



An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964

By Todd S. Purdum

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum

A top Washington journalist recounts the dramatic political battle to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the law that created modern America, on the fiftieth anniversary of its passage

It was a turbulent time in America?a time of sit-ins, freedom rides, a March on Washington and a governor standing in the schoolhouse door?when John F. Kennedy sent Congress a bill to bar racial discrimination in employment, education, and public accommodations. Countless civil rights measures had died on Capitol Hill in the past. But this one was different because, as one influential senator put it, it was "an idea whose time has come."

In a powerful narrative layered with revealing detail, Todd S. Purdum tells the story of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, recreating the legislative maneuvering and the larger-than-life characters who made its passage possible. From the Kennedy brothers to Lyndon Johnson, from Martin Luther King Jr. to Hubert Humphrey and Everett Dirksen, Purdum shows how these all-too-human figures managed, in just over a year, to create a bill that prompted the longest filibuster in the history of the U.S. Senate yet was ultimately adopted with overwhelming bipartisan support. He evokes the high purpose and low dealings that marked the creation of this monumental law, drawing on extensive archival research and dozens of new interviews that bring to life this signal achievement in American history.

Often hailed as the most important law of the past century, the Civil Rights Act stands as a lesson for our own troubled times about what is possible when patience, bipartisanship, and decency rule the day.



[Download An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)

 [**Read Online**](#) An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two ...pdf

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964

By Todd S. Purdum

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum

A top Washington journalist recounts the dramatic political battle to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the law that created modern America, on the fiftieth anniversary of its passage

It was a turbulent time in America?a time of sit-ins, freedom rides, a March on Washington and a governor standing in the schoolhouse door?when John F. Kennedy sent Congress a bill to bar racial discrimination in employment, education, and public accommodations. Countless civil rights measures had died on Capitol Hill in the past. But this one was different because, as one influential senator put it, it was "an idea whose time has come."

In a powerful narrative layered with revealing detail, Todd S. Purdum tells the story of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, recreating the legislative maneuvering and the larger-than-life characters who made its passage possible. From the Kennedy brothers to Lyndon Johnson, from Martin Luther King Jr. to Hubert Humphrey and Everett Dirksen, Purdum shows how these all-too-human figures managed, in just over a year, to create a bill that prompted the longest filibuster in the history of the U.S. Senate yet was ultimately adopted with overwhelming bipartisan support. He evokes the high purpose and low dealings that marked the creation of this monumental law, drawing on extensive archival research and dozens of new interviews that bring to life this signal achievement in American history.

Often hailed as the most important law of the past century, the Civil Rights Act stands as a lesson for our own troubled times about what is possible when patience, bipartisanship, and decency rule the day.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #756923 in Books
- Published on: 2014-04-01
- Released on: 2014-04-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 241.30" h x 34.42" w x 6.31" l, 1.47 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 416 pages



[Download An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two P ...pdf](#)



[Read Online An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum

Editorial Review

From Booklist

As we approach the golden anniversary of this landmark equal-rights and public-accommodations bill, veteran journalist Purdum painstakingly details how its passage came about. In short, not easily. Contributing editor of *Vanity Fair* and former White House correspondent for the *New York Times*, Purdum is well qualified to retell this epic from a fresh angle. The book is less for the specialist than for an audience that may be stimulated by anniversary-related publicity (or by recent congressional gridlock) to learn more. The Kennedy brothers' initial resistance to aggressive civil rights legislation may surprise some readers. Lyndon Johnson's immediate commitment to the cause, after assuming the presidency following JFK's assassination, shouldn't—others have established this convincingly. The diligent efforts of Senators Everett Dirksen and Hubert Humphrey are recalled, but Purdum also emphasizes the crucial role played by Congressman William McCulloch (Republican). It is instructive to read about the hard work, passion, intense political negotiation, and collegial respect that went into the enactment of this historic legislation 50 years ago. --Mark Levine

Review

“[A] first-rate narrative ... adding useful detail to previous accounts ... Authoritative.” ?*The Wall Street Journal*

“Today's reader will be startled, if not astonished, by how the bill made its way through Congress.” ?*The Washington Post*

“Purdum's version of this story is excellent.... An astute, well-paced, and highly readable play-by-play of the bill's journey to become a law.” ?*The Atlantic*

“A lively, informative account of the story behind the Civil Rights Act of 1964.... Purdum conveys a palpable sense of excitement akin to that created by Steven Spielberg in his recent film ‘Lincoln’ in describing how the bill's backers finally broke the longest filibuster in Senate history.” ?*The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland)

“[A] well-crafted narrative ... The author's assessment of the two presidents [JFK and LBJ] is insightful and nuanced.” ?*The Miami Herald*

“When we think back on the Civil Rights Act we naturally think of the role played by big figures who are familiar to us--such as Lyndon Johnson, Everett Dirksen, Martin Luther King. But one of the great virtues of *An Idea Whose Time Has Come* is the way it brings some lesser-known people to the fore.” ?*Vanity Fair*

“An amazingly important book.” ?*Rev. Al Sharpton, Morning Joe*

“[A] valuable new book.” ?*E.J. Dionne, The Washington Post*

“A fascinating, blow by blow account.” ?*All Things Considered, NPR*

“The book reminds the nation that even the best-intentioned leaders remain flawed, because they are still human.” ?*U.S. News & World Report*

“[A] wonderful new history of the passage of the Civil Rights Act.” ?*John Dickerson, CBSNews.com*

“[A] great book ... recounting the twists and turns that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act.... Todd Purdum's *An Idea Whose Time Has Come* ... [reads] today like breakneck drama ... [and describes] in detail a time when the rules of the political road included bipartisanship, clever backroom dealing, and at the end of the day, moral suasion.” ?*Gwen Ifill, Gwen's Take, PBS.org*

“[A] marvelous book.” ?*The Diane Rehm Show, NPR*

“One of the books of the year.” ?*Mike Allen's Playbook, Politico*

“Purdum, a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, skillfully recalls these men and their roles through the three sections of his history, which trace the bill through the administration to the House and finally the Senate.” ?*The Boston Globe*

“Purdum's book [is] more necessary now than ever.... Purdum's book is especially good at recounting how the struggle in the streets ... galvanized politicians to push the bill past its last hurdles.... Purdum's focus on each hard-won step in Congress keeps the story real and true, making the book an excellent resource on the legislation that, as the author says, ‘created the modern world.’” ?*Washingtonian*

“Todd S. Purdum's brisk ... chronicle of [the Civil Rights Act of 1964's] turbulent birth offers a salutary reminder that historic legislation is not easily achieved...As Purdum's book vividly demonstrates, politics is a tricky, unpredictable, and occasionally dirty business.” ?*The Daily Beast*

“[Purdum] skillfully retraces the act through a legislative minefield.... Purdum composes portraits of civil rights icons including Martin Luther King Jr....but his most important contribution is reintroducing readers to largely forgotten heroes.... Readers who enjoy modern American historical narratives will be gripped by this title that is an excellent companion to Gary May's *Bending Toward Justice*.” ?*Library Journal (starred review)*

“A riveting account of the hard-fought passage of 'the most important laws of the twentieth century.'...Insightful and wholly mindful of the calculations that JFK and LBJ made at every step...A must-read.” ?*Kirkus Reviews*

“An Idea Whose Time Has Come is brilliantly rendered and emotionally powerful – a riveting account of one of the most dramatic and significant moments in American history. The story Todd Purdum tells is absolutely mesmerizing.” ?*Doris Kearns Goodwin*

“Todd Purdum's history of the 1964 Civil Rights Act is a masterful reconstruction of a seminal American event. He brilliantly captures the actors and drama that made this transformation in the country's social relations a reality. Everyone interested in contemporary America will want to read this book.” ?*Robert Dallek*

“Todd Purdum brings alive Congress's great historic achievement: the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The heroes are J.F.K. and L.B.J., but also those Midwest Republicans who stayed true to Lincoln. Those are the quietly eloquent stories here, the profiles in decency and guts, where members of Congress honored values greater than current popularity. *An Idea Whose Time Has Come* shows once again that the real action in American politics takes place in the back room – and in that quieter place: the beating hearts of the decent and courageous.” ?*Chris Matthews*

“In Todd Purdum's gripping account of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we can see, from nearly

every angle, how the federal government began making good on the 'promissory note' of equal rights that Dr. King had invoked at the March on Washington. Purdum provides both an invaluable education in the political process and a keen understanding of how personalities (the famous and the unsung) and the best of both parties overcame every roadblock to 'make real the promises of democracy,' as Dr. King had challenged." ?*Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*

"The story behind the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Bill of 1964 is one that all Americans should know. An Idea Whose Time Has Come, Todd Purdum's insightful and elegantly written narrative, brings this history to life with deft portraits of the people who made the law and those who fought against it. It is a must read for all who are interested in the transformative power of the law and government to make positive changes in the lives of citizens." ?*Annette Gordon-Reed*

"Todd Purdum's remarkable An Idea Whose Time Has Come brings back to life the historic fight waged on behalf of civil rights by JFK and LBJ. Purdum is a superb writer, never dull, and his grasp of the Sixties milieu is foolproof. This is a marvelous and much needed book of lasting importance." ?*Douglas Brinkley*

"Todd Purdum's fascinating behind-the-scenes account of the birth of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a timely and hopeful reminder that sometimes the good guys do win, even in Washington." ?*Jeffrey Toobin*

"As we approach the golden anniversary of this landmark equal-rights and public-accommodations bill, veteran journalist Purdum painstakingly details how its passage came about. In short, not easily.... It is instructive to read about the hard work, passion, intense political negotiation, and collegial respect that went into the enactment of this historic legislation 50 years ago." ?*Booklist*

"Purdum's keen eye for the wide cast of Capitol Hill characters keeps the story lively." ?*Publishers Weekly*

About the Author

Todd S. Purdum is a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair* and senior writer at *Politico*. He previously spent more than twenty years at *The New York Times*, where he served as diplomatic correspondent, White House correspondent, and Los Angeles bureau chief. A graduate of Princeton University, he lives in Washington, D.C., with his wife, Dee Dee Myers, the political commentator and former White House press secretary, and their two children.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Hector Naranjo:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important take action, like looking for your favorite e-book and reading a reserve. Beside you can solve your short lived problem; you can add your knowledge by the book entitled An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Try to the actual book An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as your pal. It means that it can being your friend when you really feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than previously. Yeah, it is very fortuned for yourself. The book makes you much more confidence because you can know almost everything by the book. So , we need to make new experience along with knowledge with this book.

Hazel Mishler:

Do you one of people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 book is readable through you who hate those straight word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable reading through experience without leaving also decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer associated with An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 content conveys the idea easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different in the form of it. So , do you even now thinking An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

Carol Berry:

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 can be one of your basic books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this e-book has good vocabulary that could increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to set every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 however doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one of it. This great information could drawn you into completely new stage of crucial imagining.

Todd Porter:

This An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is great book for you because the content which is full of information for you who else always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it information accurately using great arrange word or we can say no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole data in it. Doesn't mean it only provides straight forward sentences but tricky core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in your hand like having the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no e-book that offer you world with ten or fifteen moment right but this e-book already do that. So , this is good reading book. Hey there Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt this?

Download and Read Online An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum #2V89XYMPSAN

Read An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum for online ebook

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum books to read online.

Online An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum ebook PDF download

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum Doc

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum MobiPocket

An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum EPub

2V89XYMPSAN: An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 By Todd S. Purdum