

Samuel Freedman teaches journalism at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. He is the author of 10 nonfiction books and runs a renowned book-writing seminar each spring

Freedman was a staff reporter for *The New York Times* from 1981 through 1987. From 2004 through 2008, he wrote the paper's "On Education" column, winning first prize in the Education Writers Association's annual competition in 2005. From 2006 through 2016, Freedman wrote the "On Religion" column, receiving the Goldziher Prize for Journalists in 2017 for a series of columns about Muslim-Americans that had been published over the

Freedman has contributed to numerous other publications and websites, including *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Beast*, *New York*, *Rolling Stone*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Buzzfeed*, *Salon*, *Slate*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Tablet*, *The Forward*, *Ha'aretz*, *The Undeclared*, *The Root*, and *BeliefNet*.

Freedman was named the nation's outstanding journalism educator in 1997 by the Society of Professional Journalists. In 2012, he received Columbia University's coveted Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching. Freedman's class in book-writing has developed more than 100 authors, editors, and agents, and it has been featured in *Publishers Weekly* and the *Christian Science Monitor*. He is a board member of the J. Anthony Lukas Book Awards and member of the Journalism Advisory Council of Religion News Service.

From one of the country's most distinguished journalists, a revisionist and riveting look at the American politician whom history has judged a loser, yet who played a key part in the greatest social movement of the 20th century.

"Riveting...A superbly written tale of moral and political courage for present-day readers who find themselves in similarly dark times." -*The New York Times*

During one sweltering week in July 1948, the Democratic Party gathered in Philadelphia for its national convention. The most pressing and controversial issue facing the delegates was not whom to nominate for president -the incumbent, Harry Truman, was the presumptive candidate -but whether the Democrats would finally embrace the cause of civil rights and embed it in their official platform. Even under Franklin Roosevelt, the party had dodged the issue in order to keep a bloc of Southern segregationists-the so-called Dixiecrats-in the New Deal coalition.

On the convention's final day, Hubert Humphrey, just 37 and the relatively obscure mayor of the mid-sized city of Minneapolis, ascended the podium. Defying Truman's own desire to occupy the middle ground, Humphrey urged the delegates to "get out of the shadow of state's rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights." Humphrey's speech put everything on the line, rhetorically and politically, to move the party, and the country, forward.

To the surprise of many, including Humphrey himself, the delegates voted to adopt a

meaningful civil-rights plank. With no choice but to run on it, Truman seized the opportunity it offered, desegregating the armed forces and in November upsetting the frontrunner Thomas Dewey, a victory due in part to an unprecedented surge of Black voters.

The outcome of that week in July 1948-which marks its 75th anniversary as this book is published-shapes American politics to this day. And it was in turn shaped by Humphrey. His journey to that pivotal speech runs from a remote, all-white hamlet in South Dakota to the mayoralty of Minneapolis as he tackles its notorious racism and anti-Semitism to his role as a national champion of multiracial democracy. His allies in that struggle include a Black newspaper publisher, a Jewish attorney, and a professor who had fled Nazi Germany. And his adversaries are the white supremacists, Christian Nationalists, and America Firsters of mid-century America - one of whom tries to assassinate him.

This is a book that celebrates one of the overlooked landmarks of civil rights history, and illuminates the early life and enduring legacy of the man who helped bring it about.