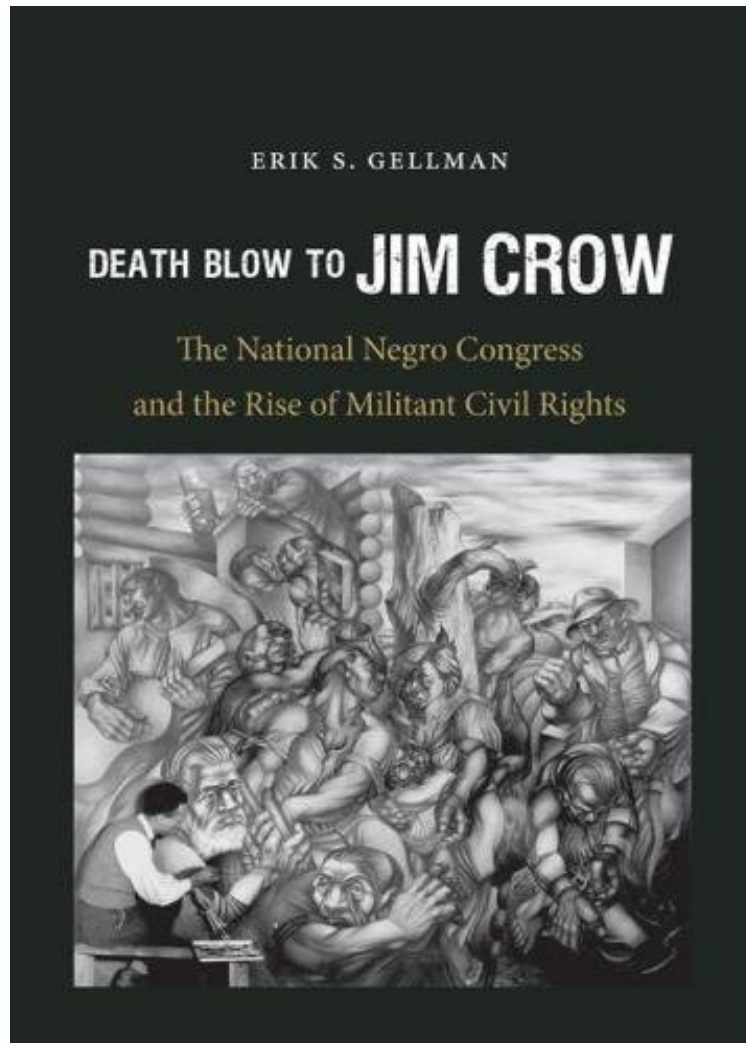


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# Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights (The John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture)

*Erik S. Gellman*

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**Erik S. Gellman : Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights (The John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights (The John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent BookBy JerseyGirlErik Gellman's book is a must read for

anyone interested in social movements, race, and labor. The book tells the story of the National Negro Congress, a militant civil rights organization, which played a key role in labor organizing and civil rights activism during the 1930s and 1940s. Gellman is an excellent writer who brings these activists "to life" in a story that moves across the United States, and to a some extent, the globe. It's packed with a ton of fascinating (and sometimes disheartening) stories of how members of the interracial NNC fought to end Jim Crow and white supremacy.

During the Great Depression, black intellectuals, labor organizers, and artists formed the National Negro Congress (NNC) to demand a "second emancipation" in America. Over the next decade, the NNC and its offshoot, the Southern Negro Youth Congress, sought to coordinate and catalyze local antiracist activism into a national movement to undermine the Jim Crow system of racial and economic exploitation. In this pioneering study, Erik S. Gellman shows how the NNC agitated for the first-class citizenship of African Americans and all members of the working class, establishing civil rights as necessary for reinvigorating American democracy. Much more than just a precursor to the 1960s civil rights movement, this activism created the most militant interracial freedom movement since Reconstruction, one that sought to empower the American labor movement to make demands on industrialists, white supremacists, and the state as never before. By focusing on the complex alliances between unions, civic groups, and the Communist Party in five geographic regions, Gellman explains how the NNC and its allies developed and implemented creative grassroots strategies to weaken Jim Crow, if not deal it the "death blow" they sought.

Gellman's work has returned the [National Negro Congress] to its proper place within our understanding of the 'Long Civil Rights Movement.'--The Historian  
A wonderful book, full of social history that has remained little examined through nearly all the fine (and sometimes mediocre) scholarship on African American life published in the last thirty years. It may also represent a new phase of serious scholarship in the twentieth-century American history at large.--Journal of Illinois History  
Death Blow to Jim Crow is a valuable contribution to the historiography of African American politics and the civil rights movement.--Journal of Southern History  
Gellman has dug deeply into the archives to narrate the compelling and much overlooked history of black Americans who waged war for a decade against the American system of racism. . . with a refreshing and believable honesty.--Patterns of Prejudice  
Provides a valuable addition to studies on interracial activism, labor-civil rights unionism, and black radicalism.--History: s of New Books  
A deeply researched and beautifully crafted book. Artfully woven together, the chapters examine the NNC's history and frame it as an important part of the African American freedom struggle. . . . Gellman has crafted a rich organizational study that is historically grounded and regionally specific that avoids romanticizing the labor-civil rights coalitions. . . . [It] makes clear the importance of the NNC in understanding the Popular Front, the rise of the CIO, and militant civil rights activism of the 1930s and 1940s.--Labor: Studies in Working-Class of the Americas  
A must-read for everyone interested in understanding the grassroots, populist nature of the long civil rights movement.--Journal of American History  
By using a multi-regional approach, Gellman is able to demonstrate the fluidity of the NNC's policies and how the organization met challenges differently depending on the location. . . . [He] has done historians of the black freedom struggle and 20th-century African American history a great service by demonstrating the significance of the NNC to U.S. labor, political, and economic history during the Great Depression, New Deal era, and World War II.--Journal of African American History  
Gellman's analysis of their successes and failures brings new and more complex dimensions to our understanding. . . . Essential reading for anyone interested in African American, labour, gender, civil rights, and social history.--Labour  
A must read. . . . A good example of how competent research and nuanced argumentation can yield scholarly discoveries even in exhaustively studied areas of American history.--American Historical  
Gellman has dug deeply into the archives to narrate the compelling and much overlooked history of black Americans who waged war for a decade against the American system of racism.--Patterns of Prejudice  
[Gellman's] writing style is clear as he sets out for the reader exactly what he intends to accomplish in every chapter. . . . Packed with gems.--North Carolina Historical  
This book immeasurably strengthens our understanding of the 'long civil rights movement,' starting it decisively in the 1930s as labor's left in the Popular Front and a broad-based movement in the African American community fought to overthrow Jim Crow and organize workers. It is a spectacular addition to the literature on civil rights unionism and African-American history.--Michael Honey, University of Washington, Tacoma, author of *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, King's Last Campaign*  
Erik S. Gellman's *Death Blow to Jim Crow* breaks new ground and enriches our understanding of the militant, radical, antiracism reformers who founded and nurtured the National Negro Congress and its affiliate, the Southern Negro Youth Congress, during the 1930s and 1940s. This perceptive and persuasive, beautifully written and meticulously researched history situates leaders of the NNC as critical architects of an intricate web of interracial unions, multi-ethnic coalitions, and cross-class alliances committed to the demolition of all forms of Jim Crow in the North and in the South. *Death Blow to Jim Crow* is essential reading for those seeking deeper insights into the explosive and transformative era that ushered in the modern freedom movement.--Darlene Clark Hine, Northwestern University  
About the Author  
Erik S. Gellman is associate professor of history at Roosevelt University.