



# The Shadows of Youth: The Remarkable Journey of the Civil Rights Generation

*Andrew B. Lewis*

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Through the lives of Diane Nash, Stokely Carmichael, Bob Moses, Bob Zellner, Julian Bond, Marion Barry, John Lewis, and their contemporaries, *The Shadows of Youth* provides a carefully woven group biography of the activists who—under the banner of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee—challenged the way Americans think about civil rights, politics, and moral obligation in an unjust democracy. A wealth of original sources and oral interviews allows the historian Andrew B. Lewis to recover the sweeping narrative of the civil rights movement, from its origins in the youth culture of the 1950s to the near present.

The teenagers who spontaneously launched sit-ins across the South in the summer of 1960 became the SNCC activists and veterans without whom the civil rights movement could not have succeeded. *The Shadows of Youth* replaces a story centered on the achievements of Martin Luther King Jr. with one that unearths the cultural currents that turned a disparate group of young adults into, in Nash's term, skilled freedom fighters. Their dedication to radical democratic possibility was transformative. In the trajectory of their lives, from teenager to adult, is visible the entire arc of the most decisive era of the American civil rights movement, and *The Shadows of Youth* for the first time establishes the centrality of their achievement in the movement's accomplishments.

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