The African American Civil Rights Movement: Separation within Black Society in America

Yacine Sarr

2-13-14

AP United States History

Mr.Bedar

Junior Thesis

The integration of various races into American culture throughout its history has become a very important aspect of the identity of the United States. Although these competing cultures eventually became able to live in peace with one another, it was only with a strenuous struggle that this was able to occur. The most prominent example of this in the history of the United States is seen within the African-American community, and the oppression they underwent from their white counterparts for centuries. In the African American Civil Rights Movement that took place during the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of African-Americans, and also many other allies fought back against these oppressors in the hopes of achieving a more just, righteous society where blacks were treated equally. Nevertheless, people within this movement had many different opinions about what they wanted this new society to be and what it should contain. Various different areas of disagreement and dissent arose during the African-American Civil Rights movement among both its leaders and its participants. Due to factors including, the assassinations of prominent figures such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, philosophical differences among leaders from the beginning of the movement, and frustrations after social and economic conditions failed to improve even after legal rights had been obtained, these small areas of disagreement eventually grew into major divisions that not only made the movement less effective, but also left a lasting separation among members of modern black society.

The Civil Rights Movement consisted of a series of social movements that were carried out with the intention of ending racial discrimination and segregation of African Americans in the United States. It lasted from approximately 1950 through 1964, containing participants who were driven to achieve full citizenship rights which at this time were denied to them simply because of their race. Blacks in America had suffered through multiple different forms of

discrimination and oppression for decades, and the Civil Rights Movement was their retaliation to the massive struggle they had endured for centuries.

Prior to the Civil Rights Movement, the situation of blacks in America was extremely undesirable. In the 1857 Supreme Court Case *Dred Scott vs. Sanford* blacks, the majority of them still enslaved at this time, were declared unfit to be considered citizens of the United States. The words, ‘all men are created equal’ within the Declaration of Independence did not apply to them because they were not considered people, but rather property.[[1]](#footnote-1)After the Civil War, and the abolition of slavery, came Reconstruction, in which Americans attempted to build the nation back up into what it had been, while incorporating the multiple changes the war had produced. The addition of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution reversed the *Dred Scott* decision and by law African-Americans were to be considered free and equal citizens and had rights to due process of law and equal protection under the law. The 14th amendment specifically granted blacks the legal capabilities of owning property, the civil right to sue, and equal access to public accommodations.[[2]](#footnote-2) Although considered equals by law, in the minds of many Americans blacks were still inferior, which was one of the primary reasons why Jim Crow laws became so prominent specifically in the southern states, where racism was much more notable.

Jim Crow laws justified the segregation of whites from blacks in the South, which in turn led to the creation of separate educational, medical, and recreational facilities which were very far from equal in quality. Blacks were expected to be deferential to whites, and lynching remained a widely used crime of hate. In 1877, U.S. troops withdrew from the south, marking the end of the Reconstruction Era. With no one remaining to enforce the new Reconstruction laws the United States had undertaken, many white politicians in southern states especially, found ways of evading the Constitution and kept blacks in lower places of society. In 1883 the United States Supreme Court ruled that the 1875 federal civil rights act granting blacks equal access to facilities was unconstitutional. A similar Supreme Court ruling followed in 1896 with the case *Plessy vs. Ferguson* which declared the Louisiana law of separating train passengers by race constitutional. This sequentially led to the “separate but equal doctrine” which became the legal basis for all southern race relations.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Various developments and events occurred within the middle of the 20th century that began laying the foundations for the approaching movement. For one, there was a massive migration of blacks to Northern states, mainly due to the slightly better treatment and opportunities that were available to them there. Between 1910 and 1940, approximately 1.75 million blacks left the South and headed north. Although they were still faced with racial discrimination in areas including schools and housing, in the North, blacks were able to acquire rights of citizenship they had previously been denied, suffrage included.[[4]](#footnote-4) The formation of the NAACP and the Urban League were also major advancements towards the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, abbreviated NAACP, was founded by both blacks and whites in 1909, making it one of the oldest Civil Rights Organizations.[[5]](#footnote-5) The focus of the group was on working the American legal system to attain civil rights for blacks through the law.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The primary goal of the NAACP was to, “recapture the fervor, the purpose, and the concern of the pre-Civil War abolitionists”.[[7]](#footnote-7)They frequently took a much more direct and militant stance and focused their tactics around litigation and legislation. However, because their actions were so militant and aggressive various views arose in which the NAACP began being considered irresponsible, some even went as far as labeling them as communists because of their strong beliefs and assertive tactics that were as assertive as they could have been to bring about social change. As time passed, members of the group became very aware that legal action was effective and stuck to it, which eventually made the group become somewhat outdated and less influential.[[8]](#footnote-8) In 1910, only one year after the foundation of the NAACP, the Urban League was formed. Members of The Urban league had a different approach and believed in the assimilation of blacks into American culture with a principle motive of easing the transition of Southern rural blacks into urban life. The first two civil rights organizations that emerged in the United States developed differently due to different views and approaches people had on the most effective way of attaining rights, thus creating a split in the movement from the beginning which only grew larger as the movement progressed.

Similarly to the differences that emerged with the formations of the NAACP and the Urban League, various philosophical differences also developed among the first Civil Rights leaders, specifically Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois. Because of these ideological differences many came to possess, divisions within the movement deepened. Booker T. Washington had been born a slave, and was freed during the Civil War when Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. He eventually made his way through college, and in 1881 formed the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, an industrial school for African-Americans.[[9]](#footnote-9)In 1895 Washington was asked to deliver a speech at the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta, this speech would eventually become one of Washington’s most notable addresses, the Atlanta Compromise. In the speech, Washington recounted a story about a distressed ship whose passengers were in need of water and another vessel who aided them, commanding them to, “Cast down your bucket where you are.”[[10]](#footnote-10)Washington eventually proceeded in using this story as a metaphor for the relationship he believed blacks and whites should have with each other, advising people to, “Cast down your bucket where you are — cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by when we are surrounded.”[[11]](#footnote-11)He found it crucial for the two races to work together and help each other achieve their desires, but found it necessary for whites to aid African-Americans in beginning their development into a more sophisticated group of people. Washington eventually went on to say that he advocated segregation, telling blacks that their race was starting at the bottom, and needed to grow and develop before competing with the white man.

On the opposing side, W.E.B. DuBois had a different philosophy and saw an opposite approach to be much more beneficial for the advancement of the black community. DuBois, one of the founders of the NAACP was born in the North, and had never been enslaved. He was one of the first blacks to graduate from Harvard and later obtained a PhD from a German university. He had much more radical views and demanded full and equal rights immediately, believing it was the only way blacks would ever make progress in America.[[12]](#footnote-12)His primary goals for African-Americans were, “(1) The right to vote; (2) Civil equality [and] (3) The education of youth according to ability.”[[13]](#footnote-13)In his Niagara Address in 1906, DuBois described his desires for the black community further:

“We will not be satisfied to take one jot or title less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America”[[14]](#footnote-14)

Unlike Washington, DuBois wanted blacks to have full rights immediately, and pushed for assimilation rather than segregation. DuBois even attack Washington’s Atlanta Compromise, saying, “Mr. Washington distinctly asks that black people give up, at least for the present, three things—First political power. Second, insistence on civil rights. Third, higher education of Negro Youth.”[[15]](#footnote-15)DuBois’s views differed greatly from Washington’s, creating a greater division within the early civil rights activist community due to competing philosophies.

The Washington and DuBois conflict developed because of differing ideologies among two very prominent Civil Rights leaders. That being said, these varying opinions were not only present between the two men, but spread across the black community, creating separation among the different people the two represented. Authors Patricia and Frederick McKissack describe this separation further: “Black people did not think with a collective brain. It was foolish to think that they did, and it was just as ridiculous to believe that they would all acquiesce to one man’s political leadership.”[[16]](#footnote-16) The philosophical differences between leaders during the beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement essentially laid the foundations for a movement which was already divided, and would continue to grow as various more factors caused these divisions to become greater.

The official commencement of the Civil Rights Movement is considered to have taken place in the early 1950s and is typically recognized by the several boycotts, and other forms of peaceful protest that occurred during the earlier phases of the movement. Two events in particular captured the nation’s attention and brought the movement into action: the Supreme Court ruling in the case *Brown vs. Board of Education*, in 1954 where segregated schools were eliminated,and the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 where preceding the arrest of Rosa Parks after declining to give up her seat to a white passenger, black residents boycotted the bus service for a year, crippling it greatly. Being the organizer of the boycott, the event also led to the rise of Martin Luther King and thus marked the beginning of the nonviolent phase of the Civil Rights Movement.[[17]](#footnote-17)

While the rise of Martin Luther King and the beginning of the nonviolent phase of the Civil Rights movement had begun with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, it deepened with King’s founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC for short) in 1957, which centered around nonviolent civil disobedience as its main tactic. This tactic eventually led to the emergence of other civil rights groups such as SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which grew directly out of the sit in movement, where participants were trained to endure abuse without resorting to violence.[[18]](#footnote-18) Although nonviolent, there were still large amounts of white resistance to these protests; one of the most significant displays was in Birmingham, Alabama where dogs and fire hoses were directed at civil rights demonstrators, children included. [[19]](#footnote-19)

As the Civil Rights movement progressed from the nonviolent phase in the mid to late 1960s, new leaders arose, tactics changed, and more divisions within it emerged, creating more gaps between the approaches taken to achieve goals, and the people that advocated these certain goals, which in turn made the movement less effective. Patricia and Frederick McKissack describe this concept further:

“Divisions within the Civil Rights Movement’s organization, always present, became more evident in the mid 1960s. A growing number of blacks, including Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael questioned whether nonviolence could truly lead America to reform, repudiated integration, and spoke of leading the masses of the black ghettos through a ‘black revolution’”.[[20]](#footnote-20)

By this time, various civil rights had been granted to African- Americans by law, the primary being the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which essentially ended any form of legal segregation and discrimination. The different aspects of the law are described:

“To enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide injunctive relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

Although these significant legal rights had been achieved, urban African-Americans, young males specifically saw no change in their lives in terms of social and economic equality considering, “White Southerners still used legal and extralegal means to deprive black Southerners of their constitutional rights, and in the North, de facto segregation meant that often African American lived in the worst urban neighborhoods and had to attend the worst urban schools”[[22]](#footnote-22) Because of this lack of change in so many lives, many blacks turned towards other tactics in achieving their desires, violence being one of the most notable, and further dividing the movement as many took different actions. Another one of the reasons violence eventually arose was because of the role of masculinity in American society, where men were expected to have a certain willingness to defend themselves and women. Through the nonviolent phase, many became less willing to let themselves be attacked without any form of retaliation.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Although many blacks saw nonviolence as less effective than violence, the opposite was actually true. With the shift to violence that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement, the movement became much less effective. Nonviolent action was so effective because of the violence it produced from people it was directed towards. Author Mark Treanor describes the effectiveness of King’s tactics, “Nonviolent direct action was successful in the South because it exerted political, economic, and moral pressure upon the segregationist order. It was this coercive element in King’s nonviolent method that provoked violence from racists.”[[24]](#footnote-24) What nonviolent protestors did was expose the true nature of racists, and with their cruel responses to it brought sympathy to African-Americans. However, with the shift towards violence, the opposite view was created, showing whites that their assumptions were correct and blacks were dangerous and unfit for the rights they so desperately desired. This meant that the separation between violence and nonviolence within the Civil Rights Movement affected the effectiveness of the movement as a whole.

In the late 1950s Malcolm X, another very prominent Civil Rights leader arose with very different views than Martin Luther King and other leaders at the time. X had a huge impact on the cultural consciousness of African Americans and essentially revolutionized the black mind by, “transforming docile Negroes and self-effacing colored people into proud blacks and self-confident African Americans”.[[25]](#footnote-25) He taught blacks to love themselves before loving others and to embrace their culture, saying, “you can’t hate the roots of the tree and not hate the tree; you can’t hate your origin and not end up hating yourself; you can’t hate Africa and not hate yourself”.[[26]](#footnote-26)He described blacks as being in a zombie-like state not knowing their true languages or religions, but rather accepting the “slave master’s culture.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

X encouraged blacks to, “stand up and do something for [themselves] instead of sitting around and waiting for the white people to solve [their] problems and tell [them] [they] are free”.[[28]](#footnote-28)However, this Black Nationalist message was unpopular in the African American community and both the black and white media, who labeled him as a promoter of violence and a teacher of hate. What made it so difficult for Malcolm X to gain support was that his rise took place during the late 1950s and early 1960s, the age of Martin Luther King, a time where people advocated integration and love. [[29]](#footnote-29)Contrary to King, Malcolm X rejected integration, saying it was insufficient to four hundred years of slave labor, and rather wanted blacks to hire and build up using their own kind.[[30]](#footnote-30)He saw nonviolence as the “philosophy of a fool” in which whites were allowed to stay superior; similarly, he ridiculed King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, saying blacks were living a nightmare.[[31]](#footnote-31) These strong views of what X called an ‘American nightmare’ are seen especially in his 164 speech *Ballot or the Bullet* where he says:

“No, I’m not an American. I’m one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So I’m not standing here speaking to as an American, or a patriot, or a flag salute, or a flag-waver—no, not I. I’m speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don’t see an American dream; I see an American nightmare.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

Nonetheless, although his ideas were a bit controversial X proved to be one of the most prominent Civil Rights leaders and left a lasting impact on modern American society. However, these huge differences among such influential civil rights leaders left great differences among blacks who divided when they lost confidence that their desires were being achieved.

Because both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King had such major influences in the Civil Rights Movement, their assassinations left the African American community lost, and ultimately became another major reason for the split in the movement, plunging the late 1960s into an era of turmoil and social unrest. Malcolm X was assassinated on February 21, 1965 by members of a Black Muslim extremist group he had broken ties with the year before, while addressing a rally in New York City.[[33]](#footnote-33) However, at the time of his death X’s views were still considered very controversial and his death did not have as significant as an impact on the Civil Rights Movement as the later death of King. Instead, Malcolm’s X views became much more attractive after his death. X’s highest impact remains on blacks living in ghettos in American cities; nonetheless he taught millions that they should be proud of their race and embrace their culture. His image remains embroidered on clothing, pins, and music art.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee by James Earl Ray while standing on the balcony of Lorraine Motel. King had been in the area in preparation for a peaceful march in support of striking sanitation workers.[[35]](#footnote-35) Sudden violence spread throughout multiple urban areas after his death as: “…mourners unleashed their rage at the loss of their leader”[[36]](#footnote-36). The loss of these leaders was one of the primary causes of the split within the movement. Without guidance many blacks turned to violence, others became inactive, and without a common goal unrest spread rapidly.

Differences in interpretation of black desires were also very prominent and contributed to the divisions within the Civil Rights Movement. Various factors in the late 1960s led to drastic changes in the Civil Rights Movement’s leadership, some of them including increasing tensions in the Vietnam War, continued resistance in the South, and unrest in Northern ghettos. [[37]](#footnote-37)Riots broke out in several urban areas including Detroit and Los Angeles; however, Harlem’s riots were some of the most significant:

“The Harlem riot in New York City, which started July 18, [1964] became something of a model for the outbreaks of urban violence. Black people, confined by segregation to neighborhoods that received lower-quality government services than their white counterparts (they—and, soon, the social scientists and journalists—called them ‘ghettoes’), struck out violently against the symbols of their repression”[[38]](#footnote-38)

This massive unrest due to a lack of social equality led many to look to other leaders and different tactics they believed would better help them achieve their desires, which in turn divided the movement further.

Stokely Carmichael was one of the leaders that arose during this difficult time frame. Carmichael was formerly part of the civil rights organization SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and went on to form the Lowndes County Organization, which helped aid thousands of blacks in registering to vote. However, in 1965 when faced with violence during a peaceful march from Tennessee to Mississippi, Carmichael and his fellow participants, including Martin Luther King, were met with an abundance of violence and brutality and the protestors were arrested. When Carmichael was released from custody he declared, “Never again will I take a beating without hitting back.”[[39]](#footnote-39) From this, arose the concept of Black Power, which referred to the coming together of black people, their unity in electing representatives, and so on.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Eventually, this Black Power slogan became the symbol of young militants who were no longer convinced that nonviolence could achieve their goals and wanted rights granted to them immediately.[[41]](#footnote-41) Nevertheless, some interpreted the slogan as blacks building their own communities, institutions, and having alliances with whites on better terms. Blacks with more radical beliefs, who described themselves as ‘black nationalists’ on the other hand, interpreted the slogan as America ridding itself of racism, and blacks living as separately from whites as possible.[[42]](#footnote-42) The basic distinctions within the Black Power movement were between pluralists and nationalists, also known as separatists. Pluralists believed the political system could be reformed to include blacks.[[43]](#footnote-43)They, “believed reform could be achieved through transforming powerless ghetto into an empowered ethnic enclave.”[[44]](#footnote-44) Pluralists targeted public schools, black political parties, and belied community control, which eventually gave them empowerment at national levels. The other sector of the Black Power movement, nationalists, did not believe the prospects of reforming the system and gaining power from within, leading them to reject the mainstream ideals such as social, political, and cultural self-governing. Because of the different leaders and ideologies that emerged as the movement progressed from the nonviolent phase, divisions in the movement increased.

The Black Power movement led to the production of many new leaders, Huey Newton being one of them. Newton later went on to found the Black Panther party in Oakland, California which organized breakfast programs in ghettos and informed the poor of their legal rights.[[45]](#footnote-45)Essentially, the Panthers made the same demands other Civil Rights leaders had been making for years, including fair employment, better housing, and equal opportunity for blacks. However, all of this was overshadowed by the image the party projected. Members of the party were recognized by their huge afros, tough language, black leather clothing, and black berets. They resembled a ‘black army’ and whites envisoned them rising up and taking over America, while the party was accepted by ghetto youth.[[46]](#footnote-46)

The persistent desires of blacks for a certain type of society, led them to lean towards certain different leaders and parties they viewed would achieve their desires. However, the fear and resistance from whites that followed this shift in the Civil Rights Movement to more violent, radical, tactics caused the effectiveness of the movement to lessen. Many Southern whites feared blacks gaining the same rights they had because, “They clung to the notion that rights were finite, and that as blacks gained freedom, whites must suffer a loss of their own liberties. On the precarious seesaw of Southern race relations, whites thought they would plummet if blacks ascended.”[[47]](#footnote-47)The turn to violence only added to the fear many whites had of black equality because it showed that white assumptions were correct, and blacks were too dangerous to be considered their equals, making the movement less effective.

The Civil Rights Movement left lasting impacts on modern black society. The separation among blacks during the movement into very distinct groups with distinct goals and ways of achieving them such as the Black Panthers and SNCC, created a society in which blacks had different views of what a good society should included and what their relationships with whites should be, leading to varying social opinions among blacks. When the Civil Rights Movement was coming to an end and crisis and riots filled urban communities, middle class whites and blacks were driven out of these urban environments and settled in northern suburban cities, leaving poor, underprivileged blacks and whites in urban “ghettos”, where many remain today.[[48]](#footnote-48)

In conclusion, within the Civil Rights movement were multiple areas of separation, the principal reasons being because of differing philosophical views, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, and a lack of change in the social and economic lives of blacks. The Movement, and also the divisions incorporated within it, left a lasting impact and somewhat of a separation among modern African-Americans. These divisions that were so powerful made the movement’s effectiveness a challenge because of the abundance of competing desires within it. Nonetheless, the Civil Rights Movement proved to be revolutionary for African Americans as it helped them achieve rights they deserved and also transformed American democracy, in the sense that voting privileges became available to more people.[[49]](#footnote-49)It served as a model for later movements for women, the mentally disabled, the elderly, and gays and lesbians. The Civil Rights Movement showed how powerful a group of people can be when they work together. It is solely because of its occurrence that African Americans are able to live at peace in this country today.

Word Count: 4,629

Annotated Bibliography

Austin, Curtis J. "Civil Rights Groups." *Civil Rights Groups*. Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage at The University of Southern Mississippi, n.d. Web. 05 Jan. 2014.

This source was acquired on the website of The University of Southern Mississippi. It contained a useful list of some of the most prominent Civil Rights Groups, their goals, and their actions, which was useful in the sense that it made it much easier to point out differences between them.

"Black Power." *Ushistory.org*. Independence Hall Association, n.d. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

This source was similar to an encyclopedia consisting of solely American history. It proved to be very helpful in summarizing important events and people, specifically Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

Campbell, Clarice T. *Civil Rights Chronicle: Letters from the South*. Jackson: University of Mississippi, 1997. Print.

This source is essentially an accumulation of letters the author, Clarice T. Campbell wrote to her family when spending a summer at different universities and cities in the Southern States. The letters are valuable primary sources considering they are from a white women’s perspective. It is also quite interesting to look into how people on the outside of the movement, specifically white Americans, interpreted certain events.

Carson, Clayborne. "Civil Rights Movement." *History.com*. A&E Television Networks, n.d. Web. 02 Jan. 2014.

This source was acquired on History.Com and gave a brief overview of the Civil Rights Movement, however what made it valuable was the description of the post Civil Rights years, and the advancement of black communities after their rights were obtained.

"Civil Rights Act of 1964." *PBS*. PBS, n.d. Web. 10 Feb. 2014.

This source was found on the internet and is Civil Rights Act of 1964. The law in its completion was displayed in writing on this website and was a very useful primary source.

Dudley, William. *The Civil Rights Movement: Opposing Viewpoints*. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven, 1996. Print.

This source is very helpful with my topic specifically because it deals with exactly what I am researching, the different viewpoints that were present among different groups of people and leaders during the Civil Rights Movement and the different Civil Rights groups that emerged because of it.

Ezra, Michael. *Civil Rights Movement: People and Perspectives*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009. Print.

This source is very similar to William Dudley’s, *The* *Civil Rights Movement: Opposing Viewpoints* in the sense that it analyzes the different perspectives and opinions that were present within the movement, and the different tactics these different groups of people used in achieving their desires.

Geschwender, James A. *The Black Revolt: The Civil Rights Movement, Ghetto Uprisings, and Separatism,*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971. Print.

This source is one of the best sources I have used at this point in the researching process. Not only does it analyze the differences in black opinion and civil rights groups during the movement, but it goes even further than that in explaining the impact and separation these specific differences have had on more modern times.

Hamilton, Virginia. *The Writings of W.E.B. DuBois*. New York: Library of America, 1986. Print.

This was a primary source, DuBois’s Niagara Address, which was originally obtained through a packet handed out in class about the differences between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, which is what it ended up being used for during the researching process.

Iton, Richard. *In Search of the Black Fantastic: Politics and Popular Culture in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.

This source described black society post Civil Rights Movement, however was a very challenging read and ended up not being very useful while researching this topic.

Karson, Jill. *Leaders of the Civil Rights Movement*. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven, 2005. Print.

This source was a description of the most prominent leaders during the Civil Rights Movement, their goals, and their achievements and was very useful in categorizing these specific goals, groups, and achievements that occurred during the movement.

Kurland, Daniel J. "Malcolm X." *Malcolm X*. N.p., 2000. Web. 10 Feb. 2014.

This source was a short article written about the assassination of Malcolm X. It was very helpful in teaching me about the event itself and what exactly occurred.

McKissack, Patricia, and Fredrick McKissack. *The Civil Rights Movement in America from 1865 to the Present*. Chicago: Childrens, 1987. Print.

This source has also been one of the better sources I have used thus far. It lays out every historical event that had some time of impact on the Civil Rights Movement in a chronological and very comprehendible fashion.

Powledge, Fred. *Free at Last?: The Civil Rights Movement and the People Who Made It*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1991. Print.

This source was a book written on the various controversial issues of the Civil Rights Movement and an analyzing of its outcomes. It was used specifically in describing the urban riots that took place during the Movement.

Treanor, Mark. *The Civil Rights Movement*. Farmington Hills: Greenhaven, 2003. Print.

This source was a great starting point for me in beginning my research, as it described the crucial points, and gave somewhat of a summary of the movement. It also provided a substantial amount of background information that I tend to include in my finalized product.

Sokol, Jason. "IIP Digital | U.S. Department of State." *White Southerners' Reactions to the Civil Rights Movement*. N.p., 29 Dec. 2008. Web. 11 Feb. 2014.

This was a very helpful source in that it gave me a much deeper understanding of white resistance and fears during the Civil Rights Movement, the background behind it, and the justifications that were given for it.

Vox, Lisa. "Civil Rights Act of 1964." *About.com African-American History*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Feb. 2014.

This source was also very useful to me. It was a description about the Civil Rights Act of 1964 but focused more specifically on how it affected blacks and the troubles that remained for them after it had been passed.

Washington, Booker T. "Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address." Address. Atlanta Address. Atlanta. 18 Sept. 1895. *The Standard Printed Version of Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.

This was another primary source, Booker T. Washington’s Atlanta Exposition Address, later known as the “Atlanta Compromise”. It was acquired through the same class packet in which the DuBois Address was found and was very helpful in analyzing the differences between DuBois and Washington further.

Wilson, Donald G. "The Martin Luther King Assassination." *Martin Luther King Assassination*. N.p., 27 Mar. 2013. Web. 10 Feb. 2014.

This source was a description of the assassination of Martin Luther King and the affects it had on the rest of the black community and the Civil Rights Movement as a whole. It was very effective in describing the troubles that resulted because of it.

X, Malcolm. "Ballot or the Bullet." "The Negro Revolt--What Comes Next? Cory Methodist Church, Cleveland. 3 Apr. 1964. Speech

This was a primary source; a speech given by Malcolm X describing his views on black’s place in America and what he believed should be done to change it. It was very helpful in allowing me to achieve a better understanding of his motives and beliefs.

Bibliographic Essay

In choosing the topic for my Junior Thesis, I referred back to topics of history that were of some sort of interest or relevance to me. Being African American myself, the Civil Rights Movement has always been something both important to me and of interest to me. However, all I really knew about the topic before beginning my research were lists of facts and names I had been taught in school. I had never truly dug deeper into the event independently, and thought it would be something interesting to do and to spend time learning more in depth about. In searching for a thesis topic I did not consult with anyone in particular, but after my topic was definite and I dove into the huge researching process, both family and teachers were very helpful in assisting me. Most of my sources were either found online or from various libraries in the area. The majority of books I used were either from the Newton Free Library or the Boston College Library. The most helpful sources I found were surprisingly not sources focused on a specific aspect of the Movement, but ones that described the movement in its entirety in a broader sense. This way, it was much easier for me to connect certain event and specific people to the larger picture, which was very helpful. It was extremely difficult for me to find sources related to the divisions within the Civil Rights Movement. The majority of the sources I found were focused on a specific side of the split rather than the split itself which made research very challenging for me.

While the first few steps in beginning the research were amusing at some points, the actual writing of the assignment itself was absolutely horrible and not fun at all. Perhaps it would have been a bit more enjoyable if I had not been under such strict deadlines or running on an extreme lack of sleep every time I had to sit down and do it, but I can safely say that I do not believe I have ever had a higher stress level than I had while writing the actual paper itself. The rough draft and final draft proved to be equally difficult for me because I had so much altering and adding of topics to complete after the rough draft had been handed back. Considering all of the additional arguments I had to include, it was also very difficult for me to edit enough out to be a bit closer to the word count limit. While I did chop out huge chunks of my original paper it is still a bit over the 4,500 word mark.

Although the experience was extremely unpleasant, I believe the assignment did have its benefits in preparing us for future assignments many of us will have similar to this one in college or even in the workplace later in life. Also, in simply making me learn so much more about a topic that was actually somewhat interesting to me. It might have been a bit more interesting if we had the opportunity to read the work of our peers in class, and learn about a few other topics people researched, considering the fact that now we’re all experts on one specific topic others may know absolutely nothing about. This week was probably the hardest week I’ve ever had to endure during my school career and the smallest amount of sleep I have ever had to run on because of this thesis and also all the stress and pressure that came along with it. However, now it’s finally over and I feel like I should do something to celebrate but in all honesty I’ll most likely just sleep for twenty four hours instead. Now that’s what you call a thesis celebration if you ask me. That was most definitely a life changing experience, but whether it changed it for the better or for the worse is debatable.

1. William, Dudley, The Civil Rights Movement: Opposing Viewpoints (San Diego, CA: Greenhaven, 1996), 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, 14-15 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid, 15-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. James A., Geschwender, The Black Revolt: The Civil Rights Movement, Ghetto Uprisings, and Separatism (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 48 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid, 49 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid, 44-45 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Frederick and Patricia McKissack, The Civil Rights Movement in America from 1865 to the Present (Chicago, Illinois: Childrens, 1987), 78 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Washington, Booker T., The Standard Printed Version of Booker T. Washington’s Atlanta Exposition Address (Atlanta, 1895) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. DuBois, W.E.B., The Writings of W.E.B. DuBois (New York: Library of America, 1986), 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. McKissack, 80 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. DuBois, 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. McKissack, 80 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid, 82-83 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid, 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid, 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. “Civil Rights Act of 1964” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/lbj-civilrights/> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Lisa Vox, “Civil Rights Act of 1964” <http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/civilrightsstruggle1/a/CivilRightAct1964.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Geschwender, 45-46 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Mark, Treanor, The Civil Rights Movement (Farmington Hills: Greenhaven, 2003), 76 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid, 124 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid, 127-128 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Ibid, 139-140 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid, 129 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Malcolm, X, “Ballot or the Bullet” (Cleveland, Ohio), 1964 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Dan J. Kurland, “The Assassination of Malcolm X”, <http://www.criticalreading.com/malcolm.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Karson, 131-132 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Donald Wilson, “The Martin Luther King Assassination”,

    < http://www.maryferrell.org/wiki/index.php/Martin\_Luther\_King\_Assassination> [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. “54f. Martin Luther King Jr.” < http://www.ushistory.org/us/54f.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. McKissack, 250 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Fred, Powledge, Free At Last? The Civil Rights Movement and the People Who Made It (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1991), 591 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid, 252 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Treanor, 99-100 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Michael, Ezra, Civil Rights Movement: People and Perspectives (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 114 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. McKissack, 253 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Jason Sokol, “White Southerners’ Reactions to the Civil Rights Movement”, < http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/publication/2009/01/20090106143801jmnamdeirf0.9369623.html#axzz2tA01HlzO> [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. McKissack, 268 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Carson, 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)