**January, 2013 Workshop**

***1963: “A Change is Gonna Come”***

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

1. **Abernathy, Ralph**
2. **Anderson, Marian**
3. **Baker, Ella**
4. **Barnett, Ross**
5. **Bevel, James**
6. **Campbell, Cloves Sr.**
7. **Connor, Bull**
8. **Cooke, Sam**
9. **Dylan, Bob**
10. **Ellis, Opal**
11. **Evers, Medgar**
12. **Evers, Myrlie**
13. **Farmer, James**
14. **Forman, James**
15. **Goode, Calvin**
16. **Hamer, Fannie Lou**
17. **Jackson, Mahalia**
18. **– 22. King, Martin Luther Jr.**
19. **Lewis, John**
20. **Lincoln, Abbey**
21. **Malcolm X**
22. **Mayfield, Curtis**
23. **Meredith, James**
24. **Moses, Bob**
25. **Nash, Diane**
26. **Odetta**
27. **Pena, Manuel**
28. **Randolph, A. Philip**
29. **Ragsdale, Eleanor**
30. **Ragsdale, Lincoln**
31. **Rustin, Bayard**
32. **Simone, Nina**
33. **Wallace, George**
34. **Wilkins, Roy**
35. **Williams, Hosea**
36. **Shuttlesworth, Fred**
37. **Young, Whitney**

**RALPH ABERNATHY (1926-1990)**

As Martin Luther King’s closest friend and advisor, Ralph Abernathy became a central figure in the civil rights struggle during the Montgomery bus boycott. ‘‘Abernathy infused his audiences with new life and ardor. The people loved and respected him as a symbol of courage and strength,’’ King wrote in *Stride Toward Freedom* (73–74).

Abernathy was born on 11 March 1926 to William L. and Louivery Bell Abernathy of Linden, Alabama. His father, the son of a slave, supported his family of 12 as a farmer while serving as deacon of the local Baptist church.

Abernathy graduated from Linden Academy and then served overseas with the United States Army toward the end of World War II. He was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1948, and two years later he received a BS in mathematics at Alabama State College in Montgomery. He later earned an MA in sociology from Atlanta University (1958).

While a graduate student at Atlanta University, Abernathy heard King preach at [Ebenezer Baptist Church](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_ebenezer_baptist_church/). In his autobiography, Abernathy recalled ‘‘burning with envy’’ at King’s ‘‘learning and confidence,’’ and he immediately saw King as a ‘‘man with a special gift from God’’ (Abernathy, 89). Abernathy introduced himself to King that day and their friendship began.

In 1952 Abernathy became pastor of Montgomery’s First Baptist Church. He was active in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and chaired the State Sunday School and Baptist Training Union Congress’ committee on the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. He issued a report urging ministers to fight against segregation, writing, ‘‘Our business as Christians is to get rid of a system that creates bad men’’ (*Papers* 2:35).

Shortly after the arrest of Rosa Parks on 1 December 1955, [E. D. Nixon](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_nixon_edgar_daniel_1899_1987/) contacted Abernathy to discuss the idea of a bus boycott. Abernathy, King, and other community leaders met to create a new organization to guide the protest movement. At Abernathy’s suggestion, the new organization was called the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA).

The different styles of Abernathy and King combined to create an effective and inspiring message at the boycott’s weekly mass meetings. While King emphasized the philosophical implications of nonviolence and the movement, Abernathy helped energize the people into positive action. ‘‘Now,’’ he would tell the audience following King’s address, ‘‘let me tell you what that means for tomorrow morning’’ (Raines, 54).

In January 1957, shortly after Abernathy’s home and church were bombed, Abernathy joined with King and African American leaders to form the organization that was eventually called the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The organization was designed to support the movement to peacefully implement the Supreme Court’s decision outlawing bus segregation by coordinating the action of local protest groups throughout the South. King was elected president of SCLC, and Abernathy became financial secretary-treasurer.

In November 1959, King announced to his Dexter Avenue Baptist Church congregation that he would be moving to Atlanta to be closer to SCLC headquarters. In January 1960, King officially announced Abernathy as the new president of the MIA: ‘‘[Abernathy] has proven his ability as a leader.… and I predict that under his leadership, Montgomery will grow to higher heights and new and creative things will be done’’ (*Papers* 5:354).

Abernathy struggled with meeting the commitments of the MIA and his ministry in Montgomery and SCLC in Atlanta. King helped remedy the problem by recommending that West Hunter Baptist Church in Atlanta hire Abernathy in late 1960. King informed a member of the church, ‘‘Ralph is a dynamic and able preacher, an exceptionally good administrator and organizer, and a great community leader. I am sure that he could give to West Hunter a type of leadership that would both double its membership and its spiritual impact in the community’’ (*Papers* 5:581). Abernathy accepted the position and moved to Atlanta in 1961.

King and Abernathy provided a great deal of support to one another. The two were jailed together 17 times. Abernathy recalled that their time in jail together allowed them to ‘‘make plans and draw strength from one another’’ (Abernathy, 254). At King’s request, Abernathy became vice-president of SCLC, because King knew that should he die, Abernathy would be able to lead the organization.

After King’s assassination in 1968, Abernathy became SCLC’s president. To prepare for the challenges ahead, he fasted for seven days and nights, telling the *New York Post* that he ‘‘needed to pray and fast for strength that I might carry on as he requested, and as the board of directors of SCLC unanimously requested, in nonviolence. I want to hold no ill will in my heart toward the assassin or anyone else for taking the life of my dearest friend, closer to me than a blood brother’’ (Michaelson, ‘‘On the Other Side’’).

Abernathy followed through with the march that King had planned to lead in support of the Memphis sanitation workers. He also continued efforts to organize the Poor People’s Campaign in Washington, D.C., the last major movement of SCLC. Yet, despite Abernathy’s commitment to SCLC, the organization never found the same kind of success it had under King’s leadership. After resigning his position in SCLC in 1977, Abernathy made an unsuccessful bid for Congress. He remained pastor of West Hunter Baptist Church and formed the Foundation for Economic Enterprises Development, an organization designed to improve black economic opportunities.

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**Source** *The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**MARIAN ANDERSON (1897-1993)**

Anderson was born in 1897 in South Philadelphia. Hard-working and respectable, her mother was a former schoolteacher. Her father delivered ice and coal throughout the city. At the heart of their community stood the Union Baptist Church at the corner of Fitzwater and Martin Streets. It was within these walls that Marian first began to sing. Her two younger sisters also possessed musical talent, but it was Marian who garnered the most attention. When she was only 14, the choirmaster, Alexander Robinson, moved her from the youth to the adult choir. She stunned the other members not only with the strength and beauty of her voice, but also with her ability to sing any part of a hymn upon demand. Whether it was the soprano, alto, tenor, or bass part that Robinson needed, he could rely on Marian to provide it.

The congregation had such faith in her that they started a "Marian Anderson's Future Fund," which would pay for lessons with the city's leading voice instructors and support her performances. The fund would provide Marian with the support she needed after her father's death in 1911. She continued to give concerts while she attended the South Philadelphia High School for Girls, and her teacher, Dr. Lucy Langdon Wilson, arranged for the famed Italian voice master, Giuseppe Boghetti, to hear her. He remembers this first meeting as occurring "at the end of a long hard day, when I was weary of singing and singers, and when a tall calm girl poured out ‘Deep River' in the twilight and made me cry." While Philadelphia conservatories turned Marian away with the refusal, "We don't take colored," she quickly acquired influential fans who would aid her career.

In 1925 Boghetti entered Marian in a contest with 300 other contestants. The winner would make a solo appearance with the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. Seventeen-year-old Marian auditioned and won. The achievement prompted Boghetti to take her to Europe. Training and performing, Marian made her European debut at the Paris Opera House in 1935. The success she met with there made her the toast of Europe, entertaining in command performances before King Gustav in Stockholm and King Christian in Copenhagen. As a young black woman from South Philadelphia who could superbly deliver Russian folk songs, classic German and French arias as well as Negro Spirituals, she was a wonder and people flocked to hear her. Sibelius, the Finnish composer, was so inspired that he dedicated the song, "Solitude," to her.

The success she encountered in Europe brought her back to America in 1935 for a public debut at [Carnegie Hall](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie/index.html) in New York. The day before the performance, while still on the *Ile de France*, Marian fell and broke her ankle. Determined to make her appearance, she performed the entire program standing on one foot, balancing against the piano, with her floor-length gown covering the cast on her ankle. Again, she met with success. It won her so much exposure and popularity that in 1936 she became the first African American to be invited to perform at the White House and then sang there again when Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt were entertaining the King and Queen of Great Britain in 1939.

Despite the fact that she was the country's third highest concert box office draw, Marian was still subject to the racial bias of the time. When she traveled in the United States, she was often, like all African Americans of her time, restricted to "colored" waiting rooms, hotels, and train cars. In once instance, she was allowed to stay in an upscale Los Angeles hotel, but not to enter its formal dining room. She learned to avoid these affronts by staying with friends in the cities where she performed and driving her own car instead of taking the train. When she performed in the South, despite a general acceptance by the public, the newspapers could not bring themselves to refer to her as "Miss Anderson." The Southern press came up with other forms of address in order to avoid paying her any type of deference; "Artist Anderson" and "Singer Anderson" frequently being used.

This type of treatment was symptomatic of the pervasive racism of the time. It finally came to a head in 1939 when Marian's manager, Sol Hurok, and Howard University tried to secure a performance for her at Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. The Daughters of the American Revolution, who owned the Hall, refused to accommodate Anderson. The rebuff was widely publicized when Eleanor Roosevelt, herself a member of the D.A.R., publicly resigned from the organization in protest. [In her letter](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/eleanor-race/) to the D.A.R., she wrote, "I am in complete disagreement with the attitude taken in refusing Constitution Hall to a great artist . . . You had an opportunity to lead in an enlightened way and it seems to me that your organization has failed." Outraged, the "Marian Anderson Committee" formed to petition the D.A.R. and likened the organization's action to those of [Hitler](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography/bulge-hitler/)'s racist regime.

In response, Eleanor and the Committee arranged for Marian to give her concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial with the Mall of Washington as her auditorium. Symbolically, the concert took place on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1939. The sun was shining as 75,000 people of all races crowded together; the largest gathering to assemble there since [Lindbergh](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lindbergh/)'s reception in 1927. Feeling the meaning of the occasion, Marian had tears in her eyes when she delivered "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" and "America" with heart-breaking pathos. The event was so momentous and inspiring that the D.A.R. finally invited Marian to sing at the Hall in 1943 for a war relief concert. At that event, both black and white concert-goers attended.

Marian's awards were many. In 1938 Eleanor Roosevelt presented her with the NAACP's Spingarn Award for "that American Negro who has made the highest achievement in any honorable field of endeavor." In 1941 she was granted the Edward Bok Award for distinguished service to the city of Philadelphia. A key moment in her career came in 1955 when she became the first African American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera. Three years after this immense achievement [President Eisenhower](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/34_eisenhower/index.html) named her a delegate to the 13th General Assembly of the United Nations. Over two dozen universities presented her with honorary doctorates and in 1963 [President Lyndon Johnson](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/video/lbj_01.html) awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

In 1965 Marian gave her final performance at Carnegie Hall in New York. Afterward, she settled with her husband, Orpheus Fisher, on a farm in Connecticut. She died of congestive heart failure on April 8, 1993. The following June, a memorial service attended by 2,000 admirers paid tribute to the singer whose beautiful voice exposed the country's ugly racial divisions. The singer who had once been barred from performing in the nation's capital and who had been forced to use the back entrance at posh hotels had become an American musical icon.

**SOURCE**

PBS *The American Experience*. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography/eleanor-anderson/

**ELLA JOSEPHINE BAKER (1903-1986)**

Rejecting King's charismatic leadership, Ella Baker advised student activists organizing the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to promote “group-centered leadership” rather than the “leader-centered” style she associated with King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) (Baker, Interview by John Britton, 19 June 1968). It was this grassroots leadership that Baker credited for the success and longevity of the movement: “You see, I think that, to be very honest, the movement made Martin rather than Martin making the movement. This is not a discredit to him. This is, to me, as it should be” (Baker, Interview, 19 June 1968).

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, on 13 December 1903, Baker was raised on the same land her grandparents had worked as slaves. Baker’s childhood was marked early on by the activist spirit of her mother, a member of the local missionary association, who called on women to act as agents of social change in their communities.

After graduating from Shaw University in 1927, Baker moved to New York, where she served as national director of the Young Negroes Cooperative League. In 1938, Baker joined the staff of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as an assistant field secretary and later as director of branches. Unable to redirect the organization's focus toward grassroots organizing, Baker resigned from her position in 1946. She joined the NAACP again in 1952 as president of the New York City branch. In 1956, Baker, along with Stanley Levison and Bayard Rustin, co-founded In Friendship to provide aid to local movements in the South.

In January 1958, Baker moved to Atlanta to organize SCLC's Crusade for Citizenship, a campaign to help enforce voting rights for black citizens. She ran SCLC's Atlanta headquarters: after executive director John Tilley resigned in April 1959, she filled in until a permanent director was hired the following year.

In addition to her criticism of SCLC’s organizing philosophy, Baker also experienced conflicts with her male colleagues. Andrew Young described Baker as a “determined woman” and went on to say: “The Baptist church had no tradition of women in independent leadership roles, and the result was dissatisfaction all around” (Young, 137).

Following the February 1960 sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, Baker and King called a conference of student activists at Shaw University. The result of the April meeting was a student-led organization known as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Already serving in an advisory capacity to the growing student movement, Baker left SCLC in August 1960.

In addition to continuing her involvement as an advisor to SNCC, Baker served as a consultant to the Southern Conference Education Fund (SCEF) throughout the mid-1960s and helped organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). She returned to New York in the late 1960s and remained active in the civil rights struggle until her death in 1986.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**ROSS BARNETT (1898-1987)**

**53RD GOVERNOR OF MISSISSIPPI: 1960-1964**

The office of governor is the only public office Ross Barnett ever held and the only political office for which he ever campaigned. He is also one of only two Mississippians who ran for the office four times. He ran and lost in 1951 and 1955, he was elected in 1959, and he ran again unsuccessfully in 1967. Governor Barnett was also the last governor who was born in the century in which Mississippi was admitted to statehood.

Born at Standing Pine in Leake County, Mississippi, on January 22, 1898, Barnett was one of Mississippi’s most successful trial lawyers. After graduating from Mississippi College in 1922, Barnett earned a law degree at the University of Mississippi in 1926 and opened a law practice in Jackson.

During Governor Barnett’s administration the state of Mississippi was celebrating the centennial of the American Civil War. The state was also adjusting to the great changes brought on by the Civil Rights Movement. Governor Barnett vowed to maintain segregation in the state’s public schools, even pledging to go to jail before he would allow integration. But in 1962, the United States Supreme Court directed the University of Mississippi to admit James H. Meredith, a black applicant. Meredith’s enrollment at Ole Miss broke the color barrier in Mississippi and his admission was the first step in the eventual elimination of all racial segregation in the state’s public schools and universities.

Although Governor Barnett is most remembered for the Meredith crisis at Ole Miss, there were several significant economic developments during his administration. A series of amendments to the state’s workmen’s compensation law and the enactment of a “right to work law,” made Mississippi more attractive to outside industry. More than 40,000 new jobs were created during his four years in office. Governor Barnett's industrial development program also included the construction of industrial parks throughout the state and the establishment of a Youth Affairs Department under the Agricultural and Industrial Board.

Governor Barnett resumed his law practice after leaving office in 1964, but continued an active interest in state politics. In 1967 he ran for governor but was eliminated in the first primary. After that defeat, Barnett resumed his law practice in Jackson. Governor Barnett was one of Mississippi’s last great “stump speakers” and remained a favorite at the Neshoba County Fair until his death on November 6, 1987. Ross Barnett Reservoir in Madison and Rankin counties and Barnett Lake in Smith County are named in honor of Governor Barnett.

*David Sansing, Ph.D., is history professor emeritus, University of Mississippi.*

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**Source**

*Mississippi Historical Society*. http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/265/index.php?s=extra&id=150

**JAMES BEVEL (1936-2008)**

Credited by Martin Luther King with initiating the Children’s Crusade during the Birmingham Campaign of 1963, James Bevel emerged as a civil rights leader from the ranks of the Nashville, Tennessee, student movement. Bevel was at King’s side during many of the major campaigns of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and was at the Lorraine Motel at the time of King’s assassination in 1968.

Bevel was born in Itta Bena, Mississippi, on 19 October 1936. He served in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1954 and 1955 before entering the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee. He was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1959, and went on to pastor the Chestnut Grove Baptist Church. During this period Bevel joined with fellow seminarian John Lewis, Diane Nash from Fisk University, and Vanderbilt’s James Lawson in the Nashville movement to initiate a local sit-in campaign in early February 1960. That same year, Bevel and the other Nashville activists attended the founding meeting of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at Shaw University. Bevel and Nash helped lead the Freedom Rides in 1961 and married later that year. In 1962 Bevel left SNCC to become Mississippi field secretary for SCLC.

Bevel and Nash moved to Alabama in the spring of 1963 and played leading roles, along with Dorothy Cotton, Andrew Young, Bernard Lee, Fred Shuttlesworth and the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, in the campaign to desegregate Birmingham. As the number of adult participants willing to go to jail dwindled, Bevel began recruiting black students from Birmingham’s high schools, colleges, and churches to participate in the protests. Mass demonstrations by students triggered a violent police response that brought national attention to Birmingham. One week later, city leaders reached an accord with movement leaders.

As he prepared to work on the Alabama voter registration movement that would later culminate in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March, Bevel informed King that more staff was needed to build a nonviolent movement in Alabama. (L to R) Ralph Abernathy, Andrew Young, King, and Coretta Scott King confer with James Bevel, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference’s vanguard organizer in Selma, during the last leg of the Selma to Montgomery March, 25 March 1965. Courtesy of Adele Saunders.

Bevel feared that activists who were not committed to nonviolence were conducting ‘‘demonstration[s] for the sake of demonstrating,’’ and that these tactics resulted in ‘‘rioting and deaths.’’ He advised, ‘‘In order to off-set these trends, the non-violent must project and execute a program that will [allow] more Negroes to become convinced of the effectiveness of non-violence and the principles of it.’’ Bevel further implored King to put ‘‘the whole non-violent staff’’ on the Alabama project (Bevel, 13 April 1964). His pressure paid off, and at the May 1964 executive staff meeting King recommended that SCLC increase its presence in Alabama. Bevel led this effort as the head of SCLC’s Direct Action Department.

Bevel moved to Chicago in 1965 to begin laying the groundwork for a nonviolent northern civil rights drive. Bevel went on to become national director of the Spring Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam in 1967 and, the following year, he joined King in the effort to win the Memphis sanitation workers strike. Bevel left SCLC after King’s death and became involved in the Republican Party and the 1995 Million Man March. He passed away on 19 December 2008 from pancreatic cancer.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp>01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia\_contents

**HERB BLOCK “HERBLOCK” (1909-2001)**

Few people had as unique a view of Herblock as Katharine Graham, the longtime chairman of The Washington Post. Here is an abridged version of her views from an article on Herblock's 50th anniversary with the Washington Post.

My Mother had a saying: "Any man worth marrying is impossible to live with." Why does this make me think of my glorious life and times with Herblock, one of the greatest ornaments to *The Post* and to all of journalism? Underneath his genius for cartooning and writing lies a modest, sweet, aw-shucks personality. Underneath that lies a layer of iron and steel. For the publishers and editors over him - or under him, as it would be more accurate to say - it's like having a tiger by the tail.

Herb fought for and earned a unique position at the paper: one of complete independence of anybody and anything. Journalistic enterprises run best when writers and editors have a lot of autonomy. But Herb's case is extreme. And because he's a genius, it works.

Since he arrived at *The Post*, five editors and five publishers have learned a cardinal rule: Don't mess with Herb. He's just as tough within the confines of *The Post* as he is in the political world outside.

Of course, this has produced a few tense moments.

I have sometimes opened the paper and gasped at Herb's cartoons, particularly during Watergate when we were so embattled on all fronts. But I learned not to interfere. And anyway, most of the time we're on the same wavelength. Even when we aren't, I should confess, I generally find myself laughing uproariously at the cartoon that has caused my apprehension. In this sense, Herb always wins.

Herb studies events and reacts to them in his own way. His point of view is liberal, and his instincts are commonsensical. But his common sense has a special twist. As economist Ken Galbraith once put it: "While Herb appreciates virtue, his real interest is in awfulness." His mind turns to the rascals, the phonies and the frauds.

Herb's unique ability to crystallize what is right - or, more likely, wrong - about an issue or a person has often influenced the course of events in Washington. Naturally, the strength and impact of his cartoons often provoke strong reactions from the readers who disagree. Part of the job of Post publishers is often to defend Herb and the paper from these reactions.

I have written my share of explanatory letters. One in 1989, said that to cartoon is to caricature, and people who are very gifted at cartooning sometimes offend. "Most of the time, however, cartoons illuminate or amuse," the letter went on to say. I doubt the irate reader was completely satisfied, but the statement, I believe, is true.

As Herb begins his second fifty years at *The Post*, he has lost none of his dynamic energy and original insight. He is going as strong as ever.

*The Post* and Herblock are forever intertwined. *The Post* is his forum. He helped create it, and he has been its shining light.

**Biographical Data**

* Born and educated in Chicago; 2 years at Lake Forest College; and part-time classes at Art Institute of Chicago.
* Editorial page cartoonist Chicago Daily News and NEA Service (Cleveland, Ohio); in U.S. Army 1943-45, before coming to The Washington Post in 1946.
* Pulitzer Prizes in cartooning, 1942, 1954, and 1979; in 1973 one of four staff members named in the Pulitzer Prize to The Washington Post for Public Service on Watergate.
* American Newspaper Guild Award, 1948; Heywood Broun Award, 1950; Sigma Delta Chi (National Journalism Society) awards, 1949, 1950, 1952, and 1957; Sidney Hillman Award (for book), 1953; National Cartoonists Society "Reuben" Outstanding Cartoonist Award, 1957; Hon. Ll.D. Lake Forest College, 1957; Lauterbach Award for services to Civil Liberties, 1959.
* Florina Lasker Award (NY Civil Liberties Union), 1960; Univ. of Missouri Distinguished Service Journalism Award, 1961; Phi Beta Kappa, 1962; Golden Key Award, 1963; Hon. Litt. D. Rutgers Univ., 1963; Bill of Rights Day Award, 1966; Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences; Hon. L.H.D., Williams College 1969.
* Elected Fellow of Sigma Delta Chi, 1970; National Headliners Award, 1976; Power of Print Award, 1977; Ho. L.H.D., Haverford College, 1977; Hon. L.H.D., Univ. of Maryland; National Press Club Annual Fourth Estate Award, 1977; Overseas Press Club Citation, 1979; NEA Award for Human Relations, 1979.
* ACLU Award "for his creative and incisive defense of the Bill of Rights," 1981; World Hunger Media Award for best cartoon on World Hunger, 1984; People for the American Way First Amendment Award for best cartoons on civil liberties, 1985; Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for contributions to the cause of freedom of speech and the advancement of freedom of the press, 1986; Hon. Ll.D. Colby College, 1986; Hubert H. Humphrey Civil Rights Award for selfless and devoted service in the cause of equality (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights), 1987; Franklin Roosevelt Freedom Medal (Franklin Delano Roosevelt Four Freedoms Foundation), 1987; World Humor Award (Workshop Library on World Humour), 1988; Overseas Press Club Award, 1988; Outstanding Consumer Media Service Award (Consumer Federation of America), 1989; National Women's Political Caucus "Good Guy Award," 1989.
* Pop. Institute Global Media Award, 1990; Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc. Maggie Award, 1991 and 1992. American Lung Ass'n. President's Award, 19993. Robert F. Kennedy Special Recognition Book Award, 1994. Presidential Medal of Freedom, 1994. Society of Professional Journalists Sigma Delta Chi Award for best cartoons of the year, 1994. Overseas Press Club Thomas Nast Award, 1995. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press Lifetime Achievement Award, 1995; Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc. Maggie Award, 1997; N.T. "Pete" Shields Award, Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1998; Distinguished Contributions to Journalism Award, National Press Foundation, 1999; Honorary Doctor of Arts degree, Harvard Univ., 1999; Living Legends Medal, Library of Congress, 2000; one of the 25 most influential journalists and newspaper in the 20th century, Editor & Publisher, 2000; Art Gliner Humor Award, Univ. of Maryland, 2000.
* DESIGNER: U.S. postage stamp commemorating 175th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, 1966.
* AUTHOR: The Herblock Book (1952), Herblock's Here and Now (1955), Herblock's Special for Today (1958), Straight Herblock (1964), The Herblock Gallery (1968), Herblock's State of the Union (1972), Herblock Special Report (1974), Herblock on All Fronts (1980), Herblock Through the Looking Glass (1984), Herblock at Large (1987), Herblock: A Cartoonist's Life (1993), and Bella and Me (Life in the Service of a Cat) - (1995), updated Herblock: A Cartoonist's Life in paperback with an added chapter and 70 more cartoons (1998).

**Source** *The Herb Block Foundation.* “Herb Block Biography.” <http://www.herbblockfoundation.org/herb-block/herb-biography>

**CLOVES CAMPBELL SR. (1930-2004)**

Cloves Campbell Sr., Recognized as one of the state's greatest and most powerful Black leaders, co-owner of the state's oldest and largest Black newspaper, died Friday after a heart attack in the offices of his beloved Arizona Informant. He was 73. He lost his sight to diabetes 10 years ago. He got up every morning at 6:30, had breakfast and then a secretary would come pick him up and take him to the office.

Campbell was an advocate for improving the quality of life in segregated neighborhoods and was a champion for the accomplishments of minorities. He overcame poverty and segregation, eventually becoming the first African-American in the Arizona Senate. He took office in 1966, after serving four years in the House.

Campbell and some of his nine siblings came to Arizona from Louisiana because of his father's illness in April 1945. However, his father died and two years later his mother perished. Orphaned at age 14, Campbell along with five of his nine brothers and sisters finished high school and college while supporting themselves. The family lived near Jefferson and 15th streets, when Blacks and Hispanics were forbidden to live north of Van Buren Street. Campbell never left his community, titling his 2001 memoir, "I Refused to Leave the 'Hood."

Campbell first ran for the Senate in 1960, but lost by 50 votes. Two years later he won election to the House. He recalled being ostracized by other lawmakers. Of all his accomplishments in the Legislature, Campbell was most proud of two pieces of legislation he sponsored. One required milk and bread to be labeled with expiration dates. The other required textbooks in Arizona schools to include the achievements and contributions of Blacks and other minority groups.

He also was proud of the role he played in getting two community colleges, South Mountain and GateWay, built in Phoenix. A former football standout at Phoenix Tech High School and Phoenix College, Campbell went to work at Central Arizona Light and Power Co. (which later became APS) as a night janitor while completing a degree in physical education at Arizona State Teachers College, now Arizona State University.

Unable to get a job teaching, he continued working as a janitor after graduation. When APS decided to use contract laborers for janitorial services, Campbell protested. Instead of losing his job, he was promoted to meter reader, which gave him the opportunity to discuss issues with other residents of his neighborhood.

Campbell retired from APS as the company's community affairs representative in 1988 and began focusing all of his energy on publishing the Arizona Informant, which he purchased in 1969. The paper has become one of the largest weeklies in Arizona. Campbell often recalled when they bought the newspaper how mainstream newspapers wrote only about Blacks getting into trouble. Campbell's mission was to tell the good news about his community, especially to show high school sports heroes and valedictorians succeeding. The Informant built its reputation by focusing on local people doing real things. Now the governor, attorney general and mayor of Phoenix all have it on their desks and Campbell's mission endures on the front page.

**Source**

*AZCentral.com.* http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/azcentral/obituary

**THEOPHILUS EUGENE “BULL” CONNOR (1897-1973)**

An ardent segregationist who served for 22 years as commissioner of public safety in Birmingham, Alabama, Bull Connor used his administrative authority over the police and ﬁre departments to ensure that Birmingham remained, as Martin Luther King described it, ‘‘the most segregated city in America’’ (King, 50). In 1963 the violent response of Connor and his police force to demonstrations during the Birmingham Campaign propelled the civil rights movement into the national spotlight.

Connor was born on 11 July 1897, in Selma, Alabama. After the death of his mother when he was eight, Connor traveled the country with his father, who moved from place to place as a railroad telegrapher. Connor never graduated from high school, but he learned telegraphy from his father and used this skill to gain employment at radio stations, eventually becoming a radio announcer.

Connor’s political career began in 1934, when he used his popularity as a Birmingham sportscaster to win a seat in the Alabama House of Representatives. After serving a term in the House, he was elected to the Birmingham City Commission, where he became known for his uncompromising opposition to integration.

When Birmingham voted to convert from a city commission system to a mayor/council system in 1962, Connor ran for mayor. Although he was defeated by Albert Boutwell in a run-off election the following spring, Connor refused to vacate his ofﬁce and still maintained control of the city’s police and ﬁre departments when the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights launched a massive assault on segregation in the city in April 1963. In King’s 1964 account of the campaign, *Why We Can’t Wait*, he characterized Connor as ‘‘a racist who prided himself on knowing how to handle the Negro and keep him in his ‘place’’’ (King, 49).

During the ﬁrst days of the campaign, Connor avoided violent confrontations between police and protesters. Adopting a strategy that had successfully thwarted demonstrations in Albany, Georgia, Birmingham police jailed wave after wave of protesters without abuse. On 2 May 1963, when campaign leaders called on young students to sustain the protest, police arrested more than 900 ‘‘Children’s Crusade’’ participants.

On 3 May, however, Connor ordered ﬁremen to use their hoses on protesters and onlookers, and as the demonstrators ﬂed from the force of the hoses, Connor directed ofﬁcers to pursue them with dogs. During the following days, television reports and newspapers across the country showed images of police and ﬁremen using hoses, dogs, and batons to force demonstrators from downtown Birmingham.

National outrage forced the John F. Kennedy’s administration to send a negotiator, Burke Marshall, to Birmingham. The Birmingham Campaign ended on 10 May when an agreement was reached between black leaders and representatives of Birmingham’s business community that moved the city toward desegregation. On 23 May 1963, the Alabama Supreme Court ordered Connor and the other city commissioners to vacate their ofﬁces. Within a year, Connor won election to the Alabama Public Service Commission, where he served as president until 1972.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**SAM COOKE “THE KING OF SOUL” (1928-1964)**

Sometimes called the father of soul music, singer Sam Cooke first reached the top of the charts in 1957 with "You Send Me." A string of pop and R&B hits soon followed, but he actually started out as a gospel performer. Born Samuel Cook in Clarksdale, Mississippi, he grew up in Chicago as the son of a minister.

Cooke began performing with his family as a child. In his teens, he formed a quintet called the Highway QCs. Cooke modeled his early work after one of his greatest inspirations, the Soul Stirrers, a popular gospel group. Not long after graduating from high school in 1948, he got the chance of a lifetime: being asked to join the Soul Stirrers, which provided him with an opportunity to hone his craft.

After six years with the Soul Stirrers, Cooke began to branch out into secular music. He recorded his first single, 1957's "Lovable," under the pseudonym "Dale Cooke." Later that year, Cooke released his first number one hit, "You Send Me." Music fans loved this ballad so much that it toppled Elvis' "Jailhouse Rock" from the top of the charts. Before long he put his crystal-clear, velvet-smooth voice to work on such up-tempo tunes as "Only Sixteen" and "Everybody Loves To Cha Cha Cha."

In addition to being a talented singer and songwriter, Cooke had business smarts. He established his own publishing company for his music in 1959 and negotiated an impressive contract with RCA in 1960. Not only did he get a substantial advance, but Cooke would also get ownership of his master recordings after 30 years. Getting this was a remarkable feat for any recording artist at the time. He continued to be a pioneer behind the scenes, founding his own record label in the early 1960s. Working with other artists on his label, Cooke helped develop the careers of Bobby Womack and Billy Preston, among others.

More hits followed Cooke's move to RCA, including 1960's "Chain Gang." Behind the song's catchy rhythm mimicking the sound of prisoners breaking rocks, the song also served as a social commentary by Cooke. He continued to win over fans with a variety of musical styles, from the 1960 ballad "Wonderful World" to the 1962 dance track "Twistin' the Night Away." In 1963, Cooke once again charted with his ode to loneliness, "Another Saturday Night."

No one knows for certain what exactly happened in the early hours of December 11, 1964. Cooke had been out the night before, reportedly drinking at a Los Angeles bar where he met a woman named Elisa Boyer. The pair hit it off and eventually ended up at the Hacienda Motel. There the couple had some type of altercation in their room, and Cooke then ended up in the motel's office.

He reportedly clashed with the motel's manager, and the manager shot Cooke. Cooke died from his injury, which the manager claimed was inflicted in self-defense. It was later ruled justifiable homicide.

Thousands turned out to mourn the legendary singer. Ray Charles and Lou Rawls sang at his funeral in Los Angeles, and another service was held in his former hometown, Chicago. The year after his death, Cooke's record company released his song "A Change Is Gonna Come." He wrote this civil rights anthem in response to Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind." It was perhaps his most pointedly political song.

No matter the circumstances of his passing, Cooke left behind a tremendous musical legacy. It only takes a listen to recordings of his live shows, such as his 1963 performance at Miami's Harlem Square Club, to recognize his contributions to soul music. And as a pop icon, Cooke has endured through his songs. Otis Redding and Al Green are among the artists who have covered his work. He was inducted into the Rock and Rock Hall of Fame in 1986.

**Source**

"Sam Cooke," *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/sam-cooke-9256129>

**BOB DYLAN (1941- )**

Folk rock singer-songwriter Bob Dylan was born Robert Allen Zimmerman on May 24, 1941, in Duluth, Minnesota. Driven by the influences of early rock stars like Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard (whom he used to imitate on the piano at high school dances), the young Dylan formed his own bands, including The Golden Chords as well as a group he fronted under the pseudonym Elston Gunn. While attending the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, he began performing folk and country songs at local cafés, taking the name "Bob Dylan," after the late Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

In 1960, Dylan dropped out of college and moved to New York where his idol, the legendary folk singer Woody Guthrie was hospitalized with a rare hereditary disease of the nervous system. Dylan visited with Guthrie regularly in his hospital room; he also became a regular in the folk clubs and coffeehouses of Greenwich Village; met a host of other musicians; and began writing songs at an astonishing pace, including "Song to Woody," a tribute to his ailing hero. In the fall of 1961, after one of his performances received a rave review in *The New York Times*, Dylan signed a recording contract with Columbia Records. Released early in 1962, *Bob Dylan* contained only two original songs, but showcased Dylan's gravelly-voiced singing style in a number of traditional folk songs and covers of blues songs.  The 1963 release of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* marked Dylan's emergence as one of the most original and poetic voices in the history of American popular music. The album included two of the most memorable 1960s folk songs, "Blowin' in the Wind" (which later became a huge hit for the folk trio Peter, Paul, and Mary) and "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall." His next album, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, firmly established Dylan as the definitive songwriter of the 60s protest movement, a reputation that only increased after he became involved with one of the movement's established icons, Joan Baez, in 1963. While his romantic relationship with Baez lasted only two years, it benefited both performers immensely in terms of their music careers—Dylan wrote some of Baez's best-known material, and Baez introduced him to thousands of fans through her concerts. By 1964 Dylan was playing 200 concerts annually, but had become tired of his role as "the" folk singer-songwriter of the protest movement.

*Another Side of Bob Dylan*, recorded in 1964, was a much more personal, introspective collection of songs, far less politically charged than Dylan's previous efforts.

In 1965, Dylan scandalized many of his folkie fans by recording the half-acoustic, half-electric album *Bringing It All Back Home*, backed by a nine-piece band. On July 25, 1965, he was famously booed at the Newport Folk Festival when he performed electrically for the first time. The albums that followed, *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965)—which included the seminal rock song "Like a Rolling Stone"—and the two-record set *Blonde on Blonde* (1966) represented Dylan at his most innovative. With his unmistakable voice and unforgettable lyrics, Dylan brought the worlds of music and literature together as no one else had.

Over the course of the next three decades, Dylan continued to reinvent himself. Following a near-fatal motorcycle accident in July 1966, Dylan spent almost a year recovering in seclusion. His next two albums, *John Wesley Harding* (1968)—including "All Along the Watchtower," later recorded by guitar great Jimi Hendrix—and the unabashedly countryish *Nashville Skyline* (1969) were far more mellow than his earlier works. Critics blasted the two-record set *Self-Portrait* (1970) and *Tarantula*, a long-awaited collection of writings Dylan published in 1971, also met with a poor reception. In 1973, Dylan appeared in *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*, a feature film directed by Sam Peckinpah. He also wrote the film's soundtrack, which became a hit and included the now-classic song, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door."

In 1974, Dylan began his first full-scale tour since his accident, embarking on a sold-out nationwide tour with his longtime backup band, the Band. An album he recorded with the Band, *Planet Waves*, became his first No. 1 album ever. He followed these successes with the celebrated 1975 album *Blood on the Tracks* and *Desire* (1976), each of which hit No. 1 as well. *Desire* included the song "Hurricane," written by Dylan about the boxer Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, then serving life in prison after what many felt was an wrongful conviction of triple homicide in 1967. Dylan was one of many prominent public figures who helped popularize Carter's cause, leading to a retrial in 1976, when he was again convicted.

After a painful split with his wife, Sara Lowndes—the song "Sara" on *Desire* was Dylan's plaintive but unsuccessful attempt to win Lowndes back—Dylan again reinvented himself, declaring in 1979 that he was a born-again Christian. The evangelical *Slow Train Coming* was a commercial hit, and won Dylan his first Grammy Award. The tour and albums that followed were less successful, however, and Dylan's religious leanings soon became less overt in his music.

Beginning in the 1980s, Dylan began touring full time, sometimes with fellow legends Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and the Grateful Dead. Notable albums during this period included *Infidels* (1983); the five-disc retrospective *Biograph* (1985); *Knocked Out Loaded* (1986); and *Oh Mercy* (1989), which became his best-received album in years.

He recorded two albums with the all-star band the Traveling Wilburys, also featuring George Harrison, the late Roy Orbison, Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne. In 1994, Dylan returned to his folk roots, winning the Grammy Award for Best Traditional Folk Album for *World Gone Wrong*.

In 1989, when Dylan was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. In 1997, Dylan became the first rock star ever to receive Kennedy Center Honors, considered the nation's highest award for artistic excellence.

Dylan's 1997 album *Time Out of Mind* re-established this one-time folk icon as one of the preeminent of rock's wise men, winning three Grammy Awards. In 2006, Dylan released the studio album *Modern Times* and in 2009 released *Together Through Life*. In 2010, he released a bootleg album called *The Witmark Demos*, followed by a new boxed set entitled *Bob Dylan: The Original Mono Recordings.* In addition, he exhibited 40 of his original paintings for a solo show at the National Gallery of Denmark. In 2011, he released yet another live album, *Bob Dylan in Concert - Brandeis University 1963*. He also announced tour dates in Taiwan, Vietnam and Australia.

**Source**

"Bob Dylan," *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/bob-dylan-9283052>

**OPAL ELLIS (1929-2010)**

The halls of justice are silent yet again as a daughter (actually one of the first ladies) of the Phoenix Civil Rights Movement has been called home. She, as the “good book” reads: “Fought a good fight. She finished her course and now she is ready to be offered up.” Opal Arlene Ellis died on December 21, surrounded by family and those close to her.

Opal Ellis, a fierce and tenacious advocate for equality, civil and human rights moved to Phoenix in 1942 with her mother Elizabeth Austin and stepfather Jessie Lydia from their humble home in Watonga, Okla.

A young dynamic Opal King attended and graduated with high distinction from Carver High School, embracing the teaching and high standards she was exposed to along with notable classmate the late Dr. Morrison Warren, Calvin Goode and others. During her high school years, Ellis led protest and marches in downtown Phoenix, in opposition to those stores that did not serve people of color. Inspired by her mother, who was not able to attend school on a regular basis in her day, Opal lived vicariously for the both of them.

“Opal Ellis was the light for many individuals that did not have the schooling or knowledge to deal with City Hall,” said longtime Phoenix resident and businessman Stanley Grimes, who reported Ellis would visit the Grimes home to have her hair done by his mother, the late Cora Mae Grimes.

“Ms. Ellis was instrumental in opening and knocking down many doors, and she was one of the first women of any race to rise to a position of responsibility in city government here in Phoenix,” Grimes said.

He added, “Opal also lived in the Matthew Henson Projects for a while and she never forgot where she came from.”

Ellis established herself as a dedicated, passionate and very professional manager, supervisor and director in neighborhood services, re-development, fair housing campaigns, affirmative action and equal employment opportunities.

“Opal was one year behind me at Carver,” shared the honorable former City Councilmember Calvin C. Goode. “When I ran for city council she was working with the Rev. Amos Dudley on community projects but came over to assist me with my run for office and she proved to be a very valuable member of my campaign,” recalled Goode.

“During her years in re-development and neighborhood service work, you could call Opal and you knew something would be done about whatever the issue was,” said Mrs. White of Mrs. White’s Golden Rule Café, one of those businesses that Ms. Ellis assisted.

Because of Ellis’ work in breaking down barriers in housing, upholding Affirmative Action, Civil Rights and her work in neighborhood development Phoenix received many awards during the mid to late 60’s that set new precedents and her work paved the way for other women of color to rise to positions of authority in the city today.

Along with longtime friend and colleague Judge Jean Williams, Ellis established one of the first observances in celebration of the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., in Phoenix and the state in 1983.

“I know the struggles Opal had to endure as a Black woman because I was seeing some of the same in trying to establish my business back then,” Ms. White said.

“Some folks say that I inspired them into going into business, well Opal Ellis inspired me to stay in business. She was a go-getter, who would stand her ground against any of those people (mostly men) and get the job done,” said White adding, “It was my pleasure to have known her and called her my friend.”

Opal Ellis leaves six children; 26 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren to cherish her memory along with a host of other family members, friends and former co-workers. She was preceded in death by her mother, Elizabeth Austin; father Henry King, and a daughter Valeria K. Brown.

Written by Danny L. White

Dec 29, 2010

**Source**

*The Arizona Informant*. http://www.azinformant.com

**MEDGAR EVERS (1925-1963)**

As ﬁeld secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) in Mississippi from 1954 until his death in 1963, Medgar Evers played a pivotal role in the civil rights organization’s expansion in the South. Although the NAACP leadership sought to challenge segregation in the courts, Evers’ interest in direct action methods led him to maintain contact with Martin Luther King and to brieﬂy join the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957.

The son of a farmer and domestic worker, Medgar Evers was born 2 July 1925, in Decatur, Mississippi. As a child, Evers walked three miles to school each day and was an enthusiastic student who loved to read. In high school he began establishing NAACP branches throughout Mississippi. Drafted into the Army in 1943, Evers’ military experience with segregation in the service heightened his commitment to the civil rights struggle.

Upon graduating from Alcorn Agricultural & Mechanical College in 1952, Evers and his wife, Myrlie, moved to Mound Bayou in northwest Mississippi, where he worked for an insurance company and organized local NAACP chapters. After the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision, Evers sought admission to the University of Mississippi Law School. He was unsuccessful but would later help James Meredith gain admittance to ‘‘Ole Miss’’ by putting him in contact with NAACP lawyers.

In December 1954, Evers became the NAACP’s ﬁrst ﬁeld secretary in Mississippi and soon afterward began receiving threatening phone calls and other types of harassment. Following the 1955 lynching of Emmett Till in Leﬂore County, Mississippi, Evers and other NAACP ofﬁcials publicized the crime, sought witnesses, and helped witnesses leave Mississippi after testifying against Till’s murderers.   Seeking ‘‘to bring ﬁrst-class citizenship to [the South] as hurriedly as possible,’’ Evers attended one of the ﬁrst meetings of SCLC in February 1957 and was elected assistant secretary of the organization (Evers, 11 March 1957). When Evers notiﬁed NAACP director Roy Wilkins of his involvement with SCLC, Wilkins advised against participating in another civil rights group. Evers sent King his letter of resignation in August of that year, stating that he was ‘‘highly honored to have had the opportunity to serve’’ SCLC (*Papers* 4:259). King communicated his regret to Evers, writing: ‘‘I certainly appreciate your devotion to the cause of justice and if there is anything that I can do to assist you in your great work please feel free to call on me’’ (King, 28 August 1957).

In 1958, when SCLC sought to establish a base for activity in Jackson, Mississippi, Evers reported to NAACP ofﬁcials that he ‘‘discouraged’’ this move. ‘‘It will be our design through the NAACP and the Progressive Voters League, of which our leaders are in key positions, to control the present state of affairs,’’ he explained (Evers, 24 January 1958).   In the spring of 1963, Evers announced that blacks in Jackson would begin mass demonstrations and rallies to protest Jackson Mayor Alan Thompson’s refusal to appoint a biracial committee to examine Jackson’s racial problems. ‘‘We are prepared to demonstrate until we get our rights!’’ Evers proclaimed. ‘‘Nobody here is afraid anymore’’ (‘‘NAACP Moves on Jackson’’).

On 12 June 1963, Evers was assassinated by a riﬂe shot in the back while walking up his driveway. That day King told the media: ‘‘The brutal murder of Medgar Evers came as shocking and tragic news to all people of good will’’ (King, 12 June 1963). Evers’ funeral was held in Jackson, and his burial at Arlington National Cemetery attracted prominent civil rights leaders from around the nation, including King and Wilkins. Evers was posthumously awarded the NAACP’s highest honor, the Spingarn Medal, later in the year. In 1994, Byron de la Beckwith was convicted of Evers’ murder. Myrlie Evers continued her husband’s activism, serving as the NAACP’s ﬁrst female chairperson from 1995 until 1998.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**MYRLIE EVERS (1933- )**

Born Myrlie Louise Beasley on March 17, 1933, in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Raised by her grandmother, a schoolteacher, Evers-Williams loved learning and music. Growing up in the segregated South, she went to Alcorn A&M College, one of the only colleges in the state that accepted African American students. While at Alcorn, she met Medgar Evers, a World War II veteran several years her senior. The couple fell in love and married in December of 1951.

When her husband became the Mississippi field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Evers-Williams worked alongside him. She assisted him as he strove to end the unjust practice of racial segregation in schools and other public facilities and campaigned for voting rights as many African Americans were denied this right in the South. Medgar made enemies of those who didn’t want race relations in the South to change. On June 12, 1963, Medger Evers was shot to death in front of his home by a white supremacist named Byron De La Beckwith.

After her husband’s murder, Evers-Williams fought hard to see his killer brought to justice. Although Beckwith was arrested and brought to trial on murder charges, two all-white juries could not reach a verdict in the case. It would take approximately 30 years for justice to be served, with Williams-Evers keeping the case alive and pushing for Beckwith to pay for his crime. Her efforts were not in vain. In the early 1990s, Beckwith was again arrested and later convicted by a multi-racial jury.

Besides her quest for justice, Evers-Williams rebuilt her life after her husband’s death. She moved with her children to California and emerged as a civil rights activist in her own right. Evers-Williams spoke on behalf of the NAACP and wrote *For Us, the Living*, which chronicled her late husband’s life and work in 1967. She also made an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Congress in 1970.

In 1976, Evers-Williams married Walter Williams, a labor and civil rights activist. She continued to explore ways to serve her community and to work with the NAACP. Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley appointed her to the Board of Public Works as a commissioner in 1987. Evers-Williams also joined the board of the NAACP. By the mid-1990s, the prestigious organization was going through a difficult period marked by scandal and economic problems. Evers-Williams decided that the best way to help the organization was by running for chairperson of the board of directors. She won the position in 1995.

As chairperson of the NAACP, Evers-Williams worked to restore the tarnished image of the organization. She also helped improve its financial status, raising enough funds to eliminate its debt. Evers-Williams received many honors for her work, including being named Woman of the Year by *Ms.* Magazine. With the organization financially stable, she decided to not seek re-election as chairperson in 1998.

After leaving her post, Evers-Williams established the Medgar Evers Institute in Jackson, Mississippi. She also wrote her autobiography entitled *Watch Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I Was Meant to Be* (1999), and many readers were moved by her powerful story.

Evers-Williams has continued to preserve the memory of her first husband with one of her latest projects. She served as editor on *The Autobiography of Medgar Evers: A Hero’s Life and Legacy Revealed Through His Writings, Letters, and Speeches* (2005).

**Source**

*“*Myrlie Evers.” *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/myrlie-evers-williams-205624>

**JAMES FARMER (1920-1999)**

As co-founder of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), James Farmer was one of the major leaders of the African American freedom struggle. In a 1997 interview, Farmer said: ‘‘I don’t see any future for the nation without integration. Our lives are intertwined, our work is intertwined, our education is intertwined’’ (Smith, ‘‘Civil Rights Leader’’). Farmer credited Martin Luther King and the Montgomery bus boycott with educating the public on nonviolent tactics: ‘‘No longer did we have to explain nonviolence to people. Thanks to Martin Luther King, it was a household word’’ (Farmer, 188).

Farmer was born on 12 January 1920, in Marshall, Texas, where his father taught theology at all-black Wiley College. When Farmer was six months old, his family moved to Holly Springs, Mississippi. Throughout his life, Farmer recounted the story of his mother having to explain why she couldn’t buy him a soft drink at a drugstore, an experience he said inspired him at an early age to ﬁght injustice. After graduating from Wiley College in 1938, he enrolled in the Howard University School of Divinity, where he ﬁrst encountered the teachings of the Indian independence leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi. Upon earning his BD in 1941, he declined ordination as a Methodist minister because ‘‘I did not feel I could preach the gospel in a segregated church’’ (Shepard, ‘‘A Life on the Front Lines’’). Farmer was granted conscientious objector status during World War II and became race relations secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a paciﬁst organization.

A year later, in 1942, Farmer co-founded CORE with an interracial group of University of Chicago students. In the 1940s CORE pioneered the strategies of nonviolent direct action, including the tactics of [sit-ins](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_sit_ins/), jail-ins, and Freedom Rides later used in the civil rights movement during the 1960s. After a brief stint at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the late 1950s, Farmer became the ﬁrst national director of CORE in 1961. That same year, Farmer mobilized CORE to conduct interracial Freedom Rides designed to test the Supreme Court ruling on interstate bus transportation in the South. The group had organized a similar test in 1947, called the ‘‘Journey of Reconciliation,’’ which ended in the riders’ arrests.

The 1961 freedom riders faced violent resistance along their journey. Upon reaching Montgomery, Alabama, Farmer encountered a rioting mob that threatened to break into Ralph Abernathy’s First Baptist Church where freedom riders and other protestors were meeting with King, who was present to offer support. When King tried to mobilize help, U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy asked Farmer to agree to a cooling-off period and to suspend the integrated rides. Farmer replied: ‘‘Please tell the attorney general that we have been cooling for 350 years. If we cool off any more, we will be in a deep freeze. The Freedom Ride will go on’’ (Farmer, 206). With the protection of U.S. marshals and the Alabama National Guard, the riders continued their journey. Arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, in the act of integrating a restaurant at the bus terminal, Farmer and the riders refused to make bond and spent 40 days at the Parchman State Penitentiary. Two years later, Farmer’s imprisonment in Plaquemine, Louisiana, for protesting police brutality prevented him from speaking at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, an event co-sponsored by CORE.

As the inﬂuence of black nationalism took hold of CORE, Farmer stepped down as National Director in 1966, and cut all ties to the organization 10 years later. After being defeated by Democratic candidate Shirley Chisholm in the 1968 congressional race for New York’s 12th district, he served in Richard Nixon’s administration in what was then the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, where he was charged with increasing the role of minorities in the agency.

In 1980 Farmer moved to Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he wrote his autobiography, *Lay Bare the Heart* (1985) and taught at Mary Washington College. President Bill Clinton awarded Farmer the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor, in 1998. He died the following year at age 79.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**JAMES FORMAN (1928-2005)**

Nearly a decade older than most civil rights activists involved in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), James Forman gained the respect of SNCC’s staff through his militancy and organizational prowess. At times, his more confrontational, revolutionary style clashed with Martin Luther King, Jr.,’s nonviolent, faith-based approach to civil rights activism.

Born 4 October 1928 in Chicago, Forman spent his early childhood living with his grandmother on a farm in Marshall County, Mississippi. At the age of six, he returned to Chicago, where he attended a Roman Catholic grammar school. Forman graduated with honors from Englewood High School in 1947 and went on to serve in the Air Force before enrolling at the University of Southern California in 1952. After suffering a beating and arrest by police during his second semester, Forman transferred to Roosevelt University in Chicago, where he became a leader in student politics and headed the university’s delegation to a conference of the National Student Association in 1956. Forman received his BA in 1957 and moved east to attend graduate school at Boston University.

During the late 1950s, Forman gradually became involved in the expanding Southern civil rights movement. In 1958 he covered the Little Rock school desegregation crisis for the *Chicago Defender*. In late 1960, Forman went to Fayette County, Tennessee, to assist sharecroppers who had been evicted for registering to vote. That summer, he was jailed with other freedom riders protesting segregated facilities in Monroe, North Carolina. After his sentence was suspended, Forman agreed to become executive secretary of SNCC.

Forman’s occasional criticism of King was not simply a rhetorical exercise, but reflected a genuine concern about the direction King was leading the movement. He specifically questioned King’s top-down leadership style, which he saw as undermining the development of local grassroots movements. For example, following W. G. Anderson’s invitation to King to join the Albany Movement, Forman criticized the move because he felt ‘‘much harm could be done by interjecting the Messiah complex.’’ He recognized that King’s presence ‘‘would detract from, rather than intensify,’’ the focus on ordinary people’s involvement in the movement (Forman, 255). Forman echoed the concerns of those in SNCC and the broader civil rights movement who saw the potential dangers of relying too heavily upon one dynamic leader.

Following the defeat of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1964, Forman and other SNCC workers went to Guinea at the invitation of that nation’s government. After his return, Forman became increasingly outspoken in his criticisms of the federal government and cautious liberalism. Within SNCC, he encouraged staff to become more aware of Marxism and Black Nationalism. He was, however, critical of the black separatist faction within SNCC who expelled whites from the organization. Forman joined with other black militants, including the Black Panther Party (BPP), in calling for greater alliances between black and white radicals. Though still working for SNCC, in early 1968 Forman became the BPP’s minister of foreign affairs and sought to build ties between African Americans and revolutionaries in the Third World.

Later in 1968, Forman also joined forces with the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, and April 1969 he and other League members took control of the National Black Economic Development Conference in Detroit, where Forman was scheduled to speak. He read a ‘‘Black Manifesto’’ that demanded that white churches pay half a billion dollars to blacks as reparations for previous exploitation. A month later he interrupted a service at New York’s Riverside Church to read the manifesto again, and later that year he resigned from SNCC.

A prolific writer, Forman authored many books on the civil rights movement and black revolutionary theory, including *Sammy Younge, Jr.: The First Black College Student to Die in the Black Liberation Movement* (1968), and his autobiography, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (1972). He received a master’s degree in African and Afro-American History from Cornell University (1980) and a PhD from the Union of Experimental Colleges and Universities (1982). In 1981, he published his thesis, ‘‘An Examination of the Question of Self-Determination and Its Application for the African American People,’’ in which he advocated an autonomous black nation in the Black Belt region of the United States. Forman died of colon cancer in 2005 at the age of 76.

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*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**CALVIN GOODE (1927- )**

City council member Calvin Coolidge Goode served eleven consecutive term (1972 to 1994), a total of twenty-two years, as a representative to thePhoenix, Arizona City Council.

Born in rural Depew, Oklahoma in 1927, Goode’s family moved to Arizona when he was ten months old. His family settled in a homestead near Gila Bend, Arizona, where they worked in agricultural fields picking cotton.

Goode graduated from Carver High School in 1945, the only school in Arizona built exclusively for African American students. He then obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Arizona State University. In 1949, Goode returned to Carver High School as an accountant, and later ran a tax accounting business, Calvin Goode & Associates.

Goode worked for the Phoenix Union High School District from 1949 to 1979. He was elected as an at large representative to the Arizona City Council in 1972. This victory made Goode the second African American to ever serve on the Phoenix City Council.

During his tenure, Goode ably advocated for jobs and job training in the community, improved programs for youth and developed a program to ensure that women and minority-owned small businesses would receive a proportionate share of city business. In 1984, Goode successfully advocated for a district form of city government. As a Phoenix city councilman, Goode helped broker a compromise that led to a Phoenix ordinance that prohibited workplace discrimination against gays, lesbians and minorities. He was also instrumental in getting the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday observed in the City of Phoenix, paving the way for the holiday to be observed statewide. Goode also championed a range of programs, from Head Start to downtown renewal projects. To commemorate his years of service to the city, a Phoenix municipal building was named in Goode’s honor.

Now retired, Goode continues to be involved in his community. He served on the Phoenix Elementary School Board for six years. Goode has been involved with Tanner Properties, which manages 393 apartments for seniors and disabled persons for twenty years. Goode remains active with the local Neighborhood Improvement Association, the Booker T. Washington Child Development Center, and the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center as well as other non-profit and governmental programs.

**Source**

***Biographical Description for the History Makers Video: Oral History with Calvin Goode.***

http://www.thehistorymakers.com/sites/production/files/A2007\_205\_Goode\_Calvin\_EAC.pdf

**FANNIE LOU HAMER (1917-1977)**

When Fannie Lou Hamer testiﬁed before the credentials committee of the 1964 Democratic National Convention, she told the world about the torture and abuse she experienced in her attempt to register to vote. Martin Luther King wrote that her ‘‘testimony educated a nation and brought the political powers to their knees in repentance, for the convention voted never again to seat a delegation that was racially segregated’’ (King, ‘‘Something Happening in Mississippi’’).

Born to sharecroppers in Montgomery County, Mississippi, in 1917, Fannie Lou was the youngest of 20 children. She grew up on a Sunﬂower County plantation and in the mid-1940s she married Perry Hamer, a tractor driver on a nearby plantation. For the next 18 years, she worked as a sharecropper and a timekeeper for the plantation owner.

In 1962, Robert Moses and other members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) came to Sunﬂower County to register black voters. Inspired by what she learned from SNCC workers, Hamer attempted to register to vote. When her landlord and employer learned of her attempt, he ﬁred Hamer and forced her to leave her home. For her determination to register, Hamer suffered repeated threats. In 1962, on her way to Septima Clark’s citizenship school in Charleston, North Carolina, Hamer was so severely beaten in the Winona, Mississippi, jail that she suffered kidney damage and was made partially blind. In 1963, Hamer, then in her forties, became the oldest SNCC employee and worked as a ﬁeld secretary for the organization. By the time she cast her ﬁrst vote in 1964, she was already very active in politics. ‘‘I cast my ﬁrst vote for myself, because I was running for Congress,’’ she recalled (Hamer, ‘‘An Oral History’’).

In 1964, Hamer helped organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), an alternative to the state’s white-controlled Democratic Party. When the MFDP challenged the all-white Mississippi delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Hamer gave an impassioned account of the violence she and other civil rights activists had suffered while attempting to register. Although news networks started a live broadcast of her testimony, President Lyndon B. Johnson scheduled a live address at the same time, forcing networks to break away from her speech. Hamer closed her testimony, which was later broadcast in full on the evening news, by stating: ‘‘If the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America’’ (Lee, 89). Speaking after Hamer and the other MFDP delegates, King told the committee, you ‘‘cannot imagine the anguish and suffering they have undergone to get to this point,’’ and urged the committee to recognize the MFDP (King, 22 August 1964).

Both King and Hamer participated in negotiations with vice presidential nominee Hubert Humphrey in the days following Hamer’s testimony. In a compromise backed by Johnson, the MFDP delegates were offered two at-large seats and a promise that the 1968 conventions would bar any state delegation that discriminated against blacks. While King supported the committee’s compromise, Hamer was adamant that her entire delegation should be seated, telling the group: ‘‘We didn’t come all this way for no two seats!’’ (Carson, 126). Although MFDP failed to unseat the regular Mississippi delegation and only won two at-large seats, their efforts had a lasting impact on the democratic process.

Hamer, like King, was motivated by faith. Although she was only semi-literate, she had committed countless verses of the bible to memory. Reﬂecting on the Nobel Peace Prize he was awarded a few months after the MFDP challenge, King thanked the ‘‘great people,’’ like the ‘‘Fannie Lou Hamers’’ whose ‘‘discipline, wise restraint, and majestic courage has led them down a nonviolent course in seeking to establish a reign of justice and a rule of love across this nation of ours’’ (King, ‘‘A Mighty Army of Love’’).

Hamer continued her career in political organizing and civil rights work as a delegate to the 1968 Democratic National Convention, where she berated authorities for failing to provide justice for King’s assassination. In 1969, Hamer helped found the Freedom Farms Corporation, a nonproﬁt farming cooperative organized to alleviate hunger among poor blacks and whites in Mississippi. She remained active in civic affairs in Mississippi throughout her life and continued to speak and give interviews about the civil rights movement until her death in 1977.

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**MAHALIA JACKSON (1911-1972)**

As the “Queen of Gospel,” Mahalia Jackson sang all over the world, performing with the same passion at the presidential inauguration of John F. Kennedy that she exhibited when she sang at fundraising events for the African American freedom struggle. A great champion of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King called her “a blessing to me… [and] a blessing to Negroes who have learned through [her] not to be ashamed of their heritage” (King, 10 January 1964).

Jackson was born in New Orleans on 26 October 1911. Her father worked three jobs and her mother, a maid, died when Jackson was young. Raised in a devout Baptist family, Jackson grew up singing in choirs. She moved to Chicago at the age of 16, and continued to sing in storefront churches and toured with a gospel quintet. Jackson released her first album in 1934, but it was her 1947 album, “Move On Up a Little Higher,” that brought Jackson fame. The album sold eight million copies, and Jackson quickly became an international celebrity, performing sold-out shows at Carnegie Hall and later hosting her own radio and television shows in Chicago.

Already an icon, Jackson met Ralph Abernathy and King at the 1956 National Baptist Convention. King later asked if she could perform in Montgomery for the foot soldiers of the newly successful bus boycott. On 17 May 1957, she joined King on the third anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, singing for the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in Washington, D.C.  She subsequently appeared often with King, singing before his speeches and for Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) fundraisers.  In a 1962 SCLC press release, King wrote that Jackson “has appeared on numerous programs that helped the struggle in the South, but now she has indicated that she wants to be involved on a regular basis” (King, 10 October 1962).

Jackson performed “I Been ‘Buked and I Been Scorned” before King took the podium at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Later expressing his gratitude to Jackson, King wrote, “When I got up to speak, I was already happy. I couldn’t help preaching. Millions of people all over this country have said it was my greatest hour. I do not know, but if it was, you, more than any single person helped to make it so” (King, 10 January 1964).

Jackson said she hoped her music could “break down some of the hate and fear that divide the white and black people in this country” (Whitman, “Mahalia Jackson”). In addition to the inspiration that her singing provided the movement, Jackson also contributed financially.

After King’s assassination, Jackson honored his last request by singing “Precious Lord” at his funeral. When Jackson herself died of heart failure in 1972 at age 60, Coretta Scott King commented that “the causes of justice, freedom, and brotherhood have lost a real champion whose dedication and commitment knew no midnight” (Whitman, “Mahalia Jackson”).

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**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (1929-1968)**

Martin Luther King, Jr., made history, but he was also transformed by his deep family roots in the African-American Baptist church, his formative experiences in his hometown of Atlanta, his theological studies, his varied models of religious and political leadership, and his extensive network of contacts in the peace and social justice movements of his time. Although King was only thirty-nine at the time of his death, his life was remarkable for the ways it reflected and inspired so many of the twentieth century’s major intellectual, cultural, and political developments.

The son, grandson, and great-grandson of Baptist ministers, Martin Luther King Jr., named Michael King at birth, was born in Atlanta and spent his first twelve years in the Auburn Avenue home that his parents, the Reverend Michael King and Alberta Williams King, shared with his maternal grandparents, the Reverend Adam Daniel (A. D.) Williams and Jeannie Celeste Williams. After Rev. Williams’ death in 1931, his son-in-law became Ebenezer Baptist Church’s new pastor and gradually established himself as a major figure in state and national Baptist groups. The elder King began referring to himself (and later to his son) as Martin Luther King.

During his undergraduate years at Atlanta’s Morehouse College from 1944 to 1948, King gradually overcame his initial reluctance to accept his inherited calling. Morehouse president Benjamin E. Mays influenced King’s spiritual development, encouraging him to view Christianity as a potential force for progressive social change. He described his decision [to enter the ministry] as a response to an “inner urge” calling him to “serve humanity” (*Papers* 1:363). He was ordained during his final semester at Morehouse, and by this time King had also taken his first steps toward political activism. He had responded to the postwar wave of anti-black violence by proclaiming in a letter to the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* that African Americans were “entitled to the basic rights and opportunities of American citizens” (*Papers* 1:121).

After leaving Morehouse, King increased his understanding of liberal Christian thought while attending Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania from 1948 to 1951 where he graduated at the top of his class.

In 1951 King began doctoral studies in systematic theology at Boston University’s School of Theology, which was dominated by personalist theologians such as Edgar Brightman and L. Harold DeWolf. The papers (including his dissertation) that King wrote during his years at Boston displayed little originality, and some contained extensive plagiarism; but his readings enabled him to formulate an eclectic yet coherent theological perspective. By the time he completed his doctoral studies in 1955, King had refined his exceptional ability to draw upon a wide range of theological and philosophical texts to express his views with force and precision. His ability to infuse his oratory with borrowed theological insights became evident in his expanding preaching activities in Boston-area-churches and at Ebenezer, where he assisted his father during school vacations.

During his stay in Boston, King also met and courted Coretta Scott, an Alabama-born Antioch College graduate who was then a student at the New England Conservatory of Music. On 18 June 1953 the two students were married in Marion, Alabama, where Scott’s family lived.

Although he considered pursuing an academic career, King decided in 1954 to accept an offer to become the pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. In December 1955, when Montgomery black leaders, such as Jo Ann Robinson, E. D. Nixon, and Ralph Abernathy formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) to protest the arrest of NAACP official Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man, they selected King to head the new group. In his role as the primary spokesman of the year-long Montgomery bus boycott, King utilized the leadership abilities he had gained from his religious background and academic training to forge a distinctive protest strategy that involved the mobilization of black churches and skillful appeals for white support. With the encouragement of Bayard Rustin, Glenn Smiley, William Stuart Nelson and other veteran pacifists, King also became a firm advocate of Mohandas Gandhi’s precepts of nonviolence, which he combined with Christian social gospel ideas.

After the United States Supreme Court outlawed Alabama bus segregation laws in Browder v. Gayle in late 1956, King sought to expand the nonviolent civil rights movement throughout the South. In 1957 he joined with C. K. Steele, Fred Shuttlesworth and T .J. Jemison in founding the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) with King as president to coordinate civil rights activities throughout the region. Publication of *Stride Toward Freedom*: The Montgomery Story (1958) further contributed to King’s rapid emergence as a national civil rights leader. Even as he expanded his influence, however, King acted cautiously. Rather than immediately seeking to stimulate mass desegregation protests in the South, King stressed the goal of achieving black voting rights when he addressed an audience at the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom.

King’s rise to fame was not without personal consequences. In 1958 King was the victim of his first assassination attempt. Although his house had been bombed several times during the Montgomery bus boycott, it was while signing copies of *Stride Toward Freedom* that Izola Ware Curry stabbed him with a letter opener. Surgery to remove it was successful, but King had to recuperate for several months, giving up all protest activity.

One of the key aspects of King’s leadership was his ability to establish support from many types of organizations including labor unions, peace organizations, southern reform organizations, and religious groups.

During 1959 he increased his understanding of Gandhian ideas during a month-long visit to India sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee. With Coretta and MIA historian Lawrence D. Reddick in tow, King meet with many Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Writing after his return, King stated, “I left India more convinced than ever before that non-violent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom” (*Papers* 5:233).

Early the following year he moved his family, which now included two children,Yolanda and Martin Luther King, III, to Atlanta in order to be nearer SCLC headquarters in that city and to become co-pastor, with his father, of Ebenezer Baptist Church. (The Kings’ third child, [Dexter](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_king_dexter_scott_1961/), was born in 1961; their fourth, Bernice, was born in 1963.) Soon after King’s arrival in Atlanta, the southern civil rights movement gained new impetus from the student-led lunch counter sit-in movement that spread throughout the region during 1960. The sit-ins brought into existence a new protest group, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which would often push King toward greater militancy. King came in contact with students, especially those from Nashville such as John Lewis, James Bevel and Diane Nash who had been trained in nonviolent tactics by James Lawson. In October 1960 King’s arrest during a student-initiated protest in Atlanta became an issue in the national presidential campaign when Democratic candidate John F. Kennedy called Coretta King to express his concern. The successful efforts of Kennedy supporters to secure King’s release contributed to the Democratic candidate’s narrow victory over Republican candidate Richard Nixon.

As the southern protest movement expanded during the early 1960s, King was often torn between the increasingly militant student activists, such as those who participated in the Freedom Rides and more cautious national civil rights leaders. During 1961 and 1962 his tactical differences with SNCC activists surfaced during a sustained protest movement in Albany, Georgia. King was arrested twice during demonstrations organized by the Albany Movement, but when he left jail and ultimately left Albany without achieving a victory, some movement activists began to question his militancy and his dominant role within the southern protest movement.

During 1963, however, King reasserted his preeminence within the African-American freedom struggle through his leadership of the Birmingham campaign. Initiated by SCLC and its affiliate, the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, the Birmingham demonstrations were the most massive civil rights protest that had yet occurred. With the assistance of Fred Shuttlesworth and other local black leaders and with little competition from SNCC and other civil rights groups, SCLC officials were able to orchestrate the Birmingham protests to achieve maximum national impact. King’s decision to intentionally allow himself to be arrested for leading a demonstration on 12 April prodded the Kennedy administration to intervene in the escalating protests. A widely quoted “Letter from Birmingham Jail” displayed his distinctive ability to influence public opinion by appropriating ideas from the Bible, the Constitution, and other canonical texts. During May, televised pictures of police using dogs and fire hoses against young demonstrators generated a national outcry against white segregationist officials in Birmingham. The brutality of Birmingham officials and the refusal of Alabama governor George C. Wallace to allow the admission of black students at the University of Alabama prompted President Kennedy to introduce major civil rights legislation.

King’s speech at the 28 August 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom attended by more than 200,000 people, was the culmination of a wave of civil rights protest activity that extended even to northern cities. In his prepared remarks King announced that African Americans wished to cash the “promissory note” signified in the egalitarian rhetoric of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Closing his address with extemporaneous remarks, he insisted that he had not lost hope: “I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream . . .  that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed:‘we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’” He appropriated the familiar words of “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” before concluding, “when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, ‘Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last’” (King, *Call*, 82, 85, 87).

Although there was much elation after the March on Washington, less than a month later, the movement was shocked by another act of senseless violence. On 15 September 1963 a dynamite blast killed four young school girls at Birmingham’s Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. King delivered the eulogy for three of the four girls, reflecting, “They say to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, and the philosophy which produced the murders” (King, *Call*, 96).

St. Augustine, Florida became the site of the next major confrontation of the civil rights movement. Beginning in 1963 Robert B. Hayling, of the local NAACP had led sit-ins against segregated businesses. SCLC was called in to help in May 1964, suffering the arrest of King and Abernathy. After a few court victories, SCLC left when a bi-racial committee was formed; however, local residents continued to suffer violence.

King’s ability to focus national attention on orchestrated confrontations with racist authorities, combined with his oration at the 1963 March on Washington, made him the most influential African-American spokesperson of the first half of the 1960s. Named *Time* magazine’s “Man of the Year” at the end of 1963, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1964. The acclaim King received strengthened his stature among civil rights leaders but also prompted Federal Bureau of Investigation director J. Edgar Hoover to step up his effort to damage King’s reputation. Hoover, with the approval of President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, established phone taps and bugs. Hoover and many other observers of the southern struggle saw King as controlling events, but he was actually a moderating force within an increasingly diverse black militancy of the mid-1960s. Although he was not personally involved in Freedom Summer (1964), he was called upon to attempt to persuade the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegates to accept a compromise at the Democratic Party National Convention.

As the African-American struggle expanded from desegregation protests to mass movements seeking economic and political gains in the North as well as the South, King’s active involvement was limited to a few highly publicized civil rights campaigns, such as Birmingham and St. Augustine, which secured popular support for the passage of national civil rights legislation, particularly the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Alabama protests reached a turning point on 7 March when state police attacked a group of demonstrators at the start of a march from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery. Carrying out Governor Wallace’s orders, the police used tear gas and clubs to turn back the marchers after they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge on the outskirts of Selma. Unprepared for the violent confrontation, King alienated some activists when he decided to postpone the continuation of the Selma to Montgomery March until he had received court approval, but the march, which finally secured federal court approval, attracted several thousand civil rights sympathizers, black and white, from all regions of the nation. On 25 March King addressed the arriving marchers from the steps of the capitol in Montgomery. The march and the subsequent killing of a white participant, Viola Liuzzo, as well as the earlier murder of James Reeb dramatized the denial of black voting rights and spurred passage during the following summer of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

After the successful voting rights march in Alabama, King was unable to garner similar support for his effort to confront the problems of northern urban blacks. Early in 1966 he, together with local activist Al Raby, launched a major campaign against poverty and other urban problems and moved his family into an apartment in Chicago’s black ghetto. As King shifted the focus of his activities to the North, however, he discovered that the tactics used in the South were not as effective elsewhere. He encountered formidable opposition from Mayor Richard Daley and was unable to mobilize Chicago’s economically and ideologically diverse black community. King was stoned by angry whites in the Chicago suburb of Cicero when he led a march against racial discrimination in housing. Despite numerous mass protests, the Chicago Campaign resulted in no significant gains and undermined King’s reputation as an effective civil rights leader.

King’s influence was damaged further by the increasingly caustic tone of black militancy of the period after 1965. Black radicals increasingly turned away from the Gandhian precepts of King toward the Black Nationalism of Malcolm X, whose posthumously published autobiography and speeches reached large audiences after his assassination in February 1965. Unable to influence the black insurgencies that occurred in many urban areas, King refused to abandon his firmly rooted beliefs about racial integration and nonviolence. He was nevertheless unpersuaded by black nationalist calls for racial uplift and institutional development in black communities.

In June 1966, James Meredith was shot while attempting a “March against Fear” in Mississippi. King, Floyd McKissick of the Congress of Racial Equality and Stokely Carmichael of SNCC decided to continue his march. During the march, the activists from SNCC decided to test a new slogan that they had been using, Black Power. King objected to the use of the term, but the media took the opportunity to expose the disagreements among protestors and publicized the term.

In his last book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (1967), King dismissed the claim of Black Power advocates “to be the most revolutionary wing of the social revolution taking place in the United States,” but he acknowledged that they responded to a psychological need among African Americans he had not previously addressed (King, *Where Do We Go*, 45-46).  “Psychological freedom, a firm sense of self-esteem, is the most powerful weapon against the long night of physical slavery,” King wrote. “The Negro will only be free when he reaches down to the inner depths of his own being and signs with the pen and ink of assertive manhood his own emancipation proclamation” (King, *Call*, 184).

Indeed, even as his popularity declined, King spoke out strongly against American involvement in the Vietnam War, making his position public in an address, “Beyond Vietnam,” on 4 April 1967 at New York’s Riverside Church. King’s involvement in the anti-war movement reduced his ability to influence national racial policies and made him a target of further FBI investigations. Nevertheless, he became ever more insistent that his version of Gandhian nonviolence and social gospel Christianity was the most appropriate response to the problems of black Americans.

In December 1967 King announced the formation of the Poor People’s Campaign, designed to prod the federal government to strengthen its antipoverty efforts. King and other SCLC workers began to recruit poor people and antipoverty activists to come to Washington, D.C., to lobby on behalf of improved antipoverty programs. This effort was in its early stages when King became involved in the Memphis sanitation workers’ strike in Tennessee. On 28 March 1968, as King led thousands of sanitation workers and sympathizers on a march through downtown Memphis, black youngsters began throwing rocks and looting stores. This outbreak of violence led to extensive press criticisms of King’s entire antipoverty strategy. King returned to Memphis for the last time in early April. Addressing an audience at Bishop Charles J. Mason Temple on 3 April, King affirmed his optimism despite the “difficult days” that lay ahead. “But it really doesn’t matter with me now,” he declared, “because I’ve been to the mountaintop [and] I’ve seen the Promised Land.” He continued, “I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.” (King, *Call*, 222-223). The following evening the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. took place as he stood on a balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. A white segregationist, James Earl Ray, was later convicted of the crime. The Poor People’s Campaign continued for a few months after his death under the direction of Ralph Abernathy, the new SCLC president, but it did not achieve its objectives.

Until his death King remained steadfast in his commitment to the radical transformation of American society through nonviolent activism. In his posthumously published essay, “A Testament of Hope” (1969), he urged African Americans to refrain from violence but also warned, “White America must recognize that justice for black people cannot be achieved without radical changes in the structure of our society.” The “black revolution” was more than a civil rights movement, he insisted. “It is forcing America to face all its interrelated flaws-racism, poverty, militarism and materialism” (King, “Testament,” 194).

After her husband’s death, Coretta Scott King established the Atlanta-based Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change (also known as the King Center) to promote Gandhian-Kingian concepts of nonviolent struggle. She also led the successful effort to honor her husband with a federally mandated King national holiday, which was first celebrated in 1986.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**JOHN LEWIS (1940- )**

Celebrated as one of the civil rights movement’s most courageous young leaders, John Lewis, a founding member and chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), greatly contributed to student movements of the 1960s. He described Martin Luther King as ‘‘the person who, more than any other, continued to inﬂuence my life, who made me who I was’’ (Lewis, 412).

Born on 21 February 1940, Lewis was raised on a farm near Troy, Alabama, where his parents were sharecroppers. Lewis was ﬁrst exposed to King and his ideas when he heard one of the young minister’s sermons on the radio. This was a revolutionary moment for Lewis who thought of King as a ‘‘Moses’’ of his people; one who used ‘‘organized religion and the emotionalism within the Negro church as an instrument, as a vehicle, toward freedom’’ (Allen, ‘‘John Lewis’’). Inspired by this idea of the [social gospel](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_social_gospel/), Lewis began preaching in local churches when he was 15 years old. Upon graduating from high school, Lewis enrolled in the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville.

Lewis’ ﬁrst direct encounter with King occurred in the summer of 1958, when he traveled to Montgomery to seek King’s help in suing to transfer to Troy State University, an all-white institution closer to his home. Lewis met with King, Ralph Abernathy, and Fred Gray at Abernathy’s First Baptist Church, and they decided they would contribute their ﬁnancial and legal assistance to ‘‘the boy from Troy,’’ as King called him (Lewis, 68). Lewis’ parents, however, feared the potential repercussions of the lawsuit. Lewis acknowledged these sentiments and returned to American Baptist that fall.

While in Nashville, Lewis attended direct action workshops led by James Lawson and came to embrace the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence. Lewis became heavily involved in the Nashville movement and participated in a series of student sit-ins in early 1960 that aimed to integrate movie theaters, restaurants, and other businesses. In April 1960, he helped form SNCC and later participated in the Freedom Rides of 1961. During this campaign, Lewis realized the potential implications of his involvement in the movement after being severely beaten by white youth. Faced with jeopardizing his ability to graduate from American Baptist by being incarcerated for participation in a demonstration, he stated: ‘‘this is [the] most important decision in my life, to decide to give up all if necessary for the Freedom Ride, that Justice and Freedom might come to the Deep South’’ (Branch, 395).

Lewis received his BA from the American Baptist Theological Seminary in 1961. Acknowledging him as ‘‘one of the most dedicated young men in our movement,’’ the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) elected him to their board the following year in an attempt to bring more young people into the organization (SCLC, 16 May 1962). In 1963 he was chosen by acclamation as the chairman of SNCC. As leader of the organization, Lewis often found himself torn between his allegiance to SNCC and his relationship with King. Lewis told King that ‘‘it has always been a deep concern of mine that there has not been enough communication between S.C.L.C. and SNCC,’’ however, this was not a sentiment shared by other members of either group (Lewis, 11 April 1964). Lewis’ decision to ‘‘maintain a liaison with Dr. King and the SCLC’’ earned him much criticism within SNCC (Lewis, 379). Lewis, however, valued King as the man who had ultimately set him on his life’s path, and chose to uphold strong ties with both him and SNCC.

As chairman of SNCC, Lewis participated in many of the civil rights movement’s most momentous events. On 28 August 1963, he delivered one of the keynote speeches at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Fellow civil rights leaders had advised Lewis to revise his speech because of its blunt criticisms of the federal government’s inaction, but the ﬁnal version was still regarded as ‘‘the most controversial and militant speech at the March,’’ proclaiming that ‘‘we march today for jobs and freedom, but we have nothing to be proud of’’ and asking in an accusatory manner, ‘‘which side is the federal government on?’’ (Lewis, 28 August 1963). Lewis went on to play a crucial role in the 1964 Freedom Summer by coordinating voter registration drives and community action programs in Mississippi.

On 7 March 1965, Lewis and Hosea Williams led several hundred protest marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama in a demonstration aimed at drawing attention to increased voting rights in the South. The march came to be known as ‘‘Bloody Sunday,’’ because of the brutal beatings that many of the marchers received from state troopers; Lewis himself was severely attacked and suffered a fractured skull. Lewis’ involvement with SNCC ended the following year when Stokely Carmichael won a bid for the chairmanship, and Lewis perceived that the organization was heading in a militant direction that conﬂicted with his ‘‘personal commitment to nonviolence’’ (Carson, 231).

Lewis continued his civil rights involvement in later years as the head of voter registration initiatives run by the Southern Regional Council and the Voter Education Project. In 1977 President Jimmy Carter chose him to head ACTION, a federal volunteer agency. He attempted to enter government that same year with a House congressional campaign but was unsuccessful. He served on Atlanta’s city council from 1982 to 1986, when he defeated Julian Bond in the Democratic congressional primary and was elected to the House of Representatives, where he served 11 terms.

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*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**ABBEY LINCOLN (1930-2010)**

Few singers have the emotional depth and versatility of Abbey Lincoln. With a voice capable of evoking the joys and pains of life, she has carved a niche as a singer, songwriter, and storyteller for over 40 years. Today, she’s a living jazz legend, still striving for new creative, self-expression.

Born Anna Marie Wooldridge on August 6, 1930 in Chicago, Illinois, Abbey grew up in rural Michigan on a large farm with her eleven siblings. The family had a piano, and Abbey developed an interest in music at an early age and soon started singing in school and church choirs.

As Lincoln’s talent matured, she began learning to express the emotions behind the lyrics. She credits the recording of Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, and Dinah Washington with teaching her to sing with conviction.

To escape the harsh Michigan winters, Abbey moved to California. At age 22, she spent a year in Honolulu, singing at a nightclub under the name Gaby Lee. When she moved back to California, she met lyricist Bob Russell, who became her manager and renamed her Abbey Lincoln.

After several years in the West, Abbey left for Chicago. While her singing career was beginning to build, she landed a role singing in the film *The Girl Can’t Help It*, wearing a dress once worn by Marilyn Monroe. But the glamorous life wasn’t sitting well with Abbey, and she fired Russell and moved on.

In 1956, Abbey recorded her first album, *Abbey Lincoln’s Affair: A Story of a Girl in Love*. The following year, she moved to New York City and worked at the Village Vanguard, which at that time was an intimate supper club, perfect for aspiring artists.

While performing at the Village Vanguard, Abbey met drummer, composer, and bebop innovator Max Roach, who she would later marry. It was Roach who introduced her to New York City’s jazz elite. He also played an important role on her development as a socio-political artist and activist.

Abbey and Roach began collaborating quiet frequently during the end of the 1950’s and throughout the 1960’s. During this time, the Civil Rights movement was on the rise, and they, along with Charles Mingus, Oscar Brown Jr., John Coltrane, and other jazz musicians, were right in the thick of it.

Lincoln, Roach, Brown and others performed at benefits and fund raising concerts for the NAACP, CORE, and other Civil Rights organizations. In 1960, they recorded Roach’s masterpiece, *We Insist!; Freedom Now Suite.*

After recording *We Insist!: Freedom Now Suite*, Abbey teamed with Hentoff to record, *Straight Ahead*. The album featured Mal Waldron, who was the last pianist to with Abbey’s idol Billie Holiday before her death.

*Straight Ahead* also featured four songs with original lyrics written by Lincoln. One of them, “In the Red,” addressed the economical injustices many blacks felt in America. A critic, who reviewed the album, labeled Abbey a “professional Negro.” She and other wrote letters to the editor of the writer’s publication.

In the mid-1960’s, Abbey starred in two more films, *Nothing But a Man* and *For the Love of Ivy*. At the end of the decade, she and Roach had divorced; Abbey moved back to California and immersed herself into art. Even though she was experiencing some financial hardship during that time, singer Miriam Makeba offered her the change to visit Africa.

Throughout the 1970’s and 1980’s, Abbey recorded on small independent labels such as Inner city and Enja. Her career got a major boost in 1989 when French producer Jean-Philippe Allard invited her to record for Verve Records/France.

When *The World Is Falling Down* was released in 1990, the record propelled Lincoln back to stardom. It featured luminaries such as alto saxophonist Jacki McLean, pianist Hank Jones, and trumpeter Clark Terry. Since then, Abbey has made a string of stellar, philosophical CDs for Verve that continue to bring her newfound critical and commercial success.

**Source** *Jazz Profiles* from NPR. <http://www.npr.org/programs/jazzprofiles/archive/lincoln.html>

**MALCOLM X (1925-1965)**

As the nation’s most visible proponent of Black Nationalism, Malcolm X’s challenge to the multiracial, nonviolent approach of Martin Luther King, Jr., helped set the tone for the ideological and tactical conflicts that took place within the black freedom struggle of the 1960s. Given Malcolm X’s abrasive criticism of King and his advocacy of racial separatism, it is not surprising that King rejected the occasional overtures from one of his fiercest critics. However, after Malcolm’s assassination in 1965, King wrote to his widow, Betty Shabazz: “While we did not always see eye to eye on methods to solve the race problem, I always had a deep affection for Malcolm and felt that he had the great ability to put his finger on the existence and root of the problem” (King, 26 February 1965).

Malcolm Little was born to Louise and Earl Little in Omaha, Nebraska, on 19 May 1925. His father died when he was six years old – the victim, he believed, of a white racist group. Following his father’s death, Malcolm recalled, “Some kind of psychological deterioration hit our family circle and began to eat away our pride” (Malcolm X, *Autobiography*, 14). By the end of the 1930s Malcolm’s mother had been institutionalized, and he became a ward of the court to be raised by white guardians in various reform schools and foster homes.

Malcolm joined the Nation of Islam (NOI) while serving a prison term in Massachusetts on burglary charges. Shortly after his release in 1952, he moved to Chicago and became a minister under Elijah Muhammad, abandoning his “slave name,” and becoming Malcolm X (Malcolm X, “We Are Rising”). By the late 1950s, Malcolm had become the Nation of Islam’s leading spokesman.

Although Malcolm rejected King’s message of [nonviolence](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_nonviolent_resistance/), he respected King as a “fellow-leader of our people,” sending King articles on the NOI as early as 1957 and inviting him to participate in mass meetings throughout the early 1960s (*Papers* 5:491). While Malcolm was particularly interested that King hear Elijah Muhammad’s message, he also sought to create an open forum for black leaders to explore solutions to the “race problem” (Malcolm X to King, 31 July 1963). King never accepted Malcolm’s invitations, however, leaving communication with him to his secretary, Maude Ballou.

Despite his repeated overtures to King, Malcolm did not refrain from criticizing him publicly. “The only revolution based on loving your enemy,” Malcolm told an audience in 1963, “is the Negro revolution…That’s no revolution” (Malcolm X, “Message to the Grass Roots,” 9).

In the spring of 1964, Malcolm broke away from the NOI and made a pilgrimage to Mecca. When he returned he began following a course that paralleled King’s – combining religious leadership and political action. Although King told reporters that Malcolm’s separation from Elijah Muhammad “holds no particular significance to the present civil rights efforts,” he argued that if “tangible gains are not made soon all across the country, we must honestly face the prospect that some Negroes might be tempted to accept some oblique path [such] as that Malcolm X proposes” (King, 16 March 1964).

Ten days later, during the Senate debate on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, King and Malcolm met for the first and only time. After holding a press conference in the Capitol on the proceedings, King encountered Malcolm in the hallway. As King recalled in a 3 April letter, “At the end of the conference, he came and spoke to me, and I readily shook his hand.” King defended shaking the hand of an adversary by saying that “my position is that of kindness and reconciliation” (King, 3 April 1965).

Malcolm’s primary concern during the remainder of 1964 was to establish ties with the black activists he saw as more militant than King. He met with a number of workers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), including SNCC chairman, John Lewis and Mississippi organizer Fannie Lou Hamer. Malcolm saw his newly created Organization of African American Unity (OAAU) as a potential source of ideological guidance for the more militant veterans of the southern civil rights movement. At the same time, he looked to the southern struggle for inspiration in his effort to revitalize the moribund Black Nationalist movement.

In January 1965, he revealed in an interview that the OAAU would “support fully and without compromise any action by any group that is designed to get meaningful immediate results” (Malcolm X, *Two Speeches*,31). Malcolm urged civil rights groups to unite, telling a gathering at a symposium sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality, “We want freedom now, but we're not going to get it saying 'We Shall Overcome.' We've got to fight to overcome" (Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks,* 38).

In early 1965, while King was jailed in Selma, Alabama, Malcolm traveled to Selma, where he had a private meeting with Coretta Scott King. “I didn’t come to Selma to make his job difficult,” he assured Coretta. “I really did come thinking that I could make it easier. If the white people realize what the alternative is, perhaps they will be more willing to hear Dr. King” (Scott King, *My Life*, 256).

On 21 February 1965, just a few weeks after his visit to Selma, Malcolm X was assassinated. King called his murder a “great tragedy” and expressed his regret that it “occurred at a time when Malcolm X was…moving toward a greater understanding of the nonviolent movement” (King, 24 February 1965). He asserted that Malcolm’s murder deprived “the world of a potentially great leader” (King, “The Nightmare of Violence”).  Malcolm’s death signaled the beginning of bitter battles involving proponents of the ideological alternatives the two men represented.

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**CURTIS MAYFIELD (1942-1999)**

Curtis Mayfield was born on June 3, 1942, in Chicago, Illinois. He met the singer Jerry Butler while performing in a church choir and joined his band The Impressions. In 1970, Mayfield began a solo career, and his most memorable project was the classic 1972 soundtrack to *Superfly*. Mayfield was paralyzed during a 1990 stage accident in Brooklyn but continued to record until his death in 1999.

Rhythm and blues singer, songwriter, and producer. Born June 3, 1942, in Chicago, Illinois. In his four decades in the music business, Mayfield helped bring a unique racial consciousness to popular music and introduced an innovative sound that greatly influenced following generations of musicians.  Mayfield began singing by the age of seven; he also taught himself to play guitar, led his own gospel and soul group, the Alphatones, and began composing music and writing lyrics before he was a teenager. In 1956, Mayfield moved with his family to the North Side of Chicago, where he met the singer Jerry Butler while performing in a church choir. Butler convinced the 14-year-old Mayfield to join his soul band, then called the Roosters. Two years later, after renaming itself the Impressions, the group scored a No. 11 hit with "For Your Precious Love."

After Butler left the Impressions to pursue a solo career, the group reformed with Mayfield as its leader. Mayfield wrote the songs, produced the records, played guitar and sang lead. During the 1960s, the heyday of the Impressions, the group brought its potent mixture of gospel, soul, and doo-wop to a total of 14 Top 10 recordings, including "Gypsy Woman" and "It's All Right." In 1964, with the hit song "Keep on Pushing," Mayfield became one of the first R&B singer-songwriters to bring a racial and political consciousness to his music. "Keep on Pushing," along with other inspirational anthems such as "People Get Ready" and "I'm So Proud," established Mayfield as one of the pioneers of soul music and as a singular voice of the civil rights movement.

In 1970, Mayfield began a solo career, recording a series of albums and working as a producer for artists like [Aretha Franklin](http://www.biography.com/people/aretha-franklin-9301157) and [Gladys Knight](http://www.biography.com/people/gladys-knight-9542334) and the Pips. His most memorable solo project was the classic 1972 funk album *Superfly*, the soundtrack to the hit "blaxploitation" film of the same name. *Superfly* was the No. 1 album on the pop charts for four weeks and solidified Mayfield's legacy as one of the late-20th century's most innovative songwriters and performers.  Though his popularity began to fade in the late 1970s with the rise of disco, Mayfield continued to record hopeful, inspirational music and tour actively in the United States, Europe, and Japan. In 1990, during an outdoor concert in Brooklyn, New York, a lighting scaffold fell on Mayfield; the accident left him paralyzed from the neck down. The amazingly indefatigable musician continued to compose and record music, learning to sing while lying flat on his back and letting gravity create the necessary pressure on his lungs.

In 1996, the year after he received a Grammy Award for Lifetime Achievement, Mayfield released his final album, *New World Order.*  In the years following his accident, Mayfield’s health had continued to deteriorate, and in 1998 his right leg was amputated due to complications from diabetes. On December 26, 1999, Mayfield died at the age of 57. A two-time inductee to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (he gained admission with the Impressions in 1991 and as a solo performer in 1999), Mayfield had been living in Atlanta, Georgia, with his wife, Altheida. He had 10 children and seven grandchildren.

His influence on other performers was undeniable. As early as the 1960s, performers like Sam Cooke, James Brown, and Marvin Gaye had followed Mayfield's lead and brought a new kind of social awareness to their music. In the 1990s, he inspired two different tribute albums (including 1994's *All Men are Brothers: A Tribute to Curtis Mayfield*, featuring Whitney Houston, Elton John, the Isley Brothers, and Aretha Franklin) and his songs were sampled or covered by a host of performers, from rappers like Snoop Doggy Dogg, L.L. Cool J, Coolio, and Dr. Dre to singers like Herbie Hancock, Deneice Williams, En Vogue, and Mary J. Blige.

**Source**

"Curtis Mayfield," *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/curtis-mayfield-9542244>

**JAMES MEREDITH (1933- )**

In Martin Luther King’s famous ‘‘Letter from Birmingham Jail,’’ he called James Meredith, the ﬁrst African American to integrate the University of Mississippi in 1962, a hero of the civil rights movement. He honored Meredith and others for their for the strong sense of purpose that allowed them to stand up to the hostility directed at them by opponents of civil rights. In 1966, King praised Meredith once again, after he was wounded on a 220-mile personal journey to encourage African American voter registration.

In June 1933, Meredith was born the seventh of thirteen children in rural Kosciusko, Mississippi. Growing up in rural Mississippi was difficult for Meredith who moved to St. Petersburg, Florida, to live with his aunt and attend public schools superior to those available in Kosciusko. After graduating from high school in 1951, Meredith joined the Air Force, serving nine years before returning to Mississippi and enrolled in Jackson State University.

In January 1961, the night following John F. Kennedy’s presidential inauguration, Meredith decided to submit an application to the University of Mississippi (also known as Ole Miss), which was closed to African-American students. His application was rejected twice, but with the help of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Meredith legally challenged the university’s segregation policy. After enduring extended court battles, the defiance of Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett, and violent campus riots, Meredith was finally admitted on 1 October 1962.

In a March 1963, a letter published in the *New York Amsterdam News*, King asked for the public’s support of Meredith, describing him as “a symbol of self-respect and dignity.” King asked the public to pray for Meredith and to express to him “how much you appreciate his heroism” (King, “A Letter to Meredith”). Meredith graduated from Ole Miss in August 1963 with a bachelor’s degree in political science.

In 1966 Meredith began a solitary march from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi, to encourage African-American voter registration. When a sniper wounded him on the second day of the march, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee rallied behind his cause. King, Stokely Carmichael, and Floyd McKissick were joined by hundreds of other marchers as they completed the march.

By the late 1960s Meredith had moved to New York and received a law degree from Columbia University. Over the next several years, Meredith became more politically involved, making several unsuccessful bids for public office, including a run for the Republican Senate nomination in Mississippi. A local community leader in Mississippi, Meredith organized a Black Man’s March to the Library in Memphis to promote reading and writing of standard English and a Black Man’s March for Education to the University of Mississippi.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**ROBERT “BOB” MOSES (1935- )**

Although he avoided publicity and was reluctant to assert himself as a leader, Robert Parris Moses became one of the most influential black leaders of the southern civil rights struggle. His vision of grassroots, community-based leadership differed from Martin Luther King’s charismatic leadership style. Nonetheless, King appreciated Moses’ fresh ideas, calling his ‘‘contribution to the freedom struggle in America’’ an ‘‘inspiration’’ (King, 21 December 1963).

Born on 23 January 1935 in New York City, Moses grew up in a housing project in Harlem. He attended Stuyvesant High School, an elite public school, and won a scholarship to Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. He earned a master’s degree in philosophy in 1957 from Harvard University, and was working toward his doctorate when he was forced to leave because of the death of his mother and the hospitalization of his father. Moses returned to New York and became a mathematics teacher at Horace Mann School.

During the late 1950s Moses became increasingly interested in the civil rights struggle. In 1959 he helped Bayard Rustin with the second Youth March for Integrated Schools in Washington, D.C. Although he was willing to stuff envelopes along with other ofﬁce volunteers, Rustin encouraged him to do more, suggesting in 1960 that he use his summer teaching break to go to Atlanta and work with King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In Atlanta, Moses volunteered to travel on behalf of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Council (SNCC)—then a nascent student organization sharing ofﬁces with SCLC—on a recruiting tour of Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi, where he met local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) activist Amzie Moore. At Moore’s request, Moses returned to Mississippi in 1961 to work on voter registration. Initially just a volunteer, Moses quickly joined SNCC’s staff of three as the special ﬁeld secretary for voter registration based in McComb, Mississippi. The following year he was named the co-director of the Council of Federated Organizations, a cooperative of civil rights groups in the state.

As an organizer, Moses nurtured local leaders who could continue the struggle after organizers had departed. He recognized the untapped potential of grassroots activists such as Fannie Lou Hamer who, despite only a sixth grade education, became one of SNCC’s most effective organizers. ‘‘Leadership is there in the people,’’ he later said. ‘‘You don’t have to worry about where your leaders are, how are we going to get some leaders. The leadership is there. If you go out and work with your people, then the leadership will emerge’’ (Carson, 303).

Moses developed the idea for the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project, which recruited northern college students to join Mississippi blacks conducting a grassroots voter registration drive. When local blacks were excluded from participating in the all-white ‘‘regular’’ Democratic Party, Moses suggested creating the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), which sought recognition as the representative delegation from Mississippi at the Democratic National Convention of 1964. Moses, King, and MFDP delegates participated in negotiations with vice presidential hopeful Hubert Humphrey. Although King favored a compromise whereby MFDP would be given two at-large seats, Moses and most MFDP delegates held out for full recognition.

Moses resigned from COFO in late 1964. He later commented that his role had become ‘‘too strong, too central, so that people who did not need to, began to lean on me, to use me as a crutch’’ (Carson, 156). He temporarily dropped his surname, going by his middle name, Parris, and began participating in the campaign against the Vietnam War. Speaking at the ﬁrst massive anti-war demonstration on 17 April 1965 at the Washington Monument, Moses linked his opposition to the war to the civil rights struggle. As his involvement in the anti-war movement increased, he took a leave of absence from SNCC to avoid criticisms from fellow members who did not support his stance. Following his trip to Africa in 1965 Moses came to believe that blacks must work independently of whites, and by 1966 Moses had cut off all relationships with whites, even former SNCC activists.

Then separated from his ﬁrst wife, SNCC worker Dona Richards, Moses moved to Canada to avoid the military draft in 1967. He later remarried and settled in Tanzania, where he and his wife Janet lived for several years before returning to the United States. While Moses was completing his PhD at Harvard, he was awarded a MacArthur Foundation ‘‘Genius’’ award, which he used to promote the Algebra Project, a national program to improve the math literacy skills of children in poor communities.

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**Source** *The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**DIANE NASH (1938- )**

Through her involvement with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Diane Nash worked closely with Marin Luther King. In 1962 King nominated Nash for a civil rights award sponsored by the New York branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to acknowledge her exemplary role in the student sit-ins. King described Nash as the ‘‘driving spirit in the nonviolent assault on segregation at lunch counters’’ (King, 9 April 1962).

Born in 1938, in Chicago, Illinois, Nash left Chicago to attend Howard University in Washington, D.C., but transferred a year later to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she majored in English.

In Nashville, Nash experienced the full effect of the Jim Crow system for the ﬁrst time. In 1959 she began attending nonviolence workshops given by James Lawson. Initially a skeptic of nonviolent tactics, Nash began to understand their effectiveness and marveled at the willingness of people to risk their lives for the sake of others. She had the opportunity to practice nonviolent direct action after the Student Central Committee in Nashville organized sit-ins in local department stores. Their sit-ins occurred in conjunction with the wave of sit-ins across the South initiated in Greensboro, North Carolina, on 1 February 1960.

In 1960 Nash attended the founding meeting of SNCC in Raleigh, North Carolina. In 1961 SNCC began supporting 10 students in Rock Hill, South Carolina, who were involved in protest activities and refused to post bail after being arrested. Shortly after arriving in Rock Hill, Nash and three other activists were also jailed for requesting service at a segregated lunch counter. For Nash, ‘‘jail without bail’’ gave protesters the ‘‘opportunity to reach the community and society with a great moral appeal and thus bring about basic changes in people and in society’’ (Garrow, 202). On 17 February 1961 King wrote to Nash, Charles Sherrod, and the other protesters ‘‘You have inspired all of us by such demonstrative courage and faith. It is good to know that there still remains a creative minority who would rather lose in a cause that will ultimately win than to win in a cause that will ultimately lose.’’

During the spring of 1961 Nash played a crucial role in sustaining Freedom Rides initiated by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). From her base in Nashville, she coordinated student efforts to continue the rides into Mississippi and served as a liaison between the press and the United States Department of Justice. Tensions developed between King and SNCC members, including Nash, when King refused to participate in the Freedom Rides himself.

After her leadership role in the Freedom Rides, Nash became head of SNCC’s direct action campaigns during the summer of 1961. That same year she married James Bevel, a fellow civil rights activist. The two moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where Nash was later convicted of contributing to the delinquency of minors for teaching them nonviolent tactics. Given a choice between paying a ﬁne and jail time, Nash opted to serve her sentence despite being pregnant. The judge suspended her sentence rather than face the possibility of negative publicity for sending a pregnant woman to jail. In 1962 she joined Bevel at SCLC as a ﬁeld staff organizer. She and Bevel made important contributions to the Birmingham Campaign, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and the Selma Campaign. Both received the Rosa Parks Award from SCLC in 1965.

From the late 1960s onward, Nash taught in Chicago public schools and continued her activism organizing tenants, welfare support, and housing advocates.

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*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**ODETTA (1930-2008)**

Folk singer. Odetta Holmes, later known simply as Odetta, was born on December 31, 1930, in Birmingham, Alabama.Before she even learned how to play an instrument, Odetta banged on the family piano in hopes of making music—until her family members got headaches and told her to stop. Growing up in the Deep South during the Great Depression, Odetta fell in love with the work songs she heard people singing to ease the pain of the times. "They were liberation songs," she later recalled. "You're walking down life's road, society's foot is on your throat, every which way you turn you can't get from under that foot. And you reach a fork in the road and you can either lie down and die or insist upon your life ... those people who made up the songs were the ones who insisted upon life."

Odetta's father, Reuben Holmes, died in 1937, when Odetta was only 7 years old. That same year she and her mother, Flora Sanders, moved across the country to Los Angeles. It was on the train to California that Odetta had her first significant experience with racism. "We were on the train when, at one point, a conductor came back and said that all the colored people had to move out of this car and into another one," she remembered. "That was my first big wound."

Although Odetta loved singing, she never considered whether she had any particular vocal talent until one of her grammar school teachers heard her voice. The teacher insisted to Odetta's mother that she sign her up for classical training. In junior high, after several years of voice coaching, she landed a spot in a prestigious signing group called the Madrigal Singers. When Odetta graduated from Belmont High School in Los Angeles, she continued on to Los Angeles City College to study music. She later insisted, however, that her real education came from outside the classroom. "School taught me how to count and taught me how to put a sentence together," she acknowledged. "But as far as the human spirit goes, I learned through folk music." And as far as her musical development went, Odetta said her formal training was "a nice exercise, but it had nothing to do with my life."

In 1950, after graduating from college with a degree in music, Odetta landed a role in the chorus of a traveling production of *Finian's Rainbow*. She fell in love with folk music when, after a show in San Francisco, she went to a Bohemian coffee shop and experienced a late-night folk music session. "That night I heard hours and hours of songs that really touched where I live," she said.

"I borrowed a guitar and learned three chords, and started to sing at parties." Later that year, she left the theater company and took a job singing at a San Francisco folk club. In 1953, she moved to New York City and soon became a fixture at Manhattan's famed Blue Angel nightclub. "As I did those songs, I could work on my hate and fury without being antisocial," she said. "Through those songs, I learned things about the history of black people in this country that the historians in school had not been willing to tell us about or had lied about."

She recorded her first solo album, *Odetta Sings Ballads and Blues*, in 1956, and it became an instant classic in American folk music. Bob Dylan later cited that album as the record that first turned him on to folk music, and *Time* magazine raved about "the meticulous care with which she tried to recreate the feeling of her folk songs." Odetta quickly followed with two more highly acclaimed folk albums: *At the Gate of Horn* (1957) and *My Eyes Have Seen* (1959). In 1960, Odetta delivered a famed concert at Carnegie Hall and released a live recording of the performance.

The 1960s, however, were Odetta's most prolific years. During that decade, she lent her powerful voice to the cause of black equality—so often so that her music has frequently been called "the soundtrack of the civil rights movement." She performed at political rallies, demonstrations and benefits. In 1963, during the March on Washington, Odetta gave the most iconic performance of her life: Singing from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial after an introduction by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Odetta also recorded more than a dozen albums during the 1960s, most notably *Odetta and the Blues*, *One Grain of Sand*, *It's a Mighty World* and *Odetta Sings Dylan*.

Odetta's popularity waned after the 1960s, and she recorded only several more albums over the remaining four decades of her life. Her most prominent later works include *Movin' It On* (1987), *Blues Everywhere I Go* (1999) and *Looking for a Home* (2001). One of the greatest American folk singers of all time, Odetta has been cited as a prominent influence by such legendary musicians as Bob Dylan, Joan Baez and Janis Joplin. President Bill Clinton presented her with a National Medal of Arts in 1999. In 2004, she was made a Kennedy Center honoree and in 2005, the Library of Congress awarded her its Living Legend Award. Her highly acclaimed final album, a live recording performed when she was 74 years old, was entitled *Gonna Let It Shine* (2005). Her music inspired a generation of civil rights activists who helped tear down the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow to build a more equal and just United States of America. In her later years, after the popularity of folk music had declined, Odetta made it her mission to share its potency with a new generation of youth. "The folk repertoire is our inheritance. Don't have to like it, but we need to hear it," she said. "I love getting to schools and telling kids there's something else out there.

It's from their forebears, and it's an alternative to what they hear on the radio. As long as I am performing, I will be pointing out that heritage that is ours."

Odetta continued performing right up until almost the day of her death on December 2, 2008, at the age of 77. She had dreamed of performing at the inauguration of President Barack Obama, but tragically passed away just weeks before he took office.

**Source**

"Odetta," *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/odetta-507480>

**MANUEL PENA**

Manuel Peña, Jr. was born in Cashion, AZ but grew up in Tolleson, AZ where as a student he championed an end to educational segregation. This signaled his long-life pursuit through political struggles for promoting fairness in employment, equality in social living, and human rights for all.

In his political life, he served three terms in the Arizona House of Representatives and twelve terms in the Arizona State Senate. His thirty years of service in the Arizona Legislature crowned his many years of public service.

Lito Peña served local government, various organizations, and community services. A few services are listed: Commissioner on Human Relations, City of Phoenix; Executive Secretary, State Athletic Commission; Vice Chairman, Movimiento Unido Mexicano; President of Community Service Organization; Post Commander, American Legion Post 41; and Secretary/Treasurer of the Phoenix Catholic Labor Society. Manuel Peña served on the Board of Directors of several organizations, among them: Phoenix Council for Civic Unity, Careers for Youth, Phoenix Urban League, CODAC, and Community Service Organization. Manuel Peña held memberships in various organizations: He served as Chairman, State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights; member of the Arizona Consumers Council; Vice-President of American Legion Post 41, and member of VFW Post 6310.

Manuel Peña, a member of the democrat political party, served District 22. In his capacity as a state legislator, Peña sponsored the legislation of many important state laws that sought to protect the working person, the disabled, the homeless, and grandparents. Peña supported the Martin Luther King Holiday. He sponsored bills: Eliminate the Sales Tax on Food, Reduce Finance Company Interest Rates, Fair Housing Bill, Regulate Auto Repairs, Unit Pricing, and the Dr. César Estrada Chávez Proclamation.

Manuel Peña served on various National Committee Assignments: Assembly on the Legislature, State Federal Assembly, Council of State Governments, Commerce, Labor and Regulation, and the Economic Development & Trade Committee.

**Source**

*Profiles of Achievement. Business/Politics/Civil Rights.*http://www.asu.edu/clas/hrc/POA/profile.manuel.html

**ELEANOR RAGSDALE (1926-1998)**

Eleanor Dickey Ragsdale was one of the most distinguished activists, educators, and entrepreneurs in Arizona history. In 1947 she graduated from the historically black Cheyney University in Pennsylvania. The university’s main mission was to cultivate African American teachers, who would become leaders in their local communities. Not long after Ragsdale graduated from Cheyney, she migrated to Phoenix to being a career as a kindergarten teacher at Dunbar Elementary School. Her teaching career was brief, however, because she soon retired from teaching to pursue business opportunities, and to join her husband Dr. Lincoln J. Ragsdale as a leader of Phoenix’s burgeoning civil rights movement.

She became a charter member of the local NAACP, Phoenix Urban League, and Greater Phoenix Council for Civic Unity (GPCCU). Through her activism, Ragsdale helped desegregate Phoenix, currently the fifth largest city in the U.S. In 1953, she led the way in desegregating Phoenix’s Encanto District, the city’s most affluent and segregated neighborhood. Also in 1953, she helped desegregate Phoenix high schools one year before *Brown v. Board of Education*. Eleanor Ragsdale negotiated political partnerships across race lines, worked with black churches in myriad “mutual aid” projects, and served in various black women’s clubs and associations, such as The Links, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She was arguably the most influential black woman in Arizona during the height of state’s civil rights movement.

Contributor: Matthew C. Whitaker

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**Source**

*The BlackPast.org: Remembered and Reclaimed. Ragsdale, Sr., Lincoln J. (1926-1995).*

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aaw/ragsdale-sr-lincoln-j-1926-1995>

**LINCOLN RAGSDALE (1926-1995)**

Dr. Lincoln J. Ragsdale, Sr. was a leading activist in the battle for civil rights in Arizona.  After graduating from Tuskegee flying school in Alabama in 1945, he relocated to Luke Air Field in Litchfield Park, Arizona, becoming one of the first black pilots to serve at that installation.

Ragsdale believed that it was his “Tuskegee experience” that emboldened him and gave him direction.  “It gave me a whole new self-image,” he maintained.  He “remembered when we [Tuskegee Airmen] used to walk through black neighborhoods right after the war, and little kids would run up to us and touch our uniforms.  ‘Mister, can you really fly an airplane’ they’d ask.  The Tuskegee airmen gave blacks a reason to be proud.”  Their service also gave the 2.5 million black veterans of World War II incentive to believe that they could achieve much more in their communities and the nation.

Since Ragsdale was commissioned after World War II, he did not fly a military combat mission.  However, during his stay at Luke Air Field, he fought a different kind of war.  The eleven Tuskegee officers stationed at Luke Air Field were housed with white, southern roommates.  “Phoenix was unquestionably the Mississippi of the West,” Ragsdale argued, and the racial views of their roommates affirmed this belief. Ragsdale recalled that his roommate “didn’t come to the room until late that first night.” When he arrived, he was incredulous.  As soon at Ragsdale’s roommate saw him, he asked Ragsdale where he was staying and made it clear that he did not want to live with a black man.  “I said I was staying with him,” Ragsdale recalled, “and he stormed out of the room.”  These interactions taught Ragsdale a great deal about racism in the military and in Arizona.  After settling in Phoenix, Ragsdale became one of the leaders of the local NAACP, Phoenix Urban League, and Greater Phoenix Council for Civic Unity (GPCCU), to fight racism in Phoenix.

In 1953, Ragsdale helped desegregate the Encanto District, Phoenix’s most affluent and segregated neighborhood.  Also in 1953, he helped desegregate Phoenix high schools one year before *Brown v. Board of Education.*  Ragsdale also helped desegregate Phoenix’s most influential corporations as early as 1962 including Motorola, General Electric and Sperry Rand.  In 1963, he positioned himself as a cornerstone of a political campaign that wrested Phoenix city government away from an elite group of white civic leaders.  Between 1963 and 1992, he fought for diversity in Phoenix’s public and private sectors, and for entrepreneurial opportunities for people of color in Arizona.   Ragsdale also played a major role in the Martin Luther King Holiday movement in Arizona, an effort that ended after twenty years of struggle when Arizona became the first state to create a Martin Luther King holiday by popular vote in November of 1992.

Contributor: Matthew C. Whitaker

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Lincoln Ragsdale, Sr. and Eleanor Ragsdale. Interview by Dean E. Smith, April 4 and November 3, 1990, Phoenix.

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**Source**

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**A. PHILIP RANDOLPH (1889-1979)**

A. Philip Randolph, who Martin Luther King, Jr. called ‘‘truly the Dean of Negro leaders,’’ played a crucial role in gaining recognition of African Americans in labor organizations (*Papers* 4:527). A socialist and a pacifist, Randolph founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first successful black trade union, and the Negro American Labor Council (NALC).

The youngest son of a poor preacher deeply committed to racial politics, Randolph was born in Crescent City, Florida, on 15 April 1889. He graduated from Jacksonville’s Cookman Institute in 1911, relocating to New York City soon afterward. In 1917 Randolph and Chandler Owen founded the *Messenger*, an African American socialist journal critical of American involvement in World War I.    After the 1925 founding of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Randolph succeeded in gaining recognition of the union from the Pullman Palace Car Company in 1937. When the union signed its first contract with the company, membership rose to nearly 15,000. In 1941 Randolph threatened a march on Washington, D.C., if the federal government did not address racial discrimination in the defense industry. In response, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which banned discrimination in the defense industries and established the Fair Employment Practices Commission. Randolph also helped to form the League for Non-violent Civil Disobedience against Military Segregation, which influenced President Harry S. Truman’s decision to desegregate the armed services in 1948.

After the American Federation of Labor merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations to form the AFL-CIO in 1955, Randolph was appointed to the new organization’s executive council, when he became one of its first two black vice presidents. As a labor official, Randolph won significant union support for the civil rights movement and allied with King and other organizations on initiatives like the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom.

In 1959 Randolph founded NALC in an effort to effectively present the demands of black workers to the labor movement. Randolph and NALC helped initiate the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, during which King delivered his famous ‘‘I Have a Dream’’ speech.    Randolph devoted his life to the achievement of both racial and economic equality. On the occasion of Randolph’s 70th birthday, King participated in an evening honoring him at New York’s Carnegie Hall. King praised Randolph’s refusal ‘‘to sell his race for a mess of pottage,’’ and credited him with never being ‘‘afraid to challenge an unjust state power’’ or to ''speak out against the power structure'' (*Papers* 5:350). Randolph died on 16 May 1979 at age 90.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**BAYARD RUSTIN (1912-1987)**

A close advisor to Martin Luther King and one of the most influential and effective organizers of the civil rights movement, Bayard Rustin was affectionately referred to as ‘‘Mr. March-on-Washington’’ by A. Philip Randolph (D’Emilio, 347). Rustin organized and led a number of protests in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, including the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. While Rustin’s homosexuality and former affliation with the Communist Party led some to question King’s relationship with him, King recognized the importance of Rustin’s skills and dedication to the movement. In a 1960 letter, King told a colleague: ‘‘We are thoroughly committed to the method of nonviolence in our struggle and we are convinced that Bayard’s expertness and commitment in this area will be of inestimable value’’ (*Papers* 5:390).

Born on 17 March 1912, Rustin was one of 12 children raised by his grandparents, Janifer and Julia Rustin, in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Rustin’s life-long commitment to nonviolence began with his Quaker upbringing and the inï¬‚uence of his grandmother, whose participation in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) resulted in leaders of the black community, such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Mary McLeod Bethune, visiting the Rustin home during Rustin’s childhood. After graduating from West Chester High School, Rustin studied intermittently at Wilberforce University, Cheyney State Teachers College, and the City College of New York.

While a student at City College of New York in the 1930s, Rustin joined the Young Communist League (YCL). Drawn to what he believed was the Communists’ commitment to racial justice, Rustin left the organization when the Communist Party shifted their emphasis away from civil rights activity in 1941. Shortly after his YCL departure, Rustin was appointed youth organizer of the proposed 1941 March on Washington, by trade union leader A. Philip Randolph. During this period he joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and co-founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Rustin organized campaigns and led workshops on nonviolent direct action for both organizations, serving as field secretary and then race relations director for FOR. During World War II he spent more than two years in prison as a conscientious objector. In 1947 Rustin was arrested with other participants of CORE’s Journey of Reconciliation, a test of the Supreme Court rulings barring segregation in interstate travel that provided a model for the Freedom Rides of 1961. After spending 22 brutal days on a North Carolina chain gang, Rustin published a report in several newspapers that lead to reform of the practice of prison chain gangs.

In 1948 Rustin went to India for seven weeks to study the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence. Several years later, he traveled to Africa on a trip sponsored by FOR and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), where he worked with West African independence movements. Despite his successful tenure with FOR, Rustin was asked to resign from the organization in 1953, after his arrest and conviction on charges related to homosexual activity. The following year he was appointed executive secretary of the War Resisters League, a position he held until January 1965.

Rustin became a key advisor to King during the Montgomery bus boycott. He first visited Montgomery in February 1956, and published a ‘‘Montgomery Diary,’’ in which, upon observing a meeting of the Montgomery Improvement Association, he wrote: ‘‘As I watched the people walk away, I had a feeling that no force on earth can stop this movement. It has all the elements to touch the hearts of men’’ (Rustin, ‘‘Montgomery Diary,’’ 10).

Rustin provided King with a deep understanding of nonviolent ideas and tactics at a time when King had only an academic familiarity with Gandhi. Rustin later recalled: ‘‘The glorious thing is that he came to a profoundly deep understanding of nonviolence through the struggle itself, and through reading and discussions which he had in the process of carrying on the protest’’ (D’Emilio, 230–231). King recognized the advantages of Rustin’s knowledge, contacts, and organizational abilities, and invited him to serve as his advisor, well aware that Rustin’s background would be controversial to other civil rights leaders. As King’s special assistant, Rustin assumed a variety of roles, including proofreader, ghostwriter, philosophy teacher, and nonviolence strategist.

Rustin was also instrumental in the formation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), proposing to King in December 1956 that he create a group that would unite black leaders in the South who possess ‘‘ties to masses of people so that their action projects are backed by broad participation of people’’ (*Papers* 3:493). Rustin developed the guidelines for discussion for the founding meeting of SCLC in January 1957. Although Rustin helped draft much of King’s memoir, *Stride Toward Freedom*, Rustin would not allow his name to be credited in the book, telling an associate: ‘‘I did not feel that he should bear this kind of burden’’ (*Papers* 4:380n).

Rustin was instrumental in organizing the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom. He authored several memos to King outlining the goals of the march and advised King on what topics he should cover in his address. With Randolph, he also coordinated the 25 October 1958 and 18 April 1959 Youth Marches for Integrated Schools.

In 1963 Randolph began organizing the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Despite the concerns of many civil rights leaders, Rustin was appointed deputy director of the march. In less than two months Rustin guided the organization of an event that would bring over 200,000 participants to the nation’s capital.

From 1965 until 1979, Rustin served as president, and later as co-chair, of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, an organization of black trade unionists dedicated to racial equality and economic justice. From this position, Rustin promoted his view that future progress for African Americans rested on alliances between blacks, liberals, labor, and religious groups.

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**Source**

*The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**NINA SIMONE (1933-2003)**

Born on February 21, 1933, in Tryon, North Carolina, Nina Simone received a scholarship to study classical piano at Julliard, but left early when she ran out of money. She turned her interest to jazz, blues and folk music and released her first album in 1958. In the ‘60s, she became identified as the voice of the civil rights and wrote songs about the movement. She died in France on April 21, 2003.

Singer, musician, composer, arranger, civil rights activist. Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon on February 21, 1933, in Tryon, North Carolina. She took to music at an early age, learning to play piano at the age of 4, and singing in her church's choir. The sixth of seven children, Simone grew up poor. Her music teacher helped establish a special fund to pay for Simone's education and, after finishing high school, Simone won a scholarship to New York City's famed Julliard School of Music to train as a classical pianist.

Simone taught piano and worked as a accompanist for other performers while at Julliard, but she eventually had to leave school after she ran out of funds. Moving to Philadelphia, Simone lived with her family there in order to save money and go to a more affordable music program. Her career took an unexpected turn, however, when she was rejected from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia; she later claimed the school denied her admittance because she was African-American. Turning away from classical music, she started playing American standards, jazz and blues in clubs in the 1950s. Before long, she also started singing along with her music at the behest of one bar owner. She took the stage name Nina Simone—"Nina" came from a nickname meaning "little one" and "Simone" after the actress Simone Signoret. She won over such fans as Harlem Renaissance writers Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, and James Baldwin.

Simone began recording her music in the late 1950s under the Bethlehem label, releasing her first full album in 1958, which featured "Plain Gold Ring" and "Little Girl Blue." It also included her one and only top 40 pop hit with her version of "I Loves You Porgy" from the George Gershwin musical *Porgy and Bess*.

In many ways, Simone's music defied standard definitions. Her classical training showed through, no matter what genre of song she played, and she drew from many sources including gospel, pop and folk. She was often called the "High Priestess of Soul," but she hated that nickname. She didn't like the label of "jazz singer", either. "If I had to be called something, it should have been a folk singer because there was more folk and blues than jazz in my playing," she later wrote.

By the mid-1960s, Simone became known as the voice of the civil rights movement. She wrote "Mississippi Goddam" in response to the 1963 assassination of Medgar Evers and the Birmingham church bombing that killed four young African-American girls.

After the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, Simone penned "Why (The King of Love Is Dead)." She also wrote "Young, Gifted and Black," borrowing the title of a play by Hansberry, which became a popular anthem at the time.

As the 1960s drew to a close, Simone tired of the American music scene and the country's deeply divided racial politics. She lived in several different countries, including Liberia, Switzerland, England and Barbados before eventually settling down in the South of France. For years, Simone also struggled with her finances, and clashed with managers, record labels, and the Internal Revenue Service.

Around this time, Simone recorded cover songs of popular music, putting her own spin on such songs as Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'" and the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun." She also showed her sensual side with the song "I Want a Little Sugar in My Bowl." She then took a break from recording, returning in 1978 with the album *Baltimore*. The title track was a cover version of a Randy Newman song. Critics gave the album a warm reception, but it did not do well commercially.

Simone went through a career renaissance in the late 1980s when her song "My Baby Just Cares For Me" was used in a perfume commercial in the United Kingdom. The song became a Top 10 hit in Britain. She also penned her autobiography, *I Put a Spell on You*, which was published in 1992. Her next recording, *A Single Woman*, came out in 1993. To support these works, Simone gave some performances in the United States.

Touring periodically, Simone maintained a strong fan base that filled concert halls whenever she performed. She appeared in New York City in 1998, her first trip there in five years. *The New York Times* critic Jon Paneles reviewed the concert, saying that "there is still power in her voice" and the show featured "a beloved sound, a celebrated personality, and a repertory that magnifies them both." That same year, Simone attended South African leader Nelson Mandela's 80th birthday celebration.

In 1999, Simone performed at the Guinness Blues Festival in Dublin, Ireland. She was joined on stage by her daughter Lisa for a few songs. Lisa, from Simone's second marriage to manager Andrew Stroud, followed in her mother's footsteps. She has appeared on Broadway in *Aida*, using the stage name "Simone."

In her final years, Simone battled with health problems. Some reports indicate she was battling breast cancer, but that claim has not been officially confirmed. She died on April 21, 2003, at her home in Carry-le-Rouet, France.

While she may be gone, Simone left a lasting impression on the world of music. She sang to share her truth, and her music still resonates with great emotion and power. Simone has inspired an array of performers, from Aretha Franklin to Joni Mitchell. Her deep, distinctive voice continues to be a popular choice for television and film soundtracks, from documentaries to comedies to dramas.

**Source** "Nina Simone," *The Biography Channel website*, <http://www.biography.com/people/nina-simone-9484532>

**GEORGE WALLACE (1919-1998)**

After pledging, ‘‘Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!’’ in his 1963 inaugural address, Alabama Governor George Wallace gained national notoriety by standing at the entrance to the University of Alabama to denounce the enrollment of two African American students. Martin Luther King described Wallace as ‘‘perhaps the most dangerous racist in America today’’ (King, ‘‘Interview’’). In a 1965 interview King said: ‘‘I am not sure that he believes all the poison that he preaches,’’ King said in 1965, ‘‘but he is artful enough to convince others that he does’’ (King, ‘‘Interview’’).

Wallace was born on 25 August 1919, in Clio, Alabama. The son of a farmer, he worked his way through the University of Alabama, earning his law degree in 1942. After a brief time in the Air Force, Wallace returned to Alabama to work as the state’s assistant attorney general. He was elected to the state legislature in 1947, and served as a district judge from 1953 to 1959. In his early political career he maintained a moderate stance on integration; but after losing his ﬁrst gubernatorial campaign to a candidate who was endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan, Wallace became an outspoken defender of segregation. In 1962 Wallace won the governorship on a segregationist platform, receiving the largest vote of any gubernatorial candidate in Alabama’s history until that time.

In June 1963 Wallace fulﬁlled a campaign promise to stand in the schoolhouse door rather than accede to federal orders to integrate Alabama schools. Wallace blocked black students Vivian Malone and James Hood from entering the University of Alabama, but yielded when President John F. Kennedy federalized the Alabama National Guard to ensure their entrance. Three months later violence in the city erupted, concluding in the murder of four young black girls in a bombing at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. King, who had been in Birmingham to desegregate public facilities, felt that Wallace’s actions contributed to the violence in the city. Writing to President Kennedy in September 1963, King lamented: ‘‘A reign of terror continues in Birmingham. The atmosphere of violence and lawlessness has been fomented and created by the irresponsible actions of Governor George Wallace who persists in violating federal ﬁat in arrogant and blatant deﬁance.’’ King warned Kennedy that if he did not ‘‘use the inﬂuence of [his] high ofﬁce,’’ Birmingham would ‘‘see the worst race riot in our [nation’s] history’’ (King, 5 September 1963). Similar confrontations, repeated in other cities, bolstered Wallace’s reputation. His ﬁrst term was also marked by the violent responses of Alabama authorities to voting rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama.

Wallace’s position on civil rights and his anti-Washington rhetoric appealed not only to southern segregationists, but also to voters in other parts of the country. In 1964 he entered the Democratic Party’s presidential primaries in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Maryland and made a strong showing in all three states, drawing up to 43 percent of the vote. In 1968 he launched a full-ﬂedged national campaign for the presidency. Running as a third-party candidate, he won ﬁve southern states and 10 million votes, half of them from outside the South.

During Wallace’s third bid for the presidency in 1972, an assassination attempt left him paralyzed below the waist and ended his campaign. He was eventually able to return to his duties as governor, and was reelected to a third term in 1974. As the black vote became more inﬂuential in Alabama, Wallace began to shift his stance on racial issues. After renouncing his former views on segregation and seeking reconciliation with civil rights leaders such as Ralph Abernathy, Jesse Jackson, and John Lewis, he won a fourth term as governor in 1982 with substantial support from African Americans. Wallace died in Montgomery on 13 September 1998 at the age of 79.

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**ROY WILKINS (1901-1981)**

As executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1955 to 1977, Roy Wilkins collaborated with Martin Luther King on many of the major campaigns of the civil rights movement. Although Wilkins favored a legal approach to achieving racial equality over King’s nonviolent direct action campaigns, the two leaders recognized that both methods were critical to advancing the civil rights cause. On the occasion of Wilkins’ 30th anniversary with the NAACP, King wrote to him: ‘‘You have proved to be one of the great leaders of our time. Through your efficiency as an administrator, your genuine humanitarian concern, and your unswerving devotion to the principles of freedom and human dignity, you have carved for yourself an imperishable niche in the annals of contemporary history’’ (King, 3 January 1962).

Wilkins was born on 30 August 1901, in St. Louis, Missouri. Raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, Wilkins attended an integrated high school and graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1923. While in college he was shocked to learn of the lynching of three black men in nearby Duluth, and became dedicated to the cause of civil rights. Wilkins joined the NAACP, and after graduating, took a job at the *Kansas City Call*, an influential black newspaper. His editorial work captured the attention of then NAACP executive secretary Walter White, who brought him to New York as his chief assistant in 1931. In this capacity Wilkins investigated working conditions for southern blacks in Mississippi River levee labor camps and advocated anti-lynching laws. In 1934 Wilkins succeeded W. E. B. Du Bois as editor of *The Crisis*, the NAACP’s magazine. Later Wilkins served as the NAACP’s administrator of internal affairs. When White died in 1955, Wilkins was selected to replace him.

In the second month of the Montgomery bus boycott, Wilkins sent King a donation to aid the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) in its efforts. By February 1956, three months into the boycott, the NAACP had offered the MIA legal counsel and urged chapters to raise funds for the boycott. King was ‘‘quite conscious of [the MIA’s] dependence on the NAACP,’’ whose legal support was instrumental in allowing the boycott to continue (*Papers* 3:244). King wrote to Wilkins, ‘‘I have said to our people all along that the great victories of the Negro have been gained through the assiduous labor of the NAACP’’ (*Papers* 3:244).

Wilkins took pride in his organization’s diligent legal work and institutional presence. Although he recognized that ‘‘the Montgomery protest … caught the eyes and hearts of the world and probably stirred more unity and pride among Negroes than anything that has happened in a quarter-century,’’ he believed that ‘‘the thing which won the Montgomery case was not the walking of the brave people, but a decision in the Supreme Court … secured through the skill of [an] NAACP lawyer’’ (Wilkins, 14 February 1957). In 1963, following the assassination of NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers, Wilkins was angered by King’s decision to launch a fundraiser for his own organization as a memorial to the slain civil rights leader. King’s plans for the fundraiser were dropped, and the two men were able to make common cause to help organize the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom several weeks later.

Despite their private struggles, the two leaders were always careful to publicly stress their cooperation and mutual admiration. King told one reporter: ‘‘I think we can work together in a very cooperative and creative manner. There need be no conflict’’ (King, ‘‘TV Interview’’). Wilkins similarly praised King’s work, acknowledging that King’s Birmingham Campaign had ‘‘made the nation realize that at last the crisis had arrived’’ (Wilkins, 23 July 1963).

Like many moderate civil rights leaders, Wilkins disagreed with King’s decision to speak out against the Vietnam War, and went as far as to send a memorandum to NAACP chapters instructing them not to use the NAACP’s name during demonstrations against he war. Despite tensions over the war, the two leaders remained closely aligned in their commitment to integration and fought to counter rising calls for ‘‘Black Power.’’

In 1967 Wilkins was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to serve on his National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, which was charged with investigating the causes of urban riots. The commission’s report, released 29 February 1968, warned: ‘‘Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal’’ (Herbers, ‘‘Panel on Civil Disorders’’). Although King called the commission’s findings ‘‘timely,’’ he argued that the recommendations ‘‘have been made before almost to the last detail and have been ignored almost to the last detail’’ (Zion, ‘‘Rights Leaders’’).

In the last two months of King’s life, King and Wilkins both lent their support to the Memphis Sanitation Workers’ Strike. Wilkins’ speech to the workers drew a crowd of several thousand people. After King’s assassination, Wilkins continued to lead the NAACP for nearly a decade. Throughout the 1970s he was critical of Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, writing in his autobiography: ‘‘I thought Mr. Nixon would try to be President of all the people; instead, he allied himself with the worst enemies of black children’’ (Wilkins, *Standing*, 339). The 1970s were also turbulent times for the NAACP, as several key national staff passed away or retired. Wilkins retired from the NAACP in 1977, and died in September 1981.

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**Source** *The King Institute Encyclopedia.* <http://mlkkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia_contents>

**HOSEA WILLIAMS (1926-2000)**

Hosea Williams described himself as the ‘‘thug’’ of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Martin Luther King affectionately called him ‘‘my wild man, my Castro,’’ in recognition of Williams’ skills as a protest organizer (Branch, 124).

Williams was born 5 January 1926, in Attapulgus, Georgia. His mother, a blind, unmarried teenager, died soon after, leaving Williams to be raised by his grandparents. At age 14, Williams moved on his own to Tallahassee, Florida, where he worked odd jobs for three years before returning to Georgia. When the United States entered World War II, Williams enlisted in the Army, working his way up to staff sergeant in an all-black unit. He was wounded by shrapnel and spent over a year recovering in a British hospital. Once back in the United States, Williams completed high school, earned a bachelor’s degree at Morris Brown College in Atlanta, and a master’s from Atlanta University. He worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Savannah, Georgia, from 1952 to 1963.

Upon moving to Savannah Williams joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and began grassroots organizing. He became widely known for giving speeches against segregation in a public park during his daily lunch break. By 1960 he had become the president of the Southeastern Georgia Crusade for Voters, an affiliate of SCLC. The following year he spoke on the power of the ballot at SCLC’s annual meeting. At SCLC’s board meeting in 1962 King personally recommended that Williams join the SCLC executive board, an honor Williams accepted.

In 1962 Williams began positioning for a seat on the Georgia NAACP national board. When NAACP director Roy Wilkins told Williams that he could advance no further in the NAACP because of his family background, Williams complained to King. King supported Williams and when he was arrested in Savannah the following summer, offered SCLC’s backing ‘‘100 percent’’ (King, 11 June 1963). In 1964, SCLC voted Williams ‘‘Man of the Year,’’ and King hired him on a trial basis to work in St. Augustine, Florida, where on the eve of the city’s 400th anniversary, SCLC was collaborating with local activists to protest segregation. There, Williams taught nonviolence to volunteers, led marches, and was arrested along with his wife and two of their five children.

Later that year Williams formally joined SCLC staff as the director of voter registration. King personally raised funds for his salary, writing a potential donor that Williams’ ‘‘talents need a broader horizon [than Savannah, Georgia], and his energies need to be made available to other communities across this nation’’ (SCLC, 9  November 1964). One such community was Selma, Alabama, where SCLC began work in January 1965, supporting local voting rights activists. After three months of groundwork, Williams and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee leader John Lewis jointly led the first attempt at a [Selma to Montgomery March](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_selma_to_montgomery_march/). This effort became known as ‘‘Bloody Sunday’’ after state troopers and local law enforcement officers brutally beat the demonstrators as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. King came to Selma to lead a successful march three days later.

In March 1965 King named Williams the head of SCLC’s Summer Community Organization and Political Education (SCOPE) Project, where he oversaw a half-million-dollar budget and several thousand volunteers. Promoted to the role of southern project director by 1966, Williams toured projects, often rallying supporters with King, and walked in the March against Fear to protest the shooting of James Meredith.

In November 1966 King asked Williams to come to Chicago, where SCLC was working with the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations on the Chicago Campaign. Although Williams did not want to leave the South, he grudgingly complied and moved north to run the campaign’s voter registration project.

Williams returned to the South to work as field director for SCLC’s Poor People’s Campaign in early 1968. He attended multiple rallies a day, flying with King from town to town to build support for the Washington campaign. At King’s urging, Williams and other SCLC staff joined King in Memphis to support the Memphis Sanitation Workers’ Strike that April. He was with King at the Lorraine Motel when King’s assassination took place on 4 April 1968.

After King’s death Williams became executive director of SCLC, a position he held until 1979, when he was forced to leave because of differences within SCLC. Williams entered mainstream politics, winning election to the Georgia General Assembly in 1974. After a decade of service, he resigned and his wife Juanita won his seat. Williams was later elected to the Atlanta City Council and then became the De Kalb County commissioner. In 1987 Williams led the largest civil rights march in Georgia history into all-white Forsyth County, approximately 30 miles north of Atlanta. Hundreds of Ku Klux Klan members and white supremacists greeted an estimated 20,000 marchers, including King’s widow, Coretta Scott King, and veteran civil rights colleagues Jesse Jackson, Andrew Young, Ralph Abernathy, Dick Gregory, and Benjamin Hooks. Williams died of cancer in 2000.

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**FRED SHUTTLESWORTH (1922-2011)**

One of the founding members of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Fred Shuttlesworth brought a militant voice to the struggle for black equality. He drew Martin Luther King, Jr. and the SCLC to Birmingham in 1963 for a historic confrontation with the forces of segregation. The scale of protest and police brutality of the Birmingham Campaign created a new level of visibility for the civil rights movement and contributed to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Born in Mount Meigs, Alabama, Shuttlesworth was licensed and ordained as a preacher in 1948. He earned an A.B. (1951) from Selma University and a B.S. (1953) from Alabama State College. Shuttlesworth served as minister at First Baptist Church in Selma until 1952, and the following year he was called to Bethel Baptist Church in Birmingham.

Shuttlesworth became involved in the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1955. When circuit judge Walter B. Jones, at the urging of Alabama attorney general, John Patterson, banned the NAACP from activity in the state in 1956, Shuttlesworth presided over a 4 June planning meeting for a new organization that became the ACMHR. Shuttlesworth lead a mass meeting at Sardis Church the next evening and was declared president by acclamation, a post he held until 1969.

After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation in Montgomery was unconstitutional in November 1956, Shuttlesworth and the ACMHR made plans to challenge segregation on Birmingham’s buses. The night before their campaign was to begin, a bomb exploded under Shuttlesworth’s parsonage at Bethel Baptist. The house was destroyed but Shuttlesworth escaped unharmed. The following day, several hundred protesters sat in the sections reserved for whites on Birmingham buses. Twenty-one of the participants were arrested and convicted, and the ACMHR filed suit in federal court to strike down the law mandating segregation.

Shuttlesworth joined King and C. K. Steele in issuing a call for a conference of southern black leaders in January 1957 “in an effort to coordinate and spur the campaign for integrated transportation in the South” (*Papers* 4:94). Held at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the meeting laid the foundation for the group that would become the SCLC. At a later meeting in August of that year, Shuttlesworth became SCLC’s first secretary.

As the SCLC struggled through its early years, Shuttlesworth urged the organization to aggressively confront segregation. “I feel that the leadership in Alabama among Negroes is, at this time, much less dynamic and imaginative than it ought to be,” he wrote to King in April 1959. “Even in our Southern Christian Leadership Conference, I believe we must move now, or else [*be*] hard put in the not too distant future, to [justify] our existence” (*Papers* 5:189-190).

In 1963, the SCLC joined forces with the ACMHR to protest segregation in Birmingham. SCLC leaders met secretly in January of that year to draw up initial plans for the Birmingham Campaign, known as “Project C” – C for confrontation. Shuttlesworth issued the “Birmingham Manifesto,” which explained the black community’s decision to act: “We act today in full concert with our Hebraic-Christian tradition, the laws of morality and the Constitution of our nation,” Shuttlesworth proclaimed. “We appeal to the citizenry of Birmingham, Negro and white, to join us in this witness for decency, morality, self-respect and human dignity” (Shuttlesworth, “Birmingham Manifesto,” 3 April 1963).  On 6 April, Shuttlesworth led the campaign’s first march on city hall.

As the campaign continued, tensions between King and Shuttlesworth increased. Shuttlesworth was in the hospital during negotiations that produced a one-day halt to demonstrations. In addition to his opposition to the resolution, Shuttlesworth resented being left out of the decision. King, however, was able to convince him to publicly support the decision. The Birmingham campaign ended two days later with an agreement between the city’s business community and SCLC that included  a commitment to the desegregation of public accommodations, a committee to ensure nondiscriminatory hiring practices in Birmingham, and cooperation in releasing jailed protesters.

Shuttleworth’s confrontational style provided a counterbalance to King’s more measured approach and served to inspire people to action. In his memoir of the Birmingham campaign King praised “the fiery words and determined zeal of Fred Shuttlesworth, who had proved to his people that he would not ask anyone to go where he was not willing to lead” (King, 61). Shuttleworth passed away in Birmingham, Ala. 5 October 2011.

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**WHITNEY YOUNG (1921-1971)**

Whitney Young served as the executive director of the National Urban League from 1961 to 1971, the critical years in the civil rights movement. Although the National Urban League was not involved in direct action protests, Young often collaborated with Martin Luther King, who appreciated that each leader played a different role in the movement and praised Young’s ‘‘creative vitality’’ (King, 31 July 1963).

Young was born on 31 July 1921, in Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky. He grew up on the campus of the Lincoln Institute, an black high school where his father served as president. After graduating from the Lincoln Institute he enrolled at the all-black Kentucky State College, becoming president of his senior class and vice president of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, which King would later join. After graduation he enlisted in the Army. Young had his first experience as a racial mediator in France during World War II, a role that inspired him to pursue a career in social work when he was discharged.

Young began to volunteer with the National Urban League while at the University of Minnesota, where he obtained his master’s degree in Social Work in 1947. In 1954 Young moved to Atlanta to become the dean of the School of Social Work at Atlanta University, and also co-chaired the Atlanta Council on Human Relations.

On 21 June 1958 King solicited Young’s suggestions for topics to discuss at a meeting he had requested between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and prominent African American leaders. Young wired King the same day, expressing his ‘‘complete confidence in you representing us’’ (Young, 21 June 1958).

Young was handpicked by a representative of the Rockefeller Foundation, a major donor to the National Urban League, to succeed Lester Granger as the organization’s head. After spending a year at Harvard University on a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, Young was elected executive director of the National Urban League in February 1961. King congratulated Young, writing: ‘‘I am convinced that they could not have found a better person for the job,’’ and offering his full assistance (King, 13 February 1961).

The following year King invited Young to speak at the annual convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conferences (SCLC). Young’s speech was such a success that SCLC reproduced it for all of the conference participants. In 1963, the instigation of philanthropist Stephen Currier, King, Young, and representatives from 5 other civil rights groups began to meet regularly to discuss the possibility of collaborating in the movement. The group later became known as the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership, or the Unity Council. Although the Urban League was more committed to social service than direct action, Young made the controversial decision to co-sponsor the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom with other Unity Council members.

Like other moderate civil rights leaders, Young did not agree with King’s opposition to the Vietnam War, saying that the first priority of black people was ‘‘survival in this country,’’ and that the issues of civil rights and the war ‘‘should remain separate’’ (King, ‘‘Man’s Relation to Man’’ 1964). King’s opposition to the war led to his alienation from President Lyndon B. Johnson, but Young’s stance brought him closer to the administration. At Johnson’s request, Young traveled to Vietnam twice, returning with positive accounts of race relations in the military. Only after Johnson left office in 1969 did Young begin to call for a speedy withdrawal from Vietnam.

In his mediating role between whites and blacks, Young was often labeled a moderate, despite his own belief that ‘‘nobody who’s working for black people is a moderate. We’re all militants in different ways’’ (Buckley, ‘‘Whitney Young’’). Young’s sudden death in 1971 in Lagos, Nigeria, shocked the nation. President Richard Nixon sent a special Air Force jet to retrieve his body, and his funeral was attended by over 6,000 people, including Coretta Scott King.

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