

ter what, at what costs and consequences academically, socially, and nationally. These are timeless questions students still wrestle with today.

In conclusion, *The Last Negroes at Harvard* is not a treatise on teaching or an empirical study of student experience using replicable research methods and theoretically grounded methodologies. It is instead an intricately researched memoir that evolved from the fateful arrival of the *Harvard Magazine* in the right mailbox at the right moment and that carries important lessons for colleges and universities today. Garrett and Ellsworth plainly illustrate that the privilege of attending Harvard has never been without tarnish and is always in need of polish. That is certainly an attribute Harvard shares with other institutions. The authors bring us back to the vocabulary of postsecondary education and to thinking about the complexity of factors that students weigh when making important decisions—from those factors that we often measure through their observable outcomes (e.g., career outcomes, grades, involvement in student organizations), as well as the less visible decisions (e.g., incorporating home and self into college). Yet, this memoir is a historical retelling with autoethnographic inflections—not a research project with controls, covariates, or analysis for qualitative data saturation and nodes. It resonates across time and student experiences partly *because* this is Garrett's story—told with care and attention to details. Its singularity of focus on Garrett and his classmates means the book does not tell a universal tale, but it does illustrate some universal themes with its singular retelling.

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THE YOUNG CRUSADERS: THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS WHO GALVANIZED THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

by V. P. Franklin

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Months before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus, fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin was arrested for committing the same act in the same city. Colvin explained that her deci-

sion to remain seated was the result of her being angry, “like any teenager might be” (p. 39). She had never forgotten the story of Jeremiah Reeves, a Black teen who had attended her high school and was arrested and electrocuted by the state after being accused of rape by a white woman. Colvin’s anger—and the anger of other Black teenagers across the country—stemmed from the daily indignities of being Black under Jim Crow, including watching their peers be mistreated and murdered by the racist justice system. Colvin’s story is one of many in V. P. Franklin’s *The Young Crusaders*, a book that recounts the often-overlooked history of children’s and teenagers’ contributions to the civil rights movement. Not just the domain of adults and college students, civil rights organizing has always involved youth leading and attending boycotts, marches, sit-ins, protests, and riots, and also serving jail time, for various causes, including anti-lynching laws, educational justice, and fair employment.

The Young Crusaders is organized chronologically, beginning with youth organizing in the 1930s and 1940s, before *Brown v. Board* (1954), and ending with calls for Black Power in the late 1960s. Part 1 focuses on youth activism before the pivotal March on Washington in 1963. In chapter 1, Franklin describes how young people during the 1930s and 1940s largely joined offshoots of adult organizations, such as the NAACP Youth Councils or the youth division of the National Negro Congress. Connections to adult institutions provided youth activists with access to resources like lawyers as well as financial, social, and political support. However, even when affiliated with an adult organization, young people often led bold actions without adult oversight. For example, in 1951 in Prince Edward County, Virginia, sixteen-year-old Barbara Jones led her high school in a walkout over the poor quality of their segregated schools. Jones explained that “if we had asked for adult help before taking the first step, we would have been turned down” (p. 34). Even before the most active years of the civil rights movement, teenagers were leading adults past their comfort zones in expressing demands for radical change.

Chapter 2 highlights the children at the frontline of school desegregation as plaintiffs in court battles and as the first Black children to integrate all-white schools. In describing these children as “young freedom fighters” (p. 42), Franklin makes a case that these students are as much activists as those students who engaged in mass direct actions. The chapter covers well-known cases, such as the Little Rock Nine, teens who endured constant harassment from white students and the community when they integrated Central High School in Arkansas in 1957. But a strength of *The Young Crusaders* is the attention it pays to cases that have eluded popular memory, such as the Milford Ten of Delaware, Black students who enrolled in all-white schools following *Brown* in 1954 but who were transferred out by the school board after white parents affiliated with the National Association for the Advancement of White People withdrew their children from school in protest.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on student campaigns throughout the South. One

“long hot summers” of the mid-1960s, taking care to explain the historical and social contexts of these expressions of Black youths’ anger. Even in the present, Black anger as a response to the murder of Black children and adults at the hands of the police is often labeled a “riot” in order to malign and control its expression. Franklin’s work helps us recognize that this practice has a long history and challenges us to look beyond the label to the real fear, frustration, and fury expressed by the acts of destruction.

In the Epilogue, Franklin makes clear that though the book focuses on Black youth activists, the legacy and lessons of this history apply to youth activism regardless of race, cause, or time period. He gives an overview of youth activism for progressive causes since the 1970s—from the LGBTQ+ activists of Southerners on New Ground (SONG) in the 1990s, to the March for Our Lives response to gun violence since 2018, to the contemporary reparatory justice movement. Though I appreciate that this book contains many stories diverse in age, region, ideology, and cause, at times the volume of cases made the reading experience feel somewhat scattered. Readers unfamiliar with this history would benefit from more interpretation from Franklin about what patterns emerge from collecting these stories and what can be learned from those patterns to inform our work as historians or activists. Rather than linger on a particular story or group of stories to offer analysis, the volume of stories demands that Franklin move onto the next state, year, and historical actor. For example, in the last chapter of the book, students of color other than Black youth begin to join in activism with demands for culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy. Franklin does not provide context for when and why student activism in the late 1960s became multiracial, which left that section of the book feeling thin. Finally, although I appreciated the Epilogue’s shout-out to the valuable progressive work of contemporary youth activists, the end of the book felt abrupt without a traditional concluding chapter in which the author summarizes his work and shares the main takeaways for the reader.

Overall, however, Franklin’s *The Young Crusaders* is an important new perspective on a history many readers think they know. The archive privileges the history of adults, especially those with the resources to preserve their own stories, so this collection of stories directly from those who were children and teenagers in the movement is invaluable. Franklin challenges readers to see the ways youth pushed the movement forward by experimenting with new direct-action techniques like lunch counter sit-ins or putting their lives and bodies on the line by boycotting school. This history also highlights the unique political and social vulnerabilities of young people, particularly young children, and the costs associated with spending so much of one’s childhood fighting for dignity. Densely packed with stories both familiar and not, *The Young Crusaders* is a valuable resource for historians, lay readers, and youth activists looking for inspiration from the past on how to make change.

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