



# Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families

By J. Anthony Lukas

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Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, and the American Book Award, the bestselling *Common Ground* is much more than the story of the busing crisis in Boston as told through the experiences of three families. As Studs Terkel remarked, it's "gripping, indelible...a truth about all large American cities."

"An epic of American city life...a story of such hypnotic specificity that we re-experience all the shades of hope and anger, pity and fear that living anywhere in late 20th-century America has inevitably provoked." —Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *The New York Times*

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**Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

The climax of this humane account of 10 years in Boston that began with news of Martin Luther King's assassination, is a watershed moment in the city's modern history--the 1974 racist riots that followed the court-ordered busing of kids to integrate the schools. To bring understanding to that moment, Lukas, a former New York Times journalist, focuses on two working-class families, headed by an Irish-American widow and an African-American mother, and on the middle-class family of a white liberal couple. Lukas goes beyond stereotypes, carefully grounding each perspective in its historical roots, whether in the antebellum South, or famine-era Ireland. In the background is the cast of public figures--including Judge Garrity, Mayor White, and Cardinal Cushing--with cameo roles in this disturbing history that won the 1986 Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction.

#### From Publishers Weekly

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the American Book Award, this book examines school integration in Boston from the vantage points of three families—one black and two white. PW stated that *Common Ground* is "highly readable and brings us as close as we are likely to get to the average person's experiences of urban racial tensions."

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#### Review

"A huge and marvelous work." —Kai Erikson, front page, *The New York Times Book Review*

"A book of such force and clarity that its just praise would require language long rendered empty by jacket blurbs. To say that *Common Ground* is about busing in Boston is a bit like saying that *Moby-Dick* is about whaling in New Bedford." —Robert B. Parker, *Chicago Tribune*

"An American classic, a book that will find a place not merely in the shelves where our national history is recorded but also in those where our literature is kept." —Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post*

"A big book—monumental in scope, rich in historical detail, challenging in its conclusions and compassionate in its portraiture of the three families: the black Twymons, the Irish McGoffs, and the Yankee Divers." —Fox Butterfield, *The New Republic*

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##### Lillian Chatman:

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**Michelle Favors:**

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