

*The following review appeared in the October 2014 issue of CHOICE:*

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Burrow, Rufus, Jr. **Extremist for love: Martin Luther King Jr., man of ideas and nonviolent social action.** Fortress, 2014. 370p index afp ISBN 9781451470208 pbk, \$24.00

In this outstanding work on Martin Luther King Jr., Burrow (Christian Theological Seminary) examines both the origins and informal influences of key ideas that undergird King's adoption of formal theories of social action and nonviolent protest. He successfully shows that King was a man of "praxis," melding intellectual thought with action. Following in the footsteps of King scholars Lewis Baldwin and Clayborne Carson, Burrows demonstrates that the roots of protest and nonviolence originated in King's family influences, his church, and southern black culture. King was influenced by Walter Rauschenbusch's ideas of the social gospel and by Reinhold Niebuhr's Christian realism. Niebuhr also influenced King's views of the pervasiveness of sin in society and the need for massive resistance by oppressed people. Burrow's chapter "Black Women Trailblazers" examines the role women played in mobilizing the Montgomery bus boycott; it also critiques King's sexism and that of the male-led civil rights movement. The last chapters elaborate on the formative influence of Gandhi's philosophy and practice of satyagraha (soul force) on King's nonviolence. Students and scholars will benefit from Burrow's views on the problem of "enduring racism" in a chapter of the same name, subtitled "What Can Be Done to Keep Hope Alive?" **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-level undergraduates through researchers/faculty. -- *L. H. Mamiya, Vassar College*