

# Spotlight

December 2, 2016



I know far less American history than Canadian history, and beyond Newfoundland and Northern history, I'm not great at that either. When it comes to American Civil Rights leaders, I could have named Martin Luther King Jr, Malcolm X, and Rosa Parks, but beyond them, I'd be scrambling. So, it was great to have an introduction to Congressman John Lewis's role— an introduction I'd probably still not had without *March: Book One*, his memoirs, being told in a graphic novel format, my preferred reading as of late.

John Lewis comes across as a compelling but sweet, almost quiet man, and to think of him as helping lead a revolution might seem at first to be counter-intuitive. Until you see his path and personality intertwine. It is not surprising then to see him turn to the teachings of Gandhi and practice nonviolent resistance. But more importantly, and perhaps most interesting considering it's a side most people don't consider, *March* shows the work and practice involved in such a tactic. Indeed, it worked. And looking at it now, it's remarkable. It's embarrassing and confusing and angering to see white people refusing to even serve a black person in a restaurant. I don't get how or why they could have behaved that way, to try to take away another human being's dignity.

Nate Powell's art perfectly matches the text, expressive and black and white to capture the time period, with a Will Eisner sort of style, sometimes abandoning the panel lines and giving such scenes an air of historical significance beyond Lewis's personal story. Powerful stuff.

*March: Book One* is the first of a three part trilogy and the series only got stronger as it went along. *March: Book Two* won an Eisner Award, while *March: Book Three*, published earlier this year, won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature, the first time ever for a graphic novel. All three books are available at the Yellowknife Public Library.

If you enjoy memoirs, please come out to the library meeting room this Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 4:00p.m., to hear our Memoir Writing 101 students read from their final projects. Memoir Writing 101 was made possible through a Service Canada New Horizons for Seniors grant.

John Mutford, Public Services Librarian