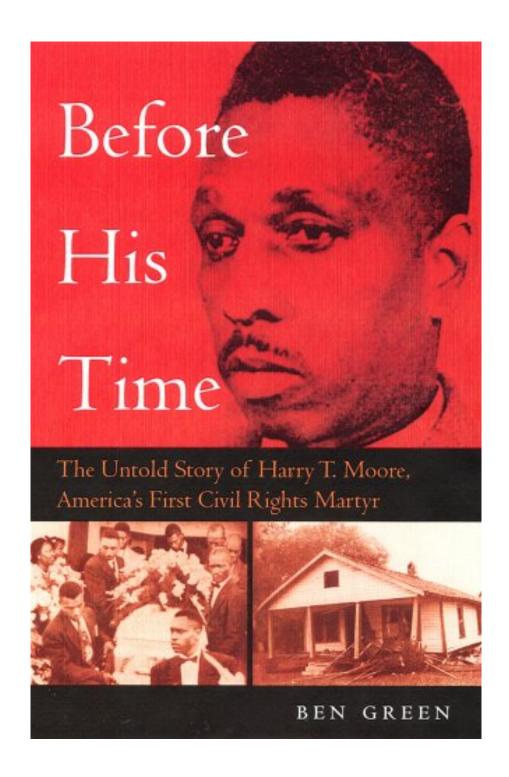


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In Jim Crow Florida, a young black man's courageous fight to obtain equal rights for blacks ends in a personal tragedy that remains unsolved to this day. This is his story. Before Martin Luther King Jr. began to preach from his pulpit in Montgomery, before the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision, and before Rosa Parks' famous bus ride, a man named Harry T. Moore toiled in Jim Crow Florida on behalf of the NAACP and the Progressive Voters' League. For seventeen years, in an era of official indifference and outright hostility, the soft-spoken but resolute Moore traveled the back roads of the state on a mission to educate, evangelize, and organize. On Christmas night in 1951, in Mims, Florida, a bomb placed under his bed ended Harry Moore's life. His wife, Harriette, died of her wounds a week later. Although Florida's governor reopened the case in 1991, no one was ever convicted of this crime. Using previously unavailable FBI files, Green introduces his readers to the good and the bad, the villainous and the virtuous, in Jim Crow Florida. In doing so, he offers a poignant and gripping memorial to the pioneering work of Harry T. Moore, one of the earliest martyrs of the modern civil rights movement.

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0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A necessary and wonderful book By Richard B. Downing I cannot overstate my admiration for Ben Green's Before His Time. As I read I felt I was traveling the roads with Harry Moore, fighting the fight with him (I should be so brave). I am fairly well read (PhD, English Lit) and have enjoyed many books, but very few have moved me as much Green's has. You need to know Harry T. Moore. Ben Green has given you the chance. Take it.

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

The story of a Civil Rights Pioneer

By J. Liesenfelt

Having moved to Brevard County in 1991, just when the Harry T. Moore murder case was back in the news, and the fact that I pass the Moore Justice Center every day, I was anxious to learn about Harry T. Moore and happily picked up a copy of this book.

Harry T. Moore and his wife Harriette were murdered on Christmas Day, 1951 when a bomb exploded beneath their bedroom at their home in Mims, Florida. At the time of his murder, Harry Moore was the Florida coordinator for the NAACP and a founder of the Progressive Voter's League. As the title of book implies, Harry Moore was before his time, including his murder. Remember this happen before Rosa Parks, before Medgar Evers, before Dr. Martin Luther King and before Brown vs. Board of Education. The murderer of the Moores has never been found.

Green traces the life of Harry Moore from childhood to teaching to his efforts in helping to lead the Civil Rights movement in Florida. Along the way Harry Moore instructed his students how to use the ballot, before African-Americans could vote and Harry Moore's efforts in the investigations of violence (re: lynching) and murders of African Americans in Florida.

The most famous case that Harry Moore investigated was the Groveland Incident. The case involved the conviction of three African-Americans in the rape of a 17-year-old woman and the subsequent killing of two of the suspects by the Sheriff of Lake County Florida, Willis McCall, in an escape attempt. All the while, Harry Moore was fighting with the NAACP national organization to retained his position in the organization. Green's biography of Harry Moore is sparse, though a lot of it could be contributed to lack of documents related to Harry Moore's life. I felt the book would have been more complete with more details on Harry Moore's internal fight with the NAACP national office and why Harry Moore's place in the Civil Rights movement has been lost.

At the end of the book, Green spends too much time tracing down former Klan members who claimed they knew who murdered Harry Moore. However, all these statements were dead ends. Ben Green's book is a good starting point to learn about a true Civil Rights pioneer.

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Green captures time, place, and mood

By A Customer

As a Florida native, I feel Green well captured Harry Moore's Florida. Before His Time is educational, enteraining, and most importantly disturbing. We need to know in detail not only what Moore did but what ws done to Moore - and why. Green tells us. Despite the many horrors depicted in the book - and there are many - the book is ultimately life affirming: it is good to know that there were (are?) some Harry T. Moore's who have walked among us. Bravo, Ben Green.

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