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ART 108

21 February 2021

March: Book Two

The novel *March: Book Two* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell is an excellent graphic novel that tells the story of the Civil Rights Movement from the view of John Lewis. John Lewis was an active member of the Freedom Riders and later became the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The graphic novel portrays the Civil Rights Movement as a struggle for African Americans to gain their rights. Throughout the novel the acts of protest were always nonviolent even though the leaders of the protest were sometimes persuaded to turn violence. The novel is an outstanding story of history that tells the struggle of that African Americans faced while being oppressed and physically abused by America.

The story begins with the early protest of African American including a young John Lewis in a local restaurant. The protesters never showed any violence towards their opposers even though they faced violence towards them. Throughout the book protesters were always beaten, arrested, or even killed by their opposers. After reading the words and looking at the artist rendition of the events, it was heartbreaking to see the violence towards African Americans. It was surprising that the African Americans never sorted to violence even when most of their efforts either landed them in jail or badly beaten, sometimes both.

The Freedom Rides that John Lewis was a part of was one of the bravest acts of protest that African Americans took part in. They knew that they were going to be faced with hostility when they chose to ride from city to city on the buses, but they did it anyway. The Freedom Riders almost at every stop were met with violence from the locals in the Southern cities they were traveling to. The most violence instant was Birmingham where their bus was torched by locals and the passengers were beaten to a “bloody red pulp” (Lewis et al. 47). The book does a good job showing nothing too graphic to the point of blood and gore. This event provides an example of the lengths that people were to go against desegregation and allowing African Americans to be considered “equals”, and the bravery of the African Americans that continued to protest knowing the consequences that might come.

The novel goes from the Civil Rights Movement to the inauguration of President Obama in 2009. The book is representing that the struggle of African Americans payed off in a huge for the success of Barack Obama to be able to take office. The deaths and oppression that African Americans faced was not in vain. The book does an excellent job in connecting the struggle of the Civil Rights Movement to a recent achievement that the African American community had in 2009. The nonviolent protest led to the change that the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement wanted to see and eventually led to the opportunities for young men to be able to take their place and continue protecting the rights of African Americans.

The end of the book seemed to point out something that people might overlook. It takes us back to the image of the church window in Alabama. That moment could have multiple meanings, but it mostly means that the job is not yet finished. There is still discrimination and police brutality against African Americans. It has gotten better for African Americans in America, but more can still be done to. This novel is an insight to the constant struggle that African Americans faced and are still facing with movements and organizations that work for equality. America needs to be changed so that everyone has the same opportunities as everyone else despite what is background.

Works Cited

Lewis, John, et al. *March: Book Two.* Top Shelf Productions, 2015.