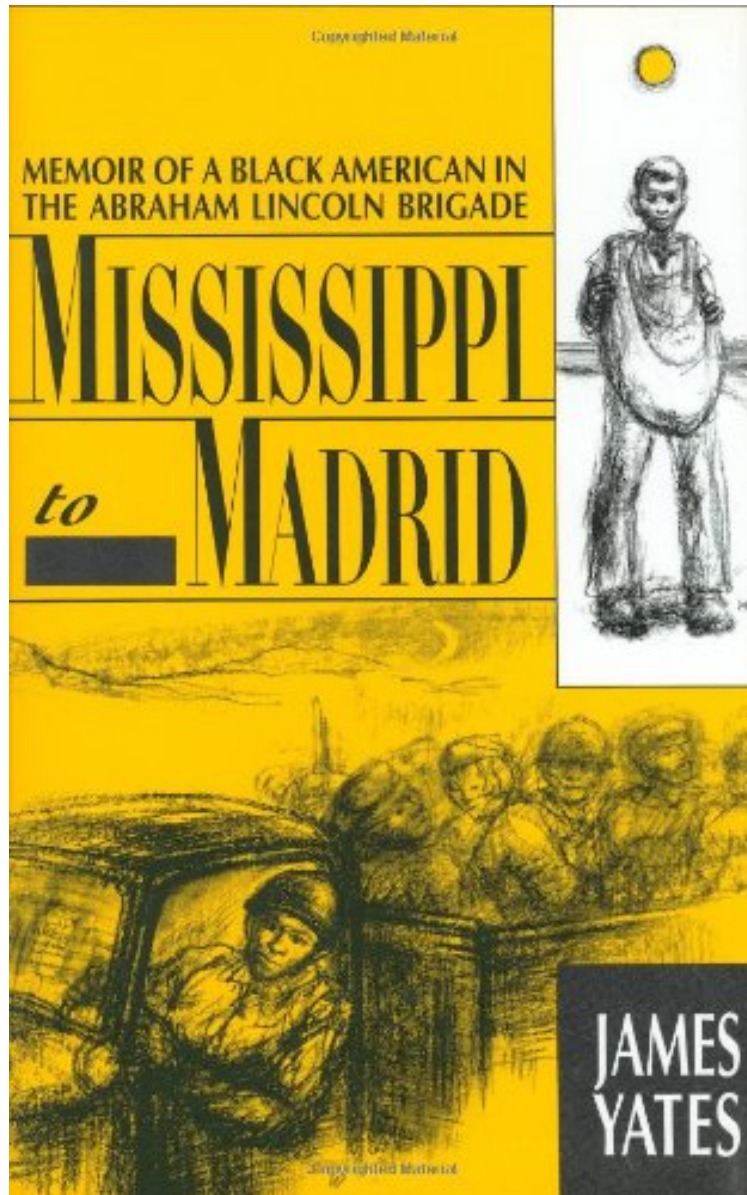


[E-BOOK] Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

James Yates

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James Yates : Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mississippi to Madrid: Memoir of a Black American in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Fantastic ReadBy LawguyI just finished this book and I could barely put it down. It is written in a simple straight forward artless style. This fits the subject well.I almost find the first half of the book more interesting than the second. The first half ends with his volunteering for Spain, but the book begins with his growing up in Mississippi. He escapes from Mississippi when he was 16 and it is as much an escape as any jail break. The book details how difficult it was after a childhood spent in the kind of brutally oppressive society that was the South to even think of living like a free man. He describes how he was too frightened to sit next to a white woman on a bus when he first got to Chicago, for instance.I would have liked more detail about his development as a radical and movement person, but that part doesn't seem to interest him. He is more interested in actions than in his thoughts. Certainly, the book moves and holds your attention. The one thing that comes through is that he is the type of person who is able to understand that what his people were fighting in the U.S. was the same thing the Republicans were fighting in Spain. He is definitely one of those people who make you blink your eyes in amazement at what he was able to accomplish.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Informative. Worth the Read.By robert n. johnsonHistory often never shared. So glad to be an adult to read what I want to. Always heard something about guys like this. They did a good deed based upon what they believed in.Not always the most organized and equipped units. Clearly, this should another example where leaderships passions don't always mean great outcomes. Training. Practice. Education. Resources. Logistics. Win every war ... in the end.Acommon1 commoner's thoughts.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A history of America in the 1930's in a nutshellBy Raymond M. HoffJames Yates went from Jim Crow poverty in the south to Herbert Hoover poverty in the north. He chose another path. He ended up in Spain fighting for the Republican government there. Yates' story is an important one to tell. Well written and will be useful for people of all colors in the US to understand what commitment to freedom really means.

From his birth to a share cropper family in the cotton fields of Mississippi to the unrest in Chicago and New York during the depression, James Yates's experience with labor protest and union organizing shaped his vision of freedom and led to his decision to fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War. Approximately 100 Blacks were among the 3,200 volunteers from the US that formed the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the first non-Jim Crow military organization in US history. Yates describes Oliver Law, the first Black commander of a US military unit; Paul Robeson; Langston Hughes, who Yates drove to the front; and nurse Salaria Key O'Reilly. Yates makes cogent connections between fascism and racism. James Yates returned to the US after having been wounded in the Spanish Civil War. He will be remembered for his active role in the struggle for freedom. James Yates died in January, 1994. The Jimmy Yates Award is presented annually to a short story writer by the Molasses Pond Writers Workshop in Franklin, Maine.

From Publishers Weekly "If you were Black in Mississippi, lightning would surely strike home sooner or later," writes Yates of his youth early in this century. For him, it struck as a mass lynching, impelling him to leave for Chicago and, later, New York. Far from home, Yates determined to "stand and fight, not flee"; with 100 other black Americans, he battled fascism in Spain in 1937. Though well worth telling, his story fails to reckon with the complexities of history or aspects of personal chronology (the fate of Yates's wife and children in Chicago goes unmentioned). But if uncertain in details, the author persuasively suggests the "overwhelming sense of kinship" shared by the anti-fascists. And while his affection for war may seem paradoxical in one who mourned the wounds of violence early, more disturbing is the fact that only in battle could Yates escape the racism of his own country. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalThe first half of Yates's memoir is a forceful indictment of the racism and poverty suffered by black Americans between the world wars. It is easy to understand how Yates was drawn to socialist causes and enlisted in the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War. The weakest part of the book is Yates's description of his service in Spain: primarily a running account of his contact with other Republican soldiers. A broader eyewitness history is John Tisa's *Recalling the Good Fight* (LJ 10/1/85). Yates's book is recommended for black history collections. Robert Jordan, Univ. of Iowa Lib., Iowa CityCopyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.