

LUCASVILLE

The Untold Story of a Prison Uprising, 2nd ed.

Staughton Lynd

Lucasville tells the story of one of the longest prison uprisings in United States history. At the maximum security Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, Ohio, prisoners seized a major area of the prison on Easter Sunday, 1993. More than 400 prisoners held L block for eleven days. Nine prisoners alleged to have been informants, or 'snitches,' and one hostage correctional officer, were murdered. There was a negotiated surrender. Thereafter, almost wholly on the basis of testimony by prisoner informants who received deals in exchange, five spokespersons or leaders were tried and sentenced to death, and more than a dozen others received long sentences.

Lucasville examines both the causes of the disturbance, what happened during the eleven days, and the fairness of the trials. Particular emphasis is placed on the inter-racial character of the action, as evidenced in the slogans that were found painted on walls after the surrender: "Black and White Together," "Convict Unity," and "Convict Race."

An eloquent Foreword by Mumia Abu-Jamal underlines these themes. He states, that the men later sentenced to death "sought to minimize violence, and indeed, according to substantial evidence, saved the lives of several men, prisoner and guard alike." Of the five men, three black and two white, sentenced to death, Mumia declares: "They rose above their status as prisoners, and became, for a few days in April 1993, what rebels in Attica had demanded a generation before them: men. As such, they did not betray each other; they did not dishonor each other; they reached beyond their prison "tribes" to reach commonality."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Staughton Lynd taught American history at Spelman College and Yale University. He was director of Freedom Schools in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer. An early leader of the movement against the Vietnam War, he was blacklisted and unable to continue as an academic. He then became a lawyer, and in this capacity has assisted rank-and-file workers and prisoners for the past thirty years. He has written, edited, or co-edited with his wife Alice Lynd more than a dozen books.

ACCOLADES

"*Lucasville* is one of the most powerful indictments of our 'justice system' I have ever read. What comes across is a litany of flaws deep in the system, and recognizably not unique to Lucasville. The detailed transcripts (yes, oral history!) give great power to the whole story."

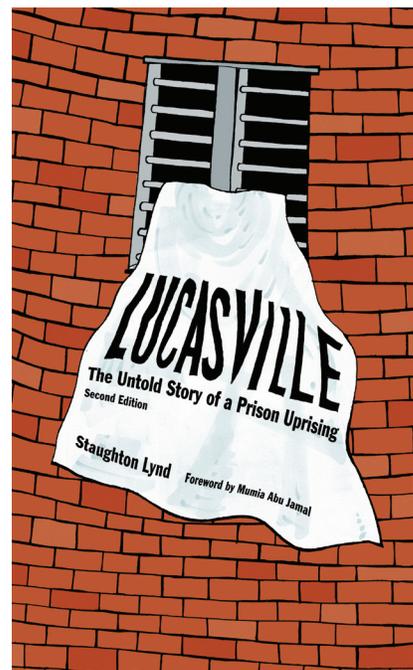
—Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*

"Of interest to anyone who follows prison politics or the often enigmatic workings of the justice system."

—*Library Journal*

"There is a temperature at which the welder's torch becomes so hot and burns with such purity that its flame is no longer yellow, orange, or red, but burns blue. Then it is capable of cutting through steel. Staughton Lynd wields the blue flame of truth, cutting through the lies, threats, evasions, and misrepresentations of the authorities of the state of Ohio."

—Professor Peter Linebaugh, Department of History, University of Toledo



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