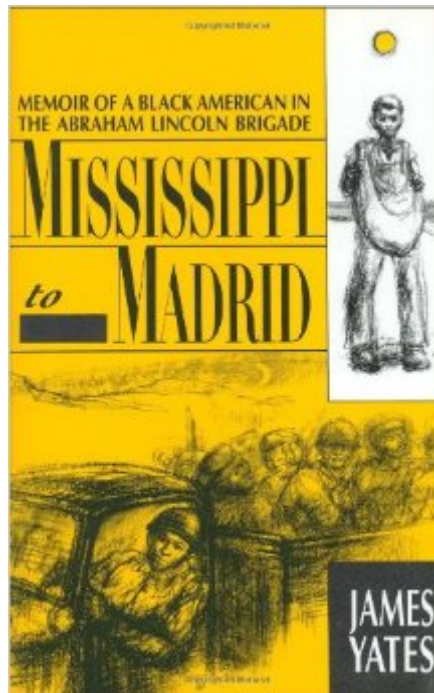


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# Mississippi To Madrid: Memoir Of A Black American In The Abraham Lincoln Brigade



## Synopsis

From his birth to a share cropper family in the cotton fields of Mississippi to the unrest in Chicago and New York during the depression, James Yates's experience with labor protest and union organizing shaped his vision of freedom and led to his decision to fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War. Approximately 100 Blacks were among the 3,200 volunteers from the US that formed the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the first non-Jim Crow military organization in US history. Yates describes Oliver Law, the first Black commander of a US military unit; Paul Robeson; Langston Hughes, who Yates drove to the front; and nurse Salaria Key O'Reilly. Yates makes cogent connections between fascism and racism. James Yates returned to the US after having been wounded in the Spanish Civil War. He will be remembered for his active role in the struggle for freedom. James Yates died in January, 1994. The Jimmy Yates Award is presented annually to a short story writer by the Molasses Pond Writers Workshop in Franklin, Maine. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I just finished this book and I could barely put it down. It is written in a simple straight forward artless style. This fits the subject well. I almost find the first half of the book more interesting than the second. The first half ends with his volunteering for Spain, but the book begins with his growing up in Mississippi. He escapes from Mississippi when he was 16 and it is as much an escape as any jail break. The book details how difficult it was after a childhood spent in the kind of brutally oppressive

society that was the South to even think of living like a free man. He describes how he was too frightened to sit next to a white woman on a bus when he first got to Chicago, for instance. I would have liked more detail about his development as a radical and movement person, but that part doesn't seem to interest him. He is more interested in actions than in his thoughts. Certainly, the book moves and holds your attention. The one thing that comes through is that he is the type of person who is able to understand that what his people were fighting in the U.S. was the same thing the Republicans were fighting in Spain. He is definitely one of those people who make you blink your eyes in amazement at what he was able to accomplish.

James Yates went from Jim Crow poverty in the south to Herbert Hoover poverty in the north. He chose another path. He ended up in Spain fighting for the Republican government there. Yates' story is an important one to tell. Well written and will be useful for people of all colors in the US to understand what commitment to freedom really means.

History often never shared. So glad to be an adult to read what I want to. Always heard something about guys like this. They did a good deed based upon what they believed in. Not always the most organized and equipped units. Clearly, this should another example where leadership's passions don't always mean great outcomes. Training. Practice. Education. Resources. Logistics. Win every war ... in the end. A commoner's thoughts.

An excellent book, which pays attention to an episode in history, that should not be forgotten. In simple words James Yates makes clear the relationship between his struggle for civil rights in the US and his later contribution to the International Brigades in Spain. Also his courage to go on with his activities after the Worldwar, as his pictures show, is impressive...

This is an important book since the role African Americans and women play in world events is often ignored or minimized. Mr. Yates's first person account of Black men and women's contribution to Spain's Civil War is heartfelt and provides a small snapshot of events that transpired in 1937. Ultimately, the book raises more issues than it resolves: more needs to be known about Langston Hughes and Richard Wright in Spain during this period and a critical study of social activist Louise Thompson is long overdue. Yet *Mississippi to Madrid*, told in a simple, straight forward style, is a poignant memoir chronicling an important historic event and makes a compelling case for more scholarship on African Americans who served in the Lincoln Brigade.

The book came before date and it was really good quality!! I would buy from this person again.

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