



Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America

By Gilbert King

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*** Winner of the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction**

*** Nominated for a 2013 Edgar Award**

*** Book of the Year (Non-fiction, 2012) *The Boston Globe*, *Christian Science Monitor***

In 1949, Florida's orange industry was booming, and citrus barons got rich on the backs of cheap Jim Crow labor. To maintain order and profits, they turned to Willis V. McCall, a violent sheriff who ruled Lake County with murderous resolve. When a white seventeen-year-old Groveland girl cried rape, McCall was fast on the trail of four young blacks who dared to envision a future for themselves beyond the citrus groves. By day's end, the Ku Klux Klan had rolled into town, burning the homes of blacks to the ground and chasing hundreds into the swamps, hell-bent on lynching the young men who came to be known as "the Groveland Boys."

And so began the chain of events that would bring Thurgood Marshall, the man known as "Mr. Civil Rights," and the most important American lawyer of the twentieth century, into the deadly fray. Associates thought it was suicidal for him to wade into the "Florida Terror" at a time when he was irreplaceable to the burgeoning civil rights movement, but the lawyer would not shrink from the fight--not after the Klan had murdered one of Marshall's NAACP associates involved with the case and Marshall had endured continual threats that he would be next.

Drawing on a wealth of never-before-published material, including the FBI's unredacted Groveland case files, as well as unprecedented access to the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund files, King shines new light on this remarkable civil rights crusader, setting his rich and driving narrative against the heroic backdrop of a case that U.S. Supreme Court justice Robert Jackson decried as "one of the best examples of one of the worst menaces to American justice."

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Gilbert King Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"Must-read, cannot-put-down history." (**New York Times**)

"Superb." (*Junot Diaz, author of **This Is How You Lose Her***)

"A powerful and well-told drama of Southern injustice." (*The Chicago Tribune*)

"*Devil in the Grove* is a compelling look at the case that forged Thurgood Marshall's perception of himself as a crusader for civil rights. . . . King's style [is] at once suspenseful and historically meticulous" (*Christian Science Monitor*)

"Recreates an important yet overlooked moment in American history with a chilling, atmospheric narrative that reads more like a Southern Gothic novel than a work of history." (*Salon*)

"A taut, intensely readable narrative." (*Boston Globe*)

"The story's drama and pathos make it a page-turner, but King's attention to detail, fresh material, and evenhanded treatment of the villains make it a worthy contribution to the history of the period, while offering valuable insight into Marshall's work and life." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"A thoroughgoing study of one of the most important civil-rights cases argued by Thurgood Marshall in dismantling Jim Crow strictures. . . . Deeply researched and superbly composed." (*Kirkus Reviews* (*starred review*))

"A compelling chronicle." (*Booklist*)

"Gripping. . . . Lively and multidimensional." (*Dallas Morning News*)

"The tragic Groveland saga -- with its Faulknerian echoes of racial injustice spinning around an accusation of rape -- comes astonishingly alive in Gilbert King's narrative. It is both heartbreaking and unforgettable." (*Wil Haygood, author of **King of the Cats: The Life and Times of Adam Clayton Powell Jr.***)

"In the terrifying story of the Groveland boys Gilbert King recreates an extraordinary moment in America's long, hard struggle for racial justice. *Devil in the Grove* is a harrowing, haunting, utterly mesmerizing book." (*Kevin Boyle, author of **Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age***)

"Gilbert King's gut-wrenching, and captivating, narrative is civil rights literature at its best--meticulously researched, brilliantly written, and singularly focused on equal justice for all." (*Michael G. Long, author of **Marshalling Justice: The Early Civil Rights Letters of Thurgood Marshall***)

"This is a haunting and compelling story, one of many in the campaign for racial justice. . . . This book is important because it is disturbing. And in that regard we cannot walk away from the story it tells." (*Phyllis Vine, author of **One Man's Castle***)

“Gilbert King has done a remarkable job of weaving together history, sociology, law and detective work of his own, to reveal facts that even I, one of the defense counsel in the case, had not been aware of until now.” (*Jack Greenberg, Alphonse Fletcher Professor of Law, Columbia University, former Director-Counsel, NAACP Legal Defense Fund.*)

“[An] excellent book on a little known and horrifying incident in which four young black men were rounded up and accused of raping a white woman, readers cannot help but be awed by the bravery of those who took a stand in the late 1940s and early 1950s.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

“Its rich case history captures the beginning of the end of the most extreme forms of racism. . . . Very few books combine this depth of research and narrative power about a subject of such pivotal significance.” (*Ira Katznelson, author of When Affirmative Action Was White and a former president of the American Political Science Association*)

From the Back Cover

***Devil in the Grove* is the winner of the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction.**

Arguably the most important American lawyer of the twentieth century, Thurgood Marshall was on the verge of bringing the landmark suit *Brown v. Board of Education* before the U.S. Supreme Court when he became embroiled in a case that threatened to change the course of the civil rights movement and cost him his life.

In 1949, Florida's orange industry was booming, and citrus barons got rich on the backs of cheap Jim Crow labor with the help of Sheriff Willis V. McCall, who ruled Lake County with murderous resolve. When a white seventeen-year-old girl cried rape, McCall pursued four young blacks who dared envision a future for themselves beyond the groves. The Ku Klux Klan joined the hunt, hell-bent on lynching the men who came to be known as "the Groveland Boys."

Associates thought it was suicidal for Marshall to wade into the "Florida Terror," but the young lawyer would not shrink from the fight despite continuous death threats against him.

Drawing on a wealth of never-before-published material, including the FBI's unredacted Groveland case files, as well as unprecedented access to the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund files, Gilbert King shines new light on this remarkable civil rights crusader.

About the Author

Gilbert King has written about U.S. Supreme Court history for the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, and is a featured contributor to *Smithsonian* magazine's history blog, *Past Imperfect*. He is the author of *The Execution of Willie Francis: Race, Murder, and the Search for Justice in the American South*. He lives in New York City with his wife and two daughters.

Users Review

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Ronald Johnson:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try thing that really

opposite from that. One activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America, you are able to enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its called reading friends.

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Antonio Ritchie:

As we know that book is vital thing to add our expertise for everything. By a publication we can know everything we would like. A book is a list of written, printed, illustrated as well as blank sheet. Every year has been exactly added. This guide Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America was filled concerning science. Spend your time to add your knowledge about your science competence. Some people has various feel when they reading a new book. If you know how big good thing about a book, you can sense enjoy to read a e-book. In the modern era like now, many ways to get book that you just wanted.

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