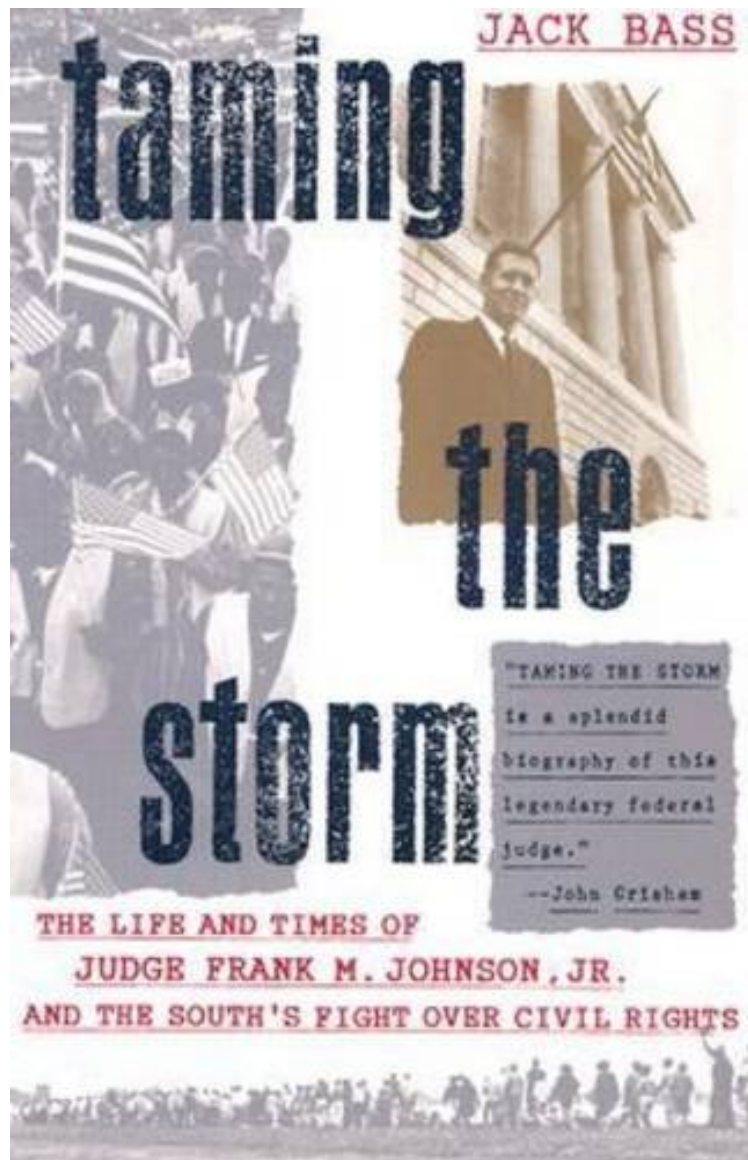


(Download) Taming the Storm: The Life and Times of Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., and the South's Fight over Civil Rights

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Jack Bass

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Jack Bass : Taming the Storm: The Life and Times of Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., and the South's Fight over Civil Rights before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Taming the Storm: The Life and Times of Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., and the South's Fight over Civil Rights:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Judge Johnson - Southern Hero By Michael "Hero in war and peace, implacable enemy of sham and duplicity, living symbol of courage and fairness, jurist par excellence. Through tides of emotion surged menacingly about you, you have read the law as it was, not as other might have wished it to be" (Bass, *Taming the Storm*, pg. 403) These words inscribed on an honorary degree from Saint Michael's College hung on the wall of Judge Frank M. Johnson Jr.'s chambers and personified the legacy of one of the most significant judges within the last century of American history. In his 1993 book, "*Taming the Storm*," Dr. Jack Bass goes to great lengths to reveal this modest hero to a generation not necessarily familiar with the judge who stood behind the traditional historic scene in the Civil Rights Movement. Judge Johnson's deeply held beliefs of personal and judicial integrity as well as a strong sense of justice can be seen in his landmark verdicts toward Civil Rights, prison reform, and state mental health care. I felt a bit like Bill Moyers' crew who had interviewed him in 1980. He said, "The only Johnson they'd ever heard of was Andrew and Lyndon. And to find such impregnable character in such a winsome form was like a discovery of a new hero" (Bass, *Taming the Storm*, pg 370). The book, more than anything, renews an optimism of finding legitimate Southern heroes - men and women of true integrity. The story of Judge Johnson, and consequently Dr. Bass's book, are essential not only to scholars but perhaps more importantly to a new generation of Southern men and women. Those who may look back on twentieth century southern history with a certain level of embarrassment can know that a beacon of rationale and justice derived from the south.

Thrust into the center of a raging storm over civil rights, Frank M. Johnson, Jr., was the youngest federal judge in the country at the time of his appointment in 1955. During his twenty-four years on the district court in Montgomery, Alabama, Johnson handed down a string of precedent-setting decisions that were vastly unpopular at the time but that would prove to have profound consequences for America's future. Not only did Johnson's trailblazing opinions greatly expand the access of African Americans to their constitutional rights, but his opinions also helped to dismantle discrimination against women, prison inmates, and the mentally ill. Johnson paid a heavy price for his judicial vision, however, for he had to endure public scorn, death threats, and the outrage of a society that felt itself and its values to be under siege. Eventually Johnson prevailed, winning honor even in his native Alabama and a respected place in the history of the civil rights movement. *Taming the Storm* is the story of an authentic American hero and the era he did so much to define.

"*Taming the Storm* describes the triumph of wisdom, tenacity, and personal courage an inspiring story.--President Jimmy Carter