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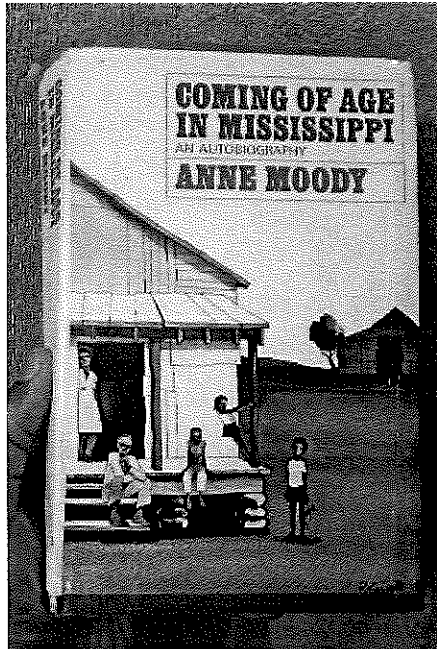
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On This Day (December 3): Anne Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi* is Published

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#AnneMoody
#ComingOfAgeinMississippi



On Dec. 3, 1968, The Dial Press of New York published *Coming of Age in Mississippi* by Anne Moody. According to her sister, Frances Jefferson, and Random House, the "hardback edition rolled off the press" and was greeted with wide acclaim, making Anne an international star.

Anne's publisher described the book as having "unforgettable power and honesty." Her publisher, who compared her book to other great titles, also wrote: "Here, in the tradition of *Manchild in the Promised Land* and *Down These Mean Streets*, is an important testimony to the black experience in America -- this time from the point of view of a remarkable young girl."

The early edition of the book featured an illustration on the front cover that depicted Anne's home on "Mr. Carter's plantation" (actual name was Miller's plantation) in Centreville, Miss. The

illustration included drawings of Anne and her siblings, Adline and Fred Jr., and their parents, Fred Sr. and Too Sweet. Fred Sr. was shown sitting on the steps of the old house as Too Sweet stood in the doorway on the front porch.

The back cover of the book featured a photo of Anne that was taken by her husband, Austin Straus.

Anne, who was born in 1940, was 28 when the book came out. She had written it at the urging of baseball star Jackie Robinson, who suggested her story needed to be told. Robinson had heard her speak in 1964 at the United Auto Workers (UAW) convention in Atlantic City. He encouraged her to write her story and publish it in a book.

For 50 years now, the book has remained a perennial seller, being read by audiences throughout the United States, and as far away as Japan and parts of Europe. It has been required reading in many schools across the country. It has also been translated into several languages.

Newspapers welcomed Anne's book with rave reviews. Consider, for example, the following excerpts:

The most moving and honest account of what life is like for the Negro in Mississippi as one is apt to find ... a far better story (and certainly far better told) than most fiction being published today ... One of the most (possibly the most) engrossing, sensitive, beautiful books of nonfiction which has been published for years and years." – ***San Francisco Sun-Reporter***

"Simply, one of the best ... For those readers who still persist in the myth that growing up black in the South is little different from growing up white, this book should prove a shattering experience Anne Moody's autobiography is an eloquent, moving testimonial to her courage; indeed, to the courage of all the young who storm the preserves of bigotry.... After reading this remarkable book, we know that this is the way it is." – ***Chicago Tribune***

In a 2015 article about Anne, Emily Langer of the *Washington Post*, wrote: "Nearly half a century after its publication, Ms. Moody's 1968 autobiography remains a noted volume in the library of first-person accounts describing the inequality suffered by African Americans of her era."

Anne spent her final years near her home in southwest Mississippi. She died in 2015 at the age of 74. Her family said she had been suffering from dementia.

For more information:

See the **Anne Moody page** here: <https://roscoereporting.blogspot.com/p/anne-moody.html>

Questions about the Anne Moody History Project may be directed to Roscoe Barnes III Ph.D. via email at doctorbarnes3@gmail.com or roscoebarnes3@yahoo.com For updates on Anne Moody history and the on-going work of this community service project, simply follow this blog or follow AMHP on Twitter (@AnneMoodyHP). **#ComingOfAgeinMississippi**

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