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**We've Got a Job:
The 1963 Birmingham
Children's March**

by Cynthia Levinson

Middle School, High School Peachtree 176 pp.2/12 978-1-56145-627-7 \$19.95

Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 was a “dismally segregated” place, from lunch counters, parks, and department-store dressing rooms to public schools. The civil rights movement led by Fred Shuttlesworth, Ralph Abernathy, and Martin Luther King Jr. intended to change all of that. Focusing on four young African Americans but never losing sight of the overall struggle, Levinson does a superb job of taking readers inside the movement, demonstrating just how difficult it was for the leaders to create a movement at all. Many blacks questioned nonviolence as a tactic, and many feared for their jobs. Adults didn't take to the streets in great enough numbers, so children had to: with young minister James Bevel as their Pied Piper, young people turned out in great numbers, intending to get arrested, fill the jails, and cripple the city. Their actions inspired adults, but when police responded with hoses, dogs, and billy clubs, nonviolence was a difficult promise to keep, as Levinson effectively shows. Clear and lively writing, well-chosen photographs, and thorough documentation make this a fine chronicle of the civil rights era. Though it lacks the tight narrative focus and the stunning photographs of Elizabeth Partridge's *Marching for Freedom* (rev. 11/09), both volumes show that, sometimes, children can change the world. dean schneider