calvin Craig. A. Philip Randolph and the African-American Labor Movement. 2005. 160p. illus. index. Morgan Reynolds, \$24.95 (1-931798-50-8). Gr. 7-10. Aside from a suspect bit of legend building at the beginning (as children, if Randolph and his brother did not fight back against bullying, their mother "would whip them, for she hated cowards") and a reliance on previously published sources only, Miller lucidly traces Randolph's spectacular career while presenting a case study in the effective use of hard-nosed rhetoric and nonviolent tactics to achieve breakthroughs in the fight against segregation. Profusely illustrated with photographs, sometimes in color, and capped by resource lists, this portrait of the fiery civil rights leader will be useful in small and medium-sized libraries as a replacement or alternative for such out-of-print titles as Sally Hanley's A. Philip Randolph (1989). –John Peters



School Library Journal

July 2005

MILLER, Calvin Craig. Roy Wilkins: Leader of the NAACP. 176p. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2005. PLB \$24.95. ISBN 1-931798-49-4. LC 2004027688.

Gr 7-10 – An adequate, if somewhat uneven, portrait of the leader and activist. Miller traces Wilkins's mostly comfortable childhood with his aunt and uncle in St. Paul, MN. The family was involved with the NAACP almost since its inception in 1909. Racism was brought home in 1920 when a mob lynched three African-American men in a nearby town. After college, Wilkins took a job at the Kansas City Call, an African-American newspaper, and later began working at the NAACP, becoming its executive secretary in 1955. Throughout his tenure with the organization, he worked with such Civil Rights

leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr., and Thurgood Marshall and Presidents Truman and Johnson to improve racial equality. This portrait is detailed and revealing, highlighting the man's achievements, challenges, and missteps. However, the sections that delve into the infighting among staff at the NAACP are sometimes hard to follow. Also, the author's attempt to place Wilkins's story into historical context sometimes overwhelms the biography. Black-and-white and color photographs appear throughout. –Kristen Oravec, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Strongsville, OH