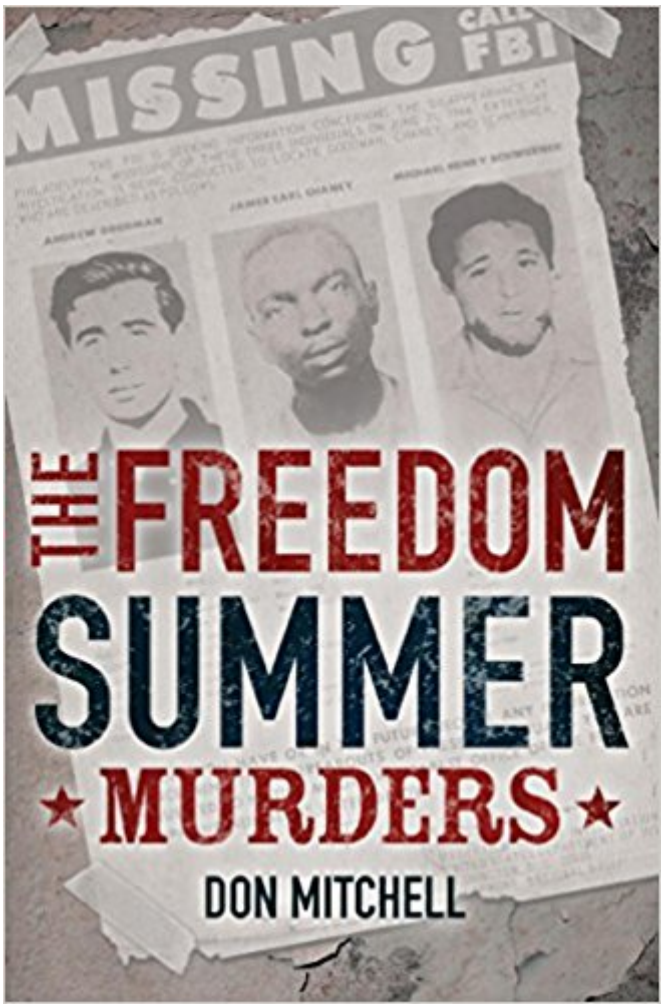
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# The Freedom Summer Murders




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## Synopsis

In June of 1964, three idealistic young men (one black and two white) were lynched by the Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi. They were trying to register African Americans to vote as part of the Freedom Summer effort to bring democracy to the South. Their disappearance and murder caused a national uproar and was one of the most significant incidents of the Civil Rights Movement, and contributed to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.The Freedom Summer Murders is the first book for young people to take a comprehensive look at the brutal murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, through to the conviction in 2005 of mastermind Edgar Ray Killen.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 6Ã¢â ¬â œ9Ã¢â ¬â •The June 1964 murders of three civil rights workers in Mississippi's Neshoba County merits study and reflection not only as a pivotal event in the Civil Rights Movement but also as a yardstick to measure our country's progress since then toward true racial equality. Why? Because, as Mitchell and others repeatedly suggest in this authoritative and brutally honest chronicle, a major reason that, of the many racial atrocities committed in the South, this one gained such intense national attention and led to decades of investigations and trials is that two of the three victims were white. The author never makes an explicit connection with current events in Florida and elsewhere, but thoughtful readers will have no trouble connecting the dots. He also never uses

the word "terrorism," but he clearly shows it in action by detailing the systematic campaign of threats, intimidation, assaults, and worse to which African Americans, particularly in Mississippi but also throughout the Jim Crow South, were subjected by whitesÃ¢â ¬â •including, often, law enforcement officials. Distilling court records, printed sources, and original interviews with surviving family members, the author sets the ugly scene, describes the murders, recounts in detail the ensuing efforts to bring the killers to justice (or at least, as he puts it, "a measure of justice"), and offers biographical sketches both of the victims and of four associated heroes who played important roles in the case. A timely, essential account, illustrated with contemporary photos and capped with extensive endnotes and source notes.Ã¢â ¬â •John Peters, Children's Literature Consultant, New York City --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

During the Freedom Summer in 1964, volunteers came to Mississippi to help locals with black voter registration. There were many ramifications, but the most shocking event was the murders of young civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. Full of original research and interviews with many personally involved, including the victimsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ families, this book goes into detail about what occurred and how the perpetrators were brought to at least partial justice. Better organization and a cast of characters would have helped readers sort out who was who. When the book gets rolling, however, the drama catches readers and doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t let go. One of the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most interesting points is how little interest American society had in civil rights violations against African Americans in the Deep South; when two white men were killed, though, the federal government and the media turned their spotlights on the issue. The black-and-white photographs are plentiful, and some are quite dramatic. An eye-opening read for young people, especially those coming to the Freedom Summer for the first time. Grades 6-9. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Rarely have I finished a book in 2 days.This is an excellent story about one of the most important events in the Civil Rights movement: The tragic murder and disappearance of three young men during "Freedom Summer" of 1964. The author does an excellent job of humanizing Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman by providing background information on their lives and what drove them to participate in the struggle for voting rights in Mississippi. Furthermore the author does a good job of recounting the horrific events of the night they were murdered, the people involved and the trial. This book should be required for any unit taught on the Civil Rights movement and any serious student of the struggle for equal rights in America. I highly recommend this book.

I found this to be a powerfully told story about the Civil Rights era. During the Freedom Summer of 1964 when several groups were working to obtain voting rights for blacks throughout the south, three young men disappeared. Mitchell explains the circumstances surrounding their disappearance before giving a brief biography of each of the three young men, two white and one black. Even in death there was great bigotry. The two white young men were shot, the black young man was severely beaten and probably dead before he was shot. The author then shares the events leading to the discovery of their bodies and the trials and memorials connected to their deaths.This story illustrates in a sickening way the circumstances existing in the South during the 1960s and long before. The sad thing is, that it's apparent from the get go that if two of the three hadn't been white, the case would not have drawn the attention that it did. The KKK did so much harm to so many and yet was so rarely brought to justice. Once again that is illustrated here. The main instigator was let go until 2005 when he was finally convicted yet even then he was only convicted of manslaughter rather than murder which it so clearly was.. And many of the others got off with just a few years in prison.One of the things that stuck with me the most is a statement made by the author, "Many people feel that this country is not yet at the place where the killing of a black mother's son is as important as the killing of a white mother's son. But the United States is closer to that goal than it was in 1964." (pg. 183)I hope that we keep moving forward toward the day when as the author says the killing of a black mother's son is a tragedy equal to the killing of a white mother's son.

I agree with the review posted. Not only does the author do an excellent job of humanizing Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman, I also believe it gives voice for the first time to the families left behind by their murders and the impact it had on their lives. It is hard to believe these were young adults in their early twenties when compared with today's generation. It is easy to get lost in the details but once past the first couple of chapters it is hard not complete the book. Captivating. I can not say any better than the reviewer before me, This book should be required for any unit taught on the Civil Rights movement and any serious student of the struggle for equal rights in America. Read this book. Stick with it. You will not be disappointed.

This provided a very solid look at the entirety of the Mississippi Burning case. From the motives of the three victims to go to the South in the first place, the attitude toward racial equality in the county of Neshoba, and the final indictment and incarceration of Killan, the book covers it all.I plan to use this book in a unit on racism and prejudice in an 8th grade class this coming year.It does get jumpy

here and there with the facts, and seems to sometimes struggle to keep things on a consistent timeline, but overall a very good read.

Sadly beautiful book about a long, hot summer, and the deaths of three innocent, caring young men working to help the ugliness of humanity through their dedication to love and brotherhood. Should be required reading for college history courses. They were tragic and generally forgotten casualties in the war against hate and ignorance.

Great book! Everyone needs to read this book in order to try to understand the situation in Ferguson, and other parts of the United States where prejudice continues to exist. History has not changed many of us.

I think it was well researched. Too heavy on Andy Goodman. Why start with him. Too sugary in describing the men didn't make them seem real

It was pretty good

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