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The Return of Julia da Cruz

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MS. MARGARET RUSSELL
345 EAST 80TH STREET # 22F
NEW YORK NY 10021-0680

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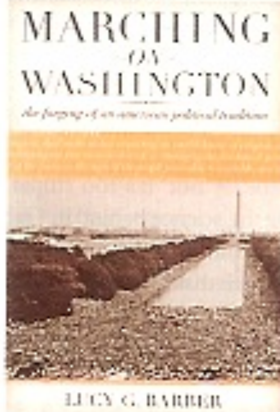
The Sole of Protest

How Washington, D.C., became civil-disobedience central. REVIEWED BY STEPHEN FOX '71 PH.D.

[BOOK] **Marching on Washington** *by Lucy G. Barber '96 Ph.D.* (University of California Press, 358 pages, $34.95).

WASHINGTON, D.C., WAS FOUNDED AS A place apart—a place of sober and measured deliberation, physically and politically isolated from the rest of the nation. The capital's role changed permanently, however, in 1894, when, during the worst economic depression the United States had yet endured, Jacob Coxey's Army slogged 700 miles from Ohio to Washington to pressure Congress to pass a massive make work program of national road building and to enact emergency currency reform. Although the causes have long since passed into obscurity, Coxey's Army began the tradition of demonstrating for social change by marching on the capital. A century later, the Mall, the Capitol, and the Lincoln Memorial have evolved into what Lucy G. Barber calls "national public spaces"—novel but apparently permanent destinations in American democracy.

Marching on Washington traces the process by which Americans redefined the capital as a place of public debate and protest. The book examines political protests, new social movements, changing ideas of citizenship and democratic rights, and the physical evolution of various spaces in Washington, D.C. All these developments reflect more than a century of tumult under the spotlights of the capital, in the process redefining Washington's role in American politics.



Barber traces this shift through six major phases. Two decades after Coxey's Army, Alice Paul and other female suffragists staged a procession and pageant on the eve of Woodrow Wilson's 1913 inauguration. (The disappointing outcome helped push Paul into a more militant strategy of picketing, arrests, and hunger strikes.) In 1932 the Bonus Army of 20,000 war veterans and their supporters converged on Washington, camped out, and lobbied Congress for their service bonuses, which were not due until 1945. During a stifling Washington summer, the protest became increasingly more radical and less patient; it was finally—and violently—suppressed by U.S. Army troops commanded by Douglas MacArthur.

The next two phases were inspired by the black labor leader A. Philip Randolph. While planning his 1941 Negro March on Washington, which aimed to abolish certain federal discriminations and to open more jobs for blacks in the burgeoning defense industries, Randolph decided to exclude white participants because he feared the influence and distractions of Communists. The march was canceled after Roosevelt agreed to issue an executive order addressing some of the protesters' demands.

Then, in 1963, Randolph and his associate Bayard Rustin produced the epochal March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Its planning amounted to a summit conference of the leaders of the civil rights movement. In contrast to previous marches, this one was ambiguously encouraged by the White House; the Kennedy administration hoped its pressure would help overcome the congressional segregationists blocking civil-rights legislation. But this official support carried a price: John Lewis of SNCC was forced to moderate his speech, and the marchers carried only approved signs and slogans.

[TELEVISION] TV sets may not figure prominently in the spare and elegant rooms **Sheila Bridges** '86 designs, but home-furnishing junkies with good cable service can now catch her decorating tips on the Fine Living Network's show *Sheila Bridges: Designer Living*. It began January 28 and airs Tuesdays at 8 P.M.

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