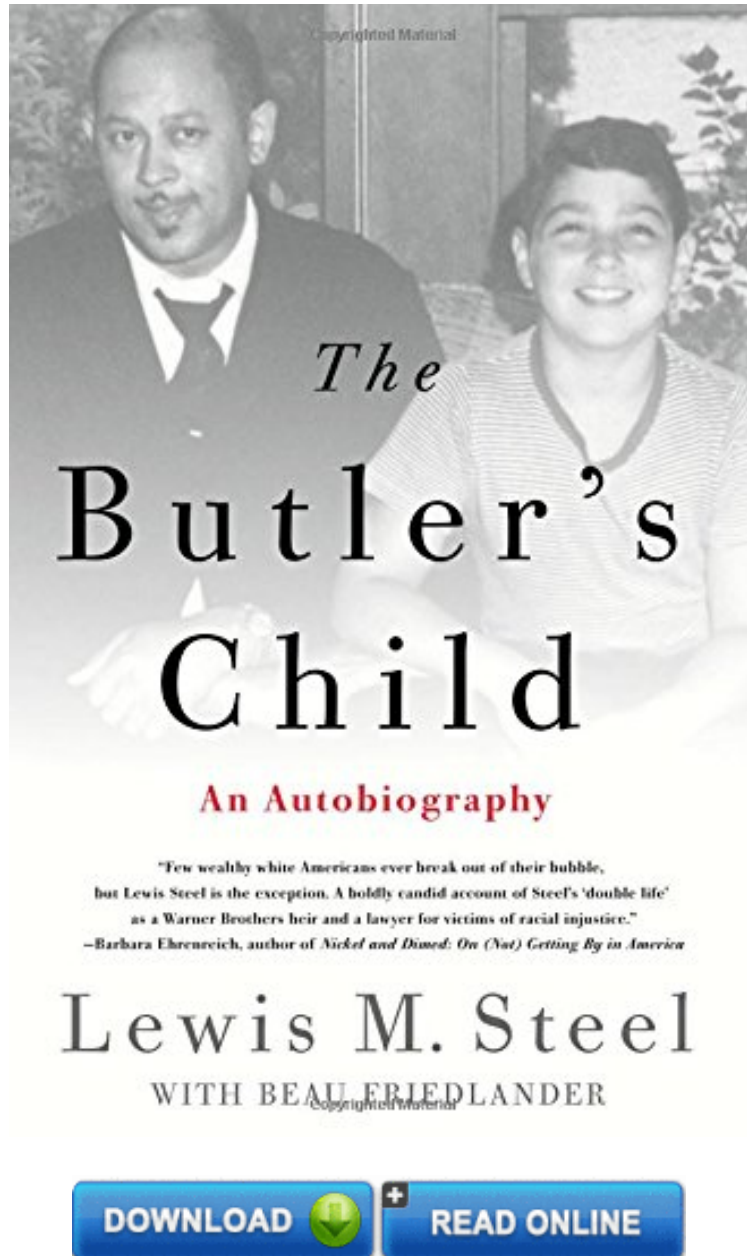


[FREE] The Butler's Child: An Autobiography

## The Butler's Child: An Autobiography

Lewis M. Steel, Beau Friedlander

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#1306949 in Books Steel Lewis M 2016-06-14 2016-06-14Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 245.11 x 29.34 x 6.391, .0 #File Name: 1250073006320 pagesThe Butler s Child An Autobiography | File size: 15.Mb

**Lewis M. Steel, Beau Friedlander : The Butler's Child: An Autobiography** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Butler's Child: An Autobiography:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you're black, you better not draw the heatBy gid tannerAn excellent read from a man who spent years trying to make the legal system more level. His brief description of the cooked up prosecutions of Hurricane Carter and John Artis should worry every American since one does not know when THEIR number might come up and this account shows that once a Prosecutor decides to go after you, you are

screwed unless you have great financial resources behind you. MOST people don't and are not fortunate enough to have lawyers like Steel and Beldock representing them, even without payment. New Jersey sounds like Mississippi in the 1960's. And, from what I hear, things there have not gotten much better there in 2016. OH, now listen for the inflamed and wronged Jersey members of the KKK to object!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Autobiography at its best

By Hist-prof

The Butlers Son tells a deeply personal and historically riveting story about the making of a civil rights lawyer at a critical moment in the civil rights movement. Born and raised in New York, Lewis Steels civil rights activism began in 1963, just as the movement was cresting toward victory over Jim Crow in the South. It was also the year that James Baldwins *The Fire Next Time* exposed the pervasive and explosive nature of racial segregation and inequality in cities across America. Fresh out of law school, Lewis Steel was among a small cohort of lawyers who brought the NAACPs legal campaign to end school segregation north, working with the brilliant Robert L. Carter. As recounted in this timely book, Steels five years with Carter at the NAACP marked the beginning of a life dedicated to challenging racial injustices and inequities in schools, in the criminal justice system, in housing, in employment, in public spaces. The story of his deep engagement with the countrys raw racial realities is intertwined with reflections on his own life as a white person born to wealth and status, and on the individuals who taught and influenced him. Steels tireless efforts put him at the center of some of the most consequential civil rights cases, struggles, and debates of the last fifty years, from inside the prison walls of Attica to courtrooms around the country and in the pages of the *New York Times*. This compelling book illuminates the racial practices, inequities, and violence that have plagued American life, and never loses sight of the human costs. Most importantly, it reveals what it takes to fight for racial justice over the long haul.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Legal History of Civil Rights Movement

By SeattleBookMama

Lewis M. Steel has a long, noteworthy career as a civil rights attorney. He was an observer during the Attica Prison riots; worked for the NAACP during the Civil Rights movement, and later defended boxer Hurricane Carter against a frame-up charge of murder. And I was permitted to read this story free and in advance, thanks to Net Galley and St. Martins Press in exchange for this honest review. I rate it 3.5 stars and round upwards; it is now available to the public. When I first approached this title I expected to see what the life of a butlers son was like. In fact, Steels social class is at the other end of the spectrum. An heir to the Warner Brothers fortune, he spent much of his time in the company of the family butler, and he was deeply affected by the emotional distance that this family servant, whom he had innocently regarded as a father figure, began to demonstrate as Steel grew older. Later, as an adult, he realized that this faithful retainer, an African-American man, surely had a family and life of his own that he went to visit on his two half-days off work, and he began to wonder what he might do to tear down the wall between the worlds of Caucasian families and Black folk. Ultimately he decided to become a civil rights attorney, and he credits the man that helped raise him as a key reason.

The NAACP of the Civil Rights era

the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was deeply immersed in litigation as a means to end segregation. Again and again, racist judges sat in court, north and south alike, and they told the NAACP to go to hell even when their evidence and research was baldly, plainly in the plaintiffs favor. The NAACP continued to push litigation over mass action because of a strong conviction that if they could get a case heard by the Supreme Court, relatively liberal in many regards and headed by Chief Justice Warren, then surely justice would be done. It didnt shake out that way. Outraged over the way the nations highest court failed to provide equal protection to its Black citizens, Steel wrote an article for *Time Magazine* titled *Nine Men in Black Who Think White*, and was summarily fired from the NAACP, who still wanted to curry favor with that court. Many of his colleagues walked out of the NAACP offices in protest.

A common question among Caucasians that want to fight for the rights of people of color in the USA is what can we do? How can one use this white privilege that exists whether it should or not, to change US laws and society for the better? And this question is raised exponentially when one is an heir, a ruling class scion that can do a tremendous amount for the cause in which he believes. This reviewer has a friend that found himself in this situation. The distant but only heir of a corset magnates fortune, he decided that the best way to seek justice was to walk his talk. Reserving a small percentage of the fortune for himself which is still a tasty enough chunk to own a middle class home in Seattle, take a vacation abroad annually, and eat in restaurants instead of his own kitchen he donated the vast majority of his personal wealth to the organization he thought best. He doesnt live in an all white neighborhood; doesnt have a household staff; and he does blue collar work on the railroad so that he can talk politics with other working people. Because to help people the most, one needs to be among them and facing similar circumstances to those they face. So he gets up at crazy oclock in the morning, goes out and gets greasy and banged up with everybody else, and then he goes home and cleans his own house and mows his own grass. He gets that more people listen when you put your life where your mouth is, and he believes the future of the world lies with the working class. So when Steel commences his hand wringing over how wealthy, how privileged he is and how bad he feels about it, I want to say, Cry me a river. Steel freely admits that he enjoys his lovely home that looks down on Central Park and allows him a lovely view of the Macys Parade every Thanksgiving. He enjoys the servants, and his neighborhood is all white. He sent his children to all white private schools even as he fought to integrate the public schools that he wouldnt let his own children attend in any case. At one point, Steel mentions that his therapist told him to stop whining, and I wanted that doctor here in the room so I could offer him a high five. Now that I have addressed the elephant in the room, I have to say that Steels

memoir, despite the wealthy liberal whining, is worth a read for those interested in Civil Rights history and in particular the part of it that has played out in the courtrooms. You don't have to like the author to benefit from the treasure trove of information in the pages of this memoir. Steel has been involved in some landmark cases, and he is at his best when he talks about the cases he has taken and how they shook out. Black lives DO matter, and those of us that think so need all the information available to fight that fight, and there are many worthwhile lessons that still apply right here, this book is worth your time and money regardless of whose memoir it is. This book was released earlier this month, and is available for sale now.

*The Butler's Child* is the personal story of a Warner Brothers family grandson who spent more than fifty years as a fighting, no holds barred civil rights lawyer. Lewis M. Steel explores why he, a privileged white man, devoted his life to seeking racial progress in often uncomprehending or hostile courts. In fact, after writing a feature for *The New York Times Magazine* entitled "Nine Men in Black Who Think White," Lewis was fired from the NAACP and the entire legal staff resigned in support of him. Lewis speaks about his family butler, an African American man named William Rutherford, who helped raise Lewis, and their deep but ultimately troubled relationship, as well as how Robert L. Carter, the NAACP's extraordinary general counsel, became Lewis' mentor, father figure and lifelong close friend. Lewis exposes the conflicts which arose from living and working in two very different worlds - that of the Warner Brothers family and that of a civil rights lawyer. He also explores his more than fifty year marriage, which joined two very different Jewish and Irish American families. Lewis' work with the NAACP and in private practice created legal precedents still relevant today. *The Butler's Child* is also an insider's look into some of the most important civil rights cases from the turbulent 1960's to the present day by a man still working to advance the civil rights that should be available to all.

Steel writes movingly . . . drawing on his experiences in two different social and cultural worlds, Steel has no trouble getting to the dark heart of our nation's racial ills in this polished, accomplished book. Publishers Weekly (starred review) "An articulate, emotionally moving chronicle of a life informed by racial unrest and elevated with dutiful humanitarianism." -Kirkus "A fascinating, insider's look into the legal side of the civil-rights battle." -Booklist Few wealthy white Americans ever break out of their bubble. When Lewis Steel walked into Attica prison in the middle of a riot in 1971, he became one of the exceptions. This is a boldly candid account of his double life as a Warner Brothers heir and a lawyer for victims of racial injustice. Barbara Ehrenreich, author, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America*, and founder, Economic Hardship Reporting Project The breadth of Steel's legal activism over the last half century, as revealed in this remarkable memoir, reminds us of the challenges that loomed in the wake of the Civil Rights gains of the 1960s: the campaign to end northern school segregation; ongoing battles against unemployment, under-employment, and housing discrimination; the pervasive problems of police brutality and a deeply flawed criminal justice system. His compelling, first-hand account of the Attica prison uprising and ensuing massacre sheds fresh light on one of the great tragedies of the Post Civil Rights era. A child of privilege, Steel has lived a life dedicated to the pursuit of racial justice, and has written a memoir that is timely, essential and deeply inspiring. -- Henry Louis Gates, Jr., The Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University *The Butler's Child* joins the family of books written about Martin Luther King, Jr, Thurgood Marshall and the many heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. This is a timely memoir since it appears as a new generation of activists are protesting in the streets. Lewis Steel, a former NAACP lawyer, gives an insider's account of how America struggled to change its laws and depart from the station of segregation and inequality. This memoir finds a good man caught in the doorway of history but still able to place his shoulder against the obstacles of change and push. Steel shows how being born into a class of privilege can still beckon one into a life of service. *The Butler's Child* is not just about race, family, mentorship, courtrooms and prisons; it's about America's Song and the countless solos we need to hear. Steel's life consists of many notes. Even after moments and days of despair, there comes a beautiful light from a beautiful man. --E. Ethelbert Miller, author of *Fathering Words: The Making of an African American Writer* and Board Chair of the Institute for Policy Studies About the Author LEWIS M. STEEL worked as a lawyer for the NAACP and is now Senior Counsel to Outten Golden LLP. He works on a range of class action cases involving sexual and racial discrimination and overtime claims. His precedent-setting decisions include *Sumitomo Shoji America, Inc. v. Avagliano*, 457 U.S. 176, which established that American subsidiaries of foreign corporations must obey American civil rights laws. He lives in New York. Beau Friedlander's writing has appeared in many publications including *Time*, *Harpers Magazine*, and *The Paris Review*. He was the founder of Context Books, served as editor in chief at Air America Media, and currently works at *The Intercept*. He lives in Brooklyn.