

Ella Baker (1903-1986)

- Advocate of mass protest
- Grass roots activist
- Believer in participatory democracy
- Grandfather-deep sense of social responsibility, and involvement in community
- NAACP staff member- 1938, President of NYC branch- 1952
- Formed *In Friendship* to support Montgomery boycotters-
- SCLC- the organization of nonviolent direct action
- BUT King did not seize the moment
- Organized SCLC's "Crusade for Citizenship" in Georgia-1958- inspired by Septima Clark's Highlander school
- Conflicts with male colleagues-"a determined woman" Patriarchy of black church
- Conflict with King- subservient role for women, Emphasis on grass roots organizing- criticized top-down leadership
- 1960- student Sit-ins an opportunity to use her skills as a community activist!
- Students valued her wisdom, energy and experience

- Broke with SCLC- Key advisor to student activists that created the student-led organization SNCC- John Lewis, “our personal Gandhi”, the spiritual mother of SNCC”
- Carmichael quote
- Helped organize Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party
- Life-long activist

Fannie Lou Hamer (1917-1977)

- Plantation sharecropper and timekeeper in Sunflower County Mississippi home of Senator James Eastland- ardent segregationist, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary committee
- Epiphany- indignity of life as a sharecropper, several miscarriages, uterine tumor, sterilized by doctor without consent
- Civil rights workers arrive 1 year later- James Forman and James Bevel
- The vote- rid of white officials, and the persecution of white supremacy
- 1962- Inspired by SNCC activists, tried to register to vote- fired, lost home- extreme harassment
- Finds her voice- eloquence, powerful singing, ironic one-liners, Mississippi- “home of the grave and the land of the tree”
- P. 256- Freedom Summer, enters a church in Ruleville
- 1963- Beaten in Winona, Mississippi jail
- 1963- oldest SNCC employee
- 1964- Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party organizer- challenges the seating of the Mississippi delegation to the 1964 Democratic Convention- white only!

- Televised Testimony “I Question America”
- “How dare this outsider, this sharecropper, this woman steal the show at his convention!” - Johnson aide
- Life-long civil rights activist

Diane Nash (1938-)

- Raised in Chicago- Fisk University (Nashville, TN)- marry well, MRS
- Epiphany- first encounters with Jim Crow- TN state fair restrooms
- Attended James Lawson's nonviolence workshops- studies Gandhi, Thoreau, Catholicism- convert to nonviolent direct action
- Student leader of Nashville sit-ins led second wave where students were arrested for disturbing the peace after being attacked by thugs- "jail without bail" 20 years old!
- Confronts Mayor Ben West- "Mayor West, do you feel it is wrong to discriminate against a person solely on the basis of their race or color?"
- SNCC founding member- recognized leader
- Organizer of Freedom Rides, Birmingham, March on Washington, Selma activist
- John Lewis called her "the most daring of our leaders"
- Chicago public schools teacher
- Activist- housing, welfare