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Many Birminghams: Taking Segregationists Seriously

Reviewed by David J. Garrow

Diane McWhorter, *Carry Me Home, Birmingham, Alabama: The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2001.

Charles Marsh, *The Last Days: A Son's Story of Sin and Segregation at the Dawn of a New South*, Basic Books, 2001.

S. Jonathan Bass, *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders, and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail,"* Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2001.

Jack E. Davis, *Race Against Time: Culture and Separation in Natchez Since 1930*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2001.

Birmingham, Alabama, has symbolized the violent intensity of southern white segregationist opposition to the Black freedom struggle ever since city Public Safety Director Eugene "Bull" Connor used snarling police dogs and high-pressure fire hoses against Black demonstrators in April and May, 1963. When four young girls were killed in a Ku Klux Klan terror bombing of Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church just four months later, the city's reputation was sealed for decades to come. But Birmingham in the 1960s was far less unique than many people nowadays imagine, and a quartet of new books reveals that Birmingham was far more representative of the white South than most people would care to remember.

Southern recalcitrance at desegregating bus seats, lunch counters, and public facilities ranging from restrooms to golf courses was virtually region-wide until congressional passage of the public accommodations provisions in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 finally resolved such issues once and for all.¹ But even in the midst of a region-wide revolt against Black activism and federal authority, contemporary news coverage presented Birmingham as the southern archetype for both barbarous law enforcement and unrestrained Klansmen.

Diane McWhorter's *Carry Me Home* brings an intensely personal perspective to Birmingham's year of infamy. As a ten-year-old white girl who had been born into one of the city's most privileged families, "I knew nothing of what was happening downtown." Even five years later, despite the fact that her ne'er-do-well father presented himself to his family as an active Klan sympathizer, "I was more worried that he was going to bring social shame on the family than I was worried about the morality of what he was doing."²

Only in her late twenties did McWhorter develop an active interest in what had transpired in her hometown two decades earlier, and in part her interest grew out of her fear that her father's professed friendship with Birmingham's most notorious Klansman, Robert E. "Dynamite Bob" Chambliss, might mean that her father had been personally involved in the city's most heinous crime. "I know Chambliss didn't bomb the church because I was with him that day" in September 1963, Martin McWhorter told his daughter in 1982.

But McWhorter's family linkages extended not only downward into the Klan, but also upwards into the board rooms of Birmingham's dominant corporations. Her two generations-older cousin Sidney Smyer, once an extreme segregationist, was the top white power broker who negotiated the interracial compromise that brought the May 1963 mass demonstrations to an end. McWhorter's paternal grandfather, a graduate of Harvard Law School, was a political intimate of the city's dominant mid-century segregationist politician, state senator James A. Simpson, whose grandson was one of McWhorter's private grade-school playmates but whose most important descendant was his working-class political protégé Eugene "Bull" Connor, whom Simpson vaulted into city office.³

McWhorter is unduly tempted to argue that "My family was simply a metaphor for the city around it," but her larger argument, that Birmingham's upper-class leadership knowingly spawned and then for many years supportively condoned both Bull Connor and Bob Chambliss, rightly pinpoints the core moral truth of why Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was successfully bombed.

"Dynamite Bob's" career as a bomber of Black homes in previously all-white neighborhoods began in 1947 under the active sponsorship of Bull Connor and within a decade expanded to include the residences and churches of Black activists such as attorney Arthur D. Shores and the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth. The city's new nickname of "Bombingham" was the most visible evidence both of Chambliss's success and of his seeming immunity from criminal prosecution. McWhorter does a commend-

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able job of describing how the Birmingham Klan's "vigilante spirit" was a direct outgrowth of the similar tactics that the city's industrialists had employed against union organizers in previous decades, but the heavy-handed editing that was deployed to trim *Carry Me Home* to its present length has created some gaping holes in McWhorter's narrative; between her first and second chapters her story simply jumps from 1938 to 1948, with the intervening years apparently discarded on some editor's floor.

McWhorter's history jumps back and forth between Birmingham's Black activists and their Klan and law enforcement opponents. Her Civil Rights Movement segments are largely derivative of previously published accounts, and her desire both to appropriately elevate the importance of Fred Shuttlesworth and to unnecessarily denigrate the role of Martin Luther King, Jr., is rather passé in light of several other recent books on Birmingham's civil rights history, although these books were released rather late in the process of McWhorter's writing.⁴

Carry Me Home's detailed treatment of Birmingham's murderous Klansmen is more fresh and original, and is drawn from local and federal law enforcement files that have long been available at the Birmingham Public Library Archives and from McWhorter's own interviews. But a reader of these sections of McWhorter's book must remain at least somewhat wary, as *Carry Me Home* makes too many readily visible factual or interpretive errors for one to be able to accept McWhorter's accounts of less well known events with complete faith. Future U. S. Attorney General Griffin B. Bell was not "Georgia's Attorney General-elect" in 1958, as McWhorter tells her readers; indeed an atrocious racist, Eugene Cook, held the job on a non-stop basis from 1945 to 1965. And anyone knowledgeable about the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott of 1955-56 will be surprised to learn from McWhorter that New York-based civil rights activist Bayard Rustin "took charge of the boycott" "[a]s soon as he arrived in Montgomery" in February 1956.

Relying on an FBI account of a 1963 interview with a Klansman regarding Governor George C. Wallace's hope that desegregation of the University of Alabama could be further postponed, McWhorter naively asserts that "An estimated 50,000 Klansmen were on standby to storm the university" if Wallace called for assistance. Even in 1963, total Klan membership in Alabama and surrounding states fell way short of that highly exaggerated figure. And, like others before her, McWhorter gullibly repeats the utterly fallacious claim that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover had a "taste for makeup and women's clothing."[5](#)

McWhorter's worst error of judgment by far occurs when she quotes the elderly Birmingham civil rights attorney Arthur Shores as telling her in 1991 in what McWhorter terms an "unguarded moment" that Bull Connor was "a good close friend of mine." The statement is absurdly erroneous on its face, but only in an endnote does McWhorter report and then breezily dismiss the fact that Shores's daughter had warned her that her father "was suffering from Alzheimer's." McWhorter's portrayal of Shores, whose home was bombed twice in the fall of 1963, as a secret "Uncle Tom" is inexcusable, and her ignorance of how well known was Shores's battle with Alzheimer's is reportorially embarrassing.[6](#)

But McWhorter does enrich our understanding of Bob Chambliss's Klan network and of law enforcement efforts to gather evidence against him, especially from informants within his own family. In 1977, when Chambliss was finally tried and convicted for masterminding the fatal bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the decisive surprise prosecution witness against him was his niece Elizabeth "Libby" Hood Cobbs, who testified how both the day before the bombing, and six days after it, Chambliss in her presence had uttered remarks that explicitly incriminated himself in the crime.

Six years after that trial, in a pioneering article in the *New York Times Magazine*, Howell Raines revealed how

Cobbs, who first spoke to the FBI a month after the bombing, had not been the only member of Chambliss's family cooperating with law enforcement.[7](#) Indeed, as Raines disclosed, Chambliss's own wife, Flora "Tee" Chambliss, who died in 1980, had also indirectly begun assisting the

investigators soon after the bombing. Tee's information was passed along by yet another female family member, "Dale Tarrant," who had been working with law enforcement prior to the bombing and who in the wake of it had also persuaded Libby Hood to talk to the FBI.

But Raines employed only the law enforcement pseudonym for "Dale Tarrant," not her real name, a practice which Elizabeth Hood Cobbs also followed in her important and emotionally powerful but unfortunately little-known 1994 autobiography, *Long Time Coming*.⁸ In that book Libby Cobbs foreshadowed a significant portion of Diane McWhorter's own analysis by contending that Chambliss was "not a singular enigma" nor "a freak of society" but instead was "a vigilante" who for "many years . . . was applauded by those in power who could have, but did not, stop him."⁹

McWhorter, however, has gone beyond both Raines and Cobb by explicitly identifying "Dale Tarrant" as Mary Frances Cunningham, one of Tee Chambliss's sisters. Behind-the-scenes controversy over Cunningham's 1963 relationship with the law enforcement officer to whom she was passing information, and over how Cunningham on one occasion told investigators a spurious story, apparently in a bungled effort to falsely attest to something that Tee Chambliss herself may have witnessed, has kept Cunningham from ever testifying publicly about the 1963 tragedy. Today Cunningham lives quietly in Birmingham and refuses to speak with journalists or historians.

McWhorter's *Carry Me Home* is thus in the end a valuable book, but her attempt to tell Birmingham's racial story through the prism of her own family is unsuccessful. In large part it fails because McWhorter eventually and rather reluctantly concludes that her father's claims of friendship with Chambliss and his cohorts were simply braggadocio. McWhorter nonetheless wants to believe that her father was doing something political during those years, that he "was not simply looking for a noble excuse to get away from his family at night," but readers may well conclude that her daddy was actually engaged in far more prosaic pursuits.

McWhorter's effort to come to terms with her memories of her father are mirrored in Charles Marsh's *The Last Days*, an intimately personal memoir of a young white boy's life in the Klan stronghold of Laurel, Mississippi, during the late 1960s. Marsh's father Bob was named pastor of Laurel's First Baptist Church in mid-1967, just a few months before the federal criminal trial of eighteen white men charged with conspiring to kill civil rights workers James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman in Neshoba County in the summer of 1964 got underway in nearby Meridian. Perhaps the most notable of the defendants was Mississippi Klan commander Sam Bowers, a Laurel resident who had ordered the killings and who also had orchestrated other mayhem and bombings in and around Laurel. Bowers's regular hangout was the Admiral Benbow Coffee Shop, and on Sunday evenings, Marsh relates, Marsh's father would take the family to the Admiral Benbow for dinner, where he would see Bowers sitting with his cohorts at the counter. "I didn't know much at the time about what it meant to be in the Klan, since my parents never said anything about it."

The day Bowers's trial commenced, Marsh's father delivered a civic club luncheon speech without feeling any need to mention what was a national, front page story; as Marsh confesses, "the Neshoba murders and the trials were the furthest thing from his mind." A month later, soon

after Bowers and six other defendants were found guilty, the home of one of Laurel's most prominent Black ministers, the Reverend Allen Johnson, was bombed, and Marsh's father joined with other local white clergy in a public statement condemning the terrorism.

One evening in early 1968, however, Reverend Marsh presented the Jaycee Man of the Year Award to a local

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citizen named Clifford Wilson and heartily extolled Wilson's civic virtues. Just one hour later Wilson was arrested as one of a dozen of Bowers's Klansmen who had carried out a murderous January, 1966 firebombing assault on the home of Hattiesburg NAACP activist Vernon Dahmer, who was fatally burned in the attack.

The public ignominy of having honored Wilson just moments before he was taken into custody for an infamous crime (for which he later was convicted) was more than the Reverend Marsh could bear. An attempt to offer his apologies to a Black Laurel minister resulted only in Reverend Marsh being told he was a cowardly hypocrite, and following that experience, Marsh writes, "My father lost his nerve. He despaired, broke down."

A reader of *The Last Days* expects the story to culminate with the Reverend Marsh becoming an explicit supporter of the Black freedom struggle, but no such transformation ensues. That absence, coupled with Marsh's own inability to criticize his father's failure, leaves *The Last Days* as a rather unsatisfying book indeed. Four years ago, when Marsh's first book, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights*,¹⁰ was published, an unusually personal "Charles Marsh Biography" enclosed with review copies characterized Marsh's father as "a Southern Baptist preacher who was instrumental in desegregating the church in the South." In the wake of *The Last Days*, that assertion appears to be based more on wishful thinking than on fact.

Yet Marsh's childhood in Laurel was inescapably a searing experience. Five years ago Marsh authored a stunningly superb magazine portrait of Klan leader Bowers after successfully pursuing an interview with him,¹¹ and a year later Marsh devoted a full one-fifth of *God's Long Summer* to an erudite but oddly even-handed treatment of Bowers's worldview.¹² The following year Bowers, who had served only six years in prison for his Chaney-Schwerner-Goodman conviction, was found guilty of orchestrating Vernon Dahmer's assassination and sentenced to life imprisonment.¹³

Thinking back to his family's self-cloistered world at Laurel's First Baptist Church, Marsh accurately confesses that the Klan's bombs "exploded in a separate world" from that of white clergymen like Marsh's father. And Marsh's conclusion of course applies not only to Laurel but to Birmingham as well, as a new study of the eight white city clergymen whose public criticism of the Black community's April 1963 demonstrations led Martin Luther King, Jr., to reply to them with his "Letter from Birmingham Jail" tellingly demonstrates.

Anyone puzzled as to whether the Birmingham of 1963 described in Jonathan Bass's *Blessed Are the Peacemakers* is actually the same city as the one portrayed in Diane McWhorter's *Carry Me Home* should be forgiven, for "Dynamite Bob" Chambliss is mentioned only once by Bass, just as four of the eight white clergy upon whom Bass focuses are entirely absent from McWhorter's copious narrative. Bass rues how the eight clergymen have been "written out of history and deemed irrelevant figures" who are remembered only as "misguided opponents of Martin Luther King," but he is most eager to rebut how "many misinformed northern liberals concluded that the eight were reactionary spokesmen of the segregated South."

Bass is willing to acknowledge that Birmingham's white clergy, like Charles Marsh's father in Laurel, were utterly typical of southern white churchmen's silent failure to acknowledge the moral justice of the Black freedom struggle. But Bass's most serious problem lies in how at least two of his eight Birmingham clergymen do indeed seem to have been reactionary advocates of racial segregation. Alabama Episcopal Bishop Charles C. J. Carpenter "denounced the 1954 *Brown* decision" and condemned the 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights march as "a foolish business and sad waste of time." In

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1965 an Episcopal clergy supporter of the movement called Carpenter a "chaplain to the dying order of the Confederacy," and even Bass calls Carpenter "hypocritical" and laments his "failure to comprehend racial injustice."

Bass also acknowledges that Methodist Bishop Nolan B. Harmon's "position on segregation never evolved," but Bass is more outspoken in recognizing what he terms Harmon's "outstanding contribution to Methodism" and in repeatedly decrying the "crusading mentality and sense of moral superiority of many white northerners." Regional pride and defensiveness appear to inhibit the otherwise obvious and undeniable conclusion that on the issue of racial justice, the "crusading" white northerners who came South to support the movement simply *were* at that time more morally perspicacious than their southern brethren.[14](#)

While Bass, like McWhorter, wrongly seeks to dismiss the transformative impact of Martin Luther King's involvement in Birmingham,[15](#) the best sections of *Blessed Are the Peacemakers* are those that describe how being among the recipients of King's famous "Letter" did have a reformatory if not transformative effect upon some of the more moderate of the eight clergymen. When Bass asked Methodist Bishop Paul Hardin, Jr., about King's Letter in 1992, Hardin replied that "I think most of his arguments were right. White ministers should have taken a more active role." And far and away the most powerful and moving section of Bass's book is his treatment of Baptist Reverend Earl Stallings, who welcomed Black worshippers into his First Baptist Church at the height of the 1963 protest and who "publicly blamed Birmingham's white churches for much of the climate of unrest in the city." Bass's account makes one think that Earl Stallings was exactly the sort of southern Baptist minister that Charles Marsh wishes Bob Marsh could have been.

The extent to which Birmingham's Klansmen were in reality no more unique than Birmingham's ministers is brought home by an especially impressive and insightful study of Natchez, Mississippi, a small city whose bloody civil rights history traditionally has received no more than a few pages' worth of attention in even the most comprehensive accounts of the Mississippi movement.¹⁶ Jack E. Davis's *Race Against Time* recounts how a new generation of Black activism emerged in Natchez between 1963 and 1965, led not by ministers or professional people but by two working-class employees of the Armstrong Tire and Rubber Co., George Metcalfe and Wharlest Jackson. In mid-August of 1965 Metcalfe presented a petition calling for school desegregation to the local school board, and eight days later a KKK bomb exploded in his automobile, breaking two limbs and permanently damaging one eye but otherwise remarkably leaving Metcalfe alive. Membership in the local NAACP branch "increased tenfold" in the wake of the attack, but local white officials remained as unresponsive as Bull Connor had been in Birmingham. Eighteen months later, in early 1967, a car bomb targeted Metcalfe's fellow activist, Wharlest Jackson, and this time the results were fatal.

Over the intervening three decades, millions of people have remembered the bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, but outside of Natchez few people other than family members and a handful of historians have ever heard of Wharlest Jackson. Davis notes how "no one has ever been arrested for the Metcalfe and Jackson bombings," but Davis's conclusions about why white Natchez was no more concerned about its less-heralded string of Klan terror bombings than was white Birmingham echo the themes that pervade McWhorter's and Bass's books. In Natchez, whites of all classes were responsible "for creating an environment ripe for Klan terrorism," Davis writes. "When the black churches burned, when the beatings escalated, and when the murders recurred, silence dropped over the white community. . . . Perhaps

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most whites were too 'busy with their lives, trying to make a living,' as one white recalled, to pay much attention."

And just as in both Laurel and Birmingham, the white clergy was missing in action. In 1963 two Natchez churchmen, Elton Brown and Summer Walters, had joined two dozen other white ministers from across the state in publicly declaring that Christianity "permits no discrimination because of race, color, or creed," but that modest number of signatories left the courageous few so easily targetable that two-thirds of them were driven from their churches. The bottom line in Natchez, as in Birmingham and Laurel, was that local Klansmen proved to be more civically influential than local churchmen. "White southern Protestantism was unable to serve as a unifying bridge between the races," Davis rightly concludes, "and in some cases perpetuated rather than prevented racial violence."

Birmingham was unique only in its notoriety, not in the murderousness of its Klansmen or the pusillanimity of its preachers. And Davis's *Race Against Time* probes more deeply than McWhorter, Marsh, or Bass as to why that was so. What both energized southern Klansmen and immobilized white clergy was a "fundamental fear of cultural commingling" between the two races based upon a deep-seated white loathing of Black culture. "Associating race with culture

made the idea of race more real. The very idea of race took sustenance from those everyday things considered the very stuff of culture." Davis tellingly concludes that, to whites of all classes and in all cities, "segregation was imperative, for in a fully open, commingling world, whites feared that they themselves could descend into blackness." *Race Against Time* does not discuss whether whites' expectation that desegregation would allow aspects of Black culture to be absorbed into white life indeed turned out to be quite correct, although not with all of the doleful effects that whites had imagined. Only a region-wide African-American uprising would show both the Klan and the clergy that racial equality would enrich and liberate the white South, not harm it.

Endnotes

[1.](#) A new volume offers an admirable account of the two constitutional test cases in which the U. S. Supreme Court upheld Title II of the 1964 Act: Richard C. Cortner, *Civil Rights and Public Accommodations: The Heart of Atlanta Motel and McClung Cases* (University Press of Kansas, 2001). *Katzenbach v. McClung*, 379 U.S. 294 (1964), involved a well-known Birmingham restaurant, Ollie's Barbecue, operated by one Ollie McClung, and it continues in business today (albeit in a different location) under the management of Ollie McClung, Jr.

[2.](#) McWhorter on National Public Radio's "Weekend All Things Considered," April 22, 2001. When she learned of Martin Luther King's assassination, "I remember thinking that the problems of the South would be over now . . . I really thought that he had caused all this trouble in the South. So that was-you know, I was pretty old by then."

[3.](#) Bull Connor may not be quite as infamous as we generally assume. See Carol Polsgrove, *Divided Minds: Intellectuals and the Civil Rights Movement*. (W.W. Norton, 2001), p. 174: "When Birmingham Police Chief Bull Durham unleashed his dogs and fire hoses...."

[4.](#) Andrew M. Manis's biography, *A Fire You Can't Put Out: The Civil Rights Life of Birmingham's Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth* (University of Alabama Press, 1999) is a superb portrait which offers much information about the Birmingham movement that McWhorter has been unable to fully incorporate. McWhorter's antipathy towards King resembles the argument of Glenn T. Eskew's *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997), which some historians have found highly unpersuasive. See for example Adam Fairclough's review in *Alabama Review*, July 1999, pp. 229-32, noting that "The most serious weakness of *But for Birmingham* is the author's undisguised hostility towards Martin Luther King, Jr."

[5.](#) Athan G. Theoharis's *J. Edgar Hoover, Sex, and Crime: An Historical Antidote* (Ivan R. Dee, 1995) is an utterly comprehensive rebuttal of such claims by a highly knowledgeable historian. The Hoover-as-cross-dresser image, which is regrettably widespread in popular culture, falsely leads people to think of Hoover as a batty queen rather than a viciously dangerous yet exceptionally skillful ideological bureaucrat.

[6.](#) See for example an article by a family friend who attended law school with Shores's grandson Arthur Shores Lee, who "would mention with pride his grandfather, now crippled with

Alzheimer's." Paul South, "30 Years After Selma, We Must Continue to March Against Hate," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, March 12, 1995, p. B1.

[7.](#) Howell Raines, "The Birmingham Bombing," *New York Times Magazine*, July 24, 1983, pp. 12ff.

[8.](#) Elizabeth H. Cobbs/Petric J. Smith, *Long Time Coming: An Insider's Story of the Birmingham Church Bombing that Rocked the World* (Crane Hill Publishers, 1994). *Long Time Coming* went virtually unreviewed in any print media. As the author's name itself signalled, soon after her 1977 testimony against Chambliss, Cobbs underwent sex change surgery and changed her name to Petric J. Smith. "Pete" Smith died in 1998 at age fifty-seven. See also Frank Sikora, *Until Justice Rolls Down: The Birmingham Church Bombing Case* (University of Alabama Press, 1991), a book lacking both source notes and bibliography, and which spoke erroneously of "Gail Tarrant." Diane McWhorter gave the Sikora book an appropriately dismissive brief notice in the *New York Times Book Review*, September 22, 1991, p. 53.

[9.](#) Cobbs also said of Chambliss that "At least two of my young cousins were victims of his inappropriate fondling, and a male cousin told me, 'I think he has tried to molest every child in the family-boys and girls.'" *Long Time Coming*, p. 54. Interestingly enough, similar allegations have been voiced against Bobby Frank Cherry, Chambliss's still-surviving Klan colleague whom most investigators believe personally planted the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bomb, by both his stepdaughter, Gloria Ladow, and his granddaughter, Teresa Cherry Stacy. See Lee Hancock, "'63 Bombing Suspect Says Kin Are Lying; He Denies Bragging of Role in Death of 4 Girls During Civil Rights Struggle," *Dallas Morning News*, July 3, 1999, p. A1, Pamela Colloff's superb article on Cherry and his family, "The Sins of the Father," *Texas Monthly*, April 2000, pp. 132ff, and Carlton Stowers, "The Good Neighbor," *Dallas Observer*, May 25, 2000. Indicted in May 2000 along with fellow surviving Klansman Tommy Blanton for the Sixteenth Street bombing, Cherry's trial was severed from Blanton's, and postponed indefinitely, on the grounds that Cherry allegedly no longer possesses the mental capacity to assist in his own defense. See Kevin Sack, "A Bitter Alabama Cry: Slow Justice is No Justice," *New York Times*, April 13, 2001, p. A12 and Sack, "Church Bombing Figure Found to Be Incompetent," *New York Times*, July 17, 2001, p. A12. Blanton was found guilty after a remarkably quick trial. See Kevin Sack, "Ex-Klansman is Found Guilty in '63 Bombing," *New York Times*, May 2, 2001, p. A1.

[10.](#) (Princeton University Press, 1997).

[11.](#) Charles Marsh, "Rendezvous With the Wizard," *Oxford American*, October/November 1996, pp. 22-32.

[12.](#) Marsh's treatment of the Klansman includes apparent regard for what he terms "the level of theological realism in Bowers's analysis." *God's Long Summer*, p. 80.

[13.](#) Rick Bragg, "Jurors Convict Former Wizard in Klan Murder," *New York Times*, August 22, 1998, p. A1.

[14.](#) In 1965 in Alabama alone, two visiting white clergymen, Episcopalian Jonathan M. Daniels and Unitarian James J. Reeb, were killed by white racist assailants. See Charles W. Eagles's excellent *Outside Agitator: Jon Daniels and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama* (University of North Carolina Press, 1993), and Duncan Howlett, *No Greater Love: The James Reeb Story* (Harper & Row, 1966).

[15.](#) "Meaningful change" in Birmingham, Bass contends, "occurred only at a gradual and moderate pace," and "inevitably, it was [local] citizens, both black and white, and not Martin Luther King and the SCLC [King's organization], that brought about the real transformation of the city." *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, p. 226.

[16.](#) See John Dittmer's excellent *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (University of Illinois Press, 1994), pp. 353-62.