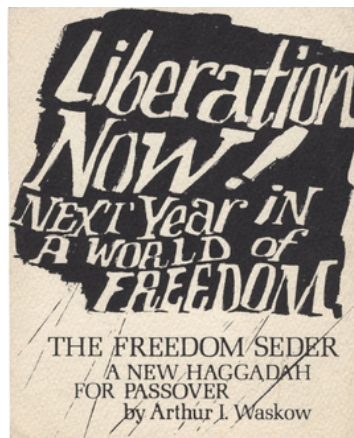
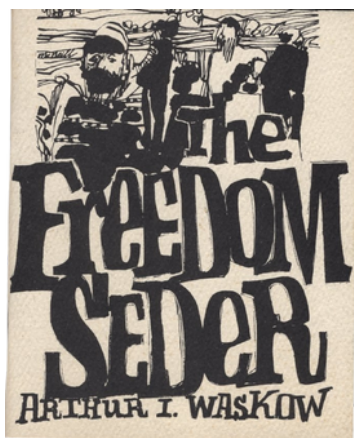


The Freedom Seder Haggadah (1969)

About

In 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was murdered. This tragedy, on top of decades of injustice, grief, and anger, sparked riots in many American cities. After days of unrest in DC, the US National Guard was called in to restore order and the city was placed under a strict curfew. The following week, the Jewish holiday of Passover began. Upon seeing military vehicles and soldiers in his neighborhood, Jewish activist Arthur Waskow drew a connection between the ancient Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt and the work of Black activists in the 1960s. Over the next year, Waskow developed the Freedom Seder. In addition to the traditional biblical stories, foods, and rituals, the Freedom Seder haggadah (guide to the seder dinner) included many other stories of oppression and liberation. It quoted Henry David Thoreau, Nat Turner, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Emmanuel Ringelblum, a historian of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. On the first anniversary of MLK's death, 800 people gathered in the basement of Lincoln Temple (a historically Black church) to celebrate the Freedom Seder. Guided by Waskow's haggadah, Jewish, Christian, white, and black Washingtonians sang, prayed, and remembered together. The seder was broadcasted and written about by several news stations. Hundreds of families bought copies of the Freedom Seder haggadah to use on Passover the following year.

Item



Front cover (left) and back cover (right)
[Link to Read Full Text](#)

Haggadah, "The Freedom Seder: A New Haggadah for Passover." 48-page booklet, written by Arthur Waskow, illustrated by Lloyd McNeill, published by The Micah Press, 1969. Includes preface and list of acknowledgments. Gift of Mike Tabor, Capital Jewish Museum Collection. Object ID: 2016.05.

Questions

1. How does the Freedom Seder reveal connections between different marginalized groups in history?
2. Why might sharing or adapting religious tradition be useful? Why might it be controversial?
3. What stories of oppression and liberation might you include in your own Freedom Seder?

Learn More

- "Freedom Seder, 1969" The Shalom Center. [Footage from the seder is available at this link.](#)

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