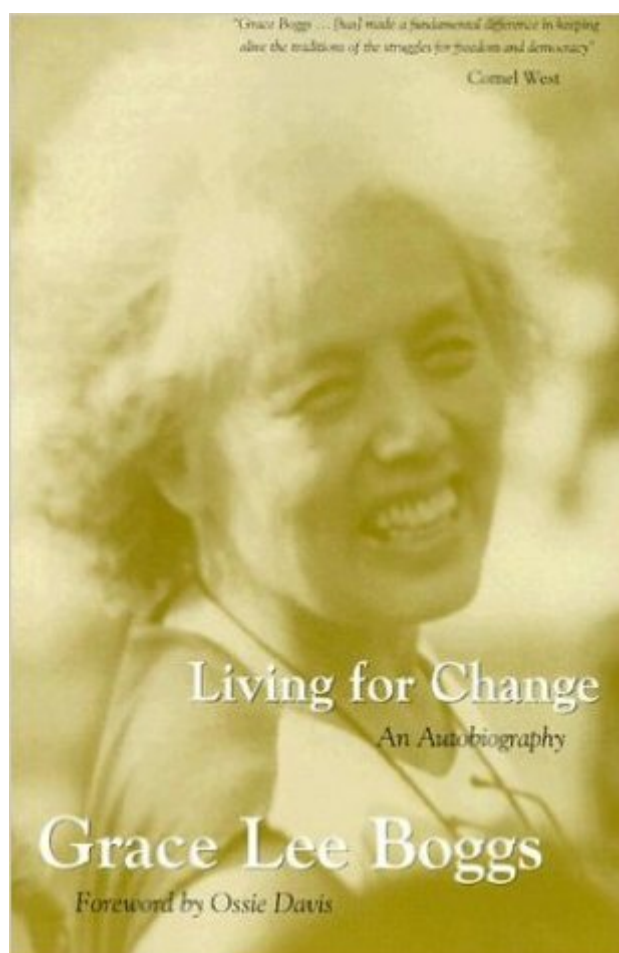


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Living For Change: An Autobiography



Synopsis

"More than a deeply moving memoir, this is a book of revelation. Grace Lee Boggs, Chinese American, middle class, highly educated, discovers through her encounters with remarkable rebels, blue collars as well as philosophers, where the body is buried: who is doing what to whom in our society. It is an adventure that is truly liberating". Studs Terkel "Grace Lee Boggs has made a fundamental difference in keeping alive the traditions of the struggles for freedom and democracy". Cornel West Living for Change is a sweeping account of the life of an untraditional radical from the end of the thirties, through the cold war, the civil rights era, and the rise of Black Power, the Nation of Islam, and the Black Panthers to the present efforts to rebuild our crumbling urban communities. This fascinating autobiography traces the story of a woman who transcended class and racial boundaries to pursue her passionate belief in a better society. Grace Lee Boggs was raised in New York City during a time when her father was not allowed to buy land for their home because he was Chinese. Educated at Barnard and Bryn Mawr, Boggs was in her twenties when radical politics beckoned, and she was inspired to become a revolutionary focusing on the black community. During her early years as an activist in New York, Boggs began a twenty-year friendship and collaboration with C. L. R. James, the brilliant and influential West Indian Marxist to whom she devotes a revelatory chapter of this book. In 1953, she moved to Detroit where, she writes, "radical history had been made and could be made again". It was also the home of James Boggs, an African American auto worker (and later author and revolutionary theoretician) who would become one of the movement's freshest and most persuasive voices, as well as Grace's husband. Beginning with their work together on the newsletter Correspondence, Grace and James formed the core of a network that over the years would include Malcolm X, Lyman Paine, Ping Ferry, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Kwame Nkrumah, Stokely Carmichael, and inner-city youth. Rich in the personalities and anecdotes of twentieth-century progressive activism, Living for Change is an involving and inspiring look at a remarkable woman who continues to dedicate her life to social justice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For anyone who has ever wanted to work for social change, this life story by a wise and vital woman is a guidebook. As the book's cover tells us, "Grace Lee Boggs is a first-generation Chinese American who has been a speaker, writer, and movement activist in the African- American community for fifty-five years." After earning her Ph.D. in philosophy at Bryn Mawr in June of 1940, Grace wanted to become an activist. She moved to Chicago in the fall of 1940 and began working with the South Side Tenants Organization--a group that had been set up by the Workers Party. When distinguished "labor leader A. Phillip Randolph issued a call for blacks all over the country to march on Washington to demand jobs in the defense plants," more and more people began attending the Workers Party discussions in Chicago's Washington Park. Grace had been invited to participate in those discussions. She said, "The more I went out in the community and met people, the more inadequate I was beginning to feel." When Randolph's leadership of the March on Washington movement was successful and President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, Grace realized "the power that the black community has within itself to change this country when it begins to move. As a result, I decided that what I wanted to do with the rest of my life was to become a movement activist in the black community." To Grace, "Joining the Workers Party seemed a good way to start," and that's what she did, in order to get the political education she felt she needed. In the 1950s, Grace moved to Detroit where she worked on the Socialist Workers Party newsletter and met Jimmy Boggs, "A rank-and-file black Chrysler-Jefferson worker and community activist.

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