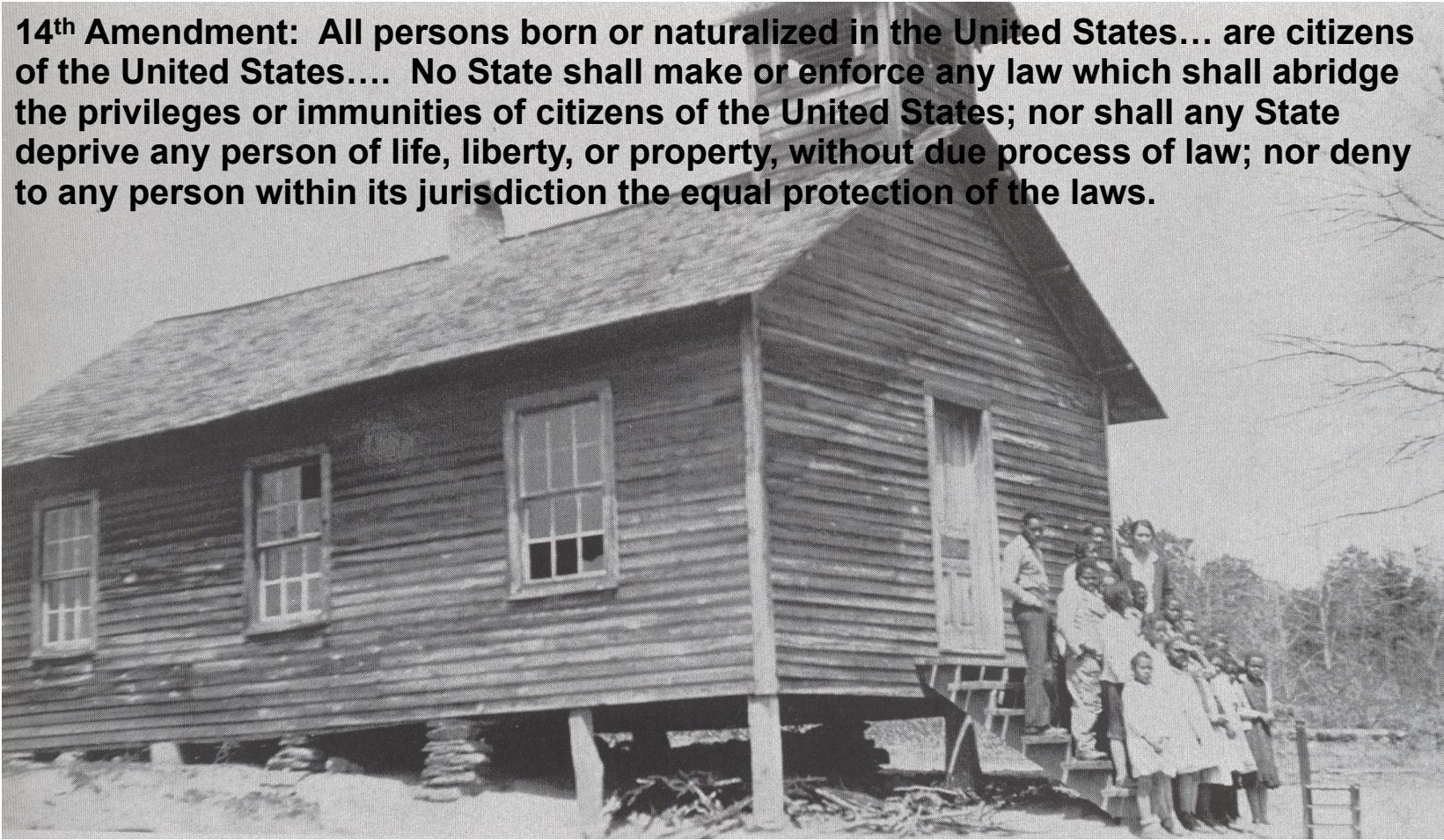


# The Civil Rights Movement



# The Status of 20th-Century African-Americans

**14<sup>th</sup> Amendment: All persons born or naturalized in the United States... are citizens of the United States.... No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.**



***Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896***

**"We consider the underlying fallacy of the plaintiff's argument to consist in the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it."**

# The Culture of Lynchings

## Aug. 6, 1930

Two young African-American men, Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith, were lynched in the town center of Marion, IN. The night before they had been arrested and charged with the armed robbery, murder of a white factory worker, and the rape of his female companion. That evening, local police were unable to stop a mob of thousands from breaking into the jail and pulling the young men out of their cells and lynch them.



Photograph from Bettmann/Corbis

News of the lynching spread across the world. Local photographer Lawrence Beitler took what would become the most iconic photograph of lynching in America. The photograph shows two bodies hanging from a tree surrounded by a crowd of ordinary citizens, including women and children. Thousands of copies were made and sold. The photograph helped inspire the poem and song "**Strange Fruit**" written by Abel Meeropol — and performed around the world by Billie Holiday.

# Truman signs Executive Order 9981

## July 26, 1948



"It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin."



# Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas

## May 17, 1954



The students represented in *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka*.  
(L to R: Vicki Henderson, Donald Henderson, Linda Brown, James Emanuel, Nancy Todd, and Katherine Carper)

The Supreme Court rules on this landmark case, unanimously agreeing that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional, paving the way for large-scale desegregation. The decision overturns the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling.

It is a victory for NAACP attorney Thurgood Marshall, who will later return to the Supreme Court as the nation's first black justice.



Thurgood Marshall with James Nabrit Jr. and George E.C. Hayes after their victory in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case before the Supreme Court, May 17, 1954

# Emmett Till Murder

## August 28, 1955



MAMIE TILL MOBLEY

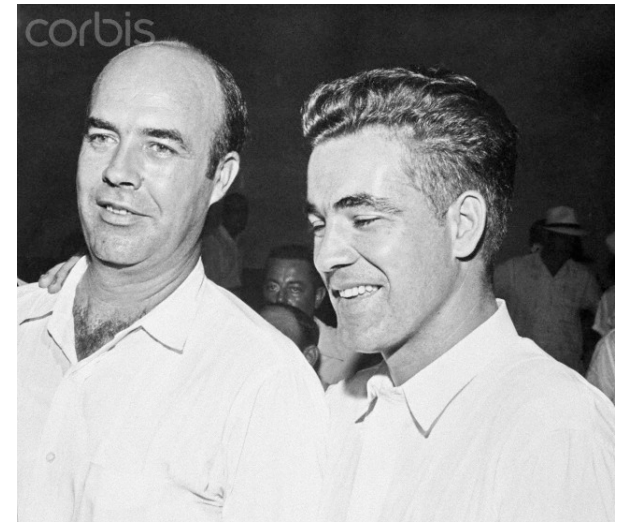


Fourteen-year-old Emmett Till is visiting family in Mississippi when he is kidnapped, brutally beaten, shot, and dumped in the Tallahatchie River for allegedly whistling at a white woman.





Two white men, J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant, are arrested for the murder and acquitted by an all-white jury. They later boast about committing the murder in a *Look* magazine interview. The case becomes a cause célèbre of the civil rights movement.



In 1955 a Mississippi jury (seated in the first two rows) acquitted two white men of murdering Emmett Till



Mamie Till Mobley weeps at her son's funeral on Sept. 6, 1955, in Chicago

# Segregation - Even Diplomats! 1955

“In 1955, G. L. Mehta, the Indian Ambassador to the United States, was refused service in the whites only section of a restaurant at Houston International Airport.”





# Rosa Parks

## August 28, 1955



NAACP member Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat at the front of the "colored section" of a bus in Montgomery, AL to a white passenger, defying a southern custom of the time.



# Montgomery Bus Boycott

## December 1, 1955 - December 20, 1956



In response to the arrest of Rosa Parks, the Montgomery black community launches a bus boycott, which will last for more than a year, until the buses are desegregated Dec. 21, 1956. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., newly elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), is instrumental in leading the boycott.



June, 1956 - College students jeer at the driver of a city bus as he drives his empty vehicle across the school campus.



# The Little Rock Nine

## September 1957



Nine African-American students enroll at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. The ensuing struggle becomes known as the "Little Rock Crisis." The crisis gained world-wide attention when Governor Faubus ordered the Arkansas National Guard to surround Central High School to keep the nine students from entering the school. President Eisenhower ultimately ordered the 101st Airborne Division into Little Rock to insure the safety of the "Little Rock Nine" and that the rulings of the Supreme Court were upheld.

The plan was to have the nine children arrive together, but when the meeting place was changed the night before, one family's lack of a telephone made this last minute change disastrous. Elizabeth Eckford took a different route to school, walking up to the front entrance completely alone.

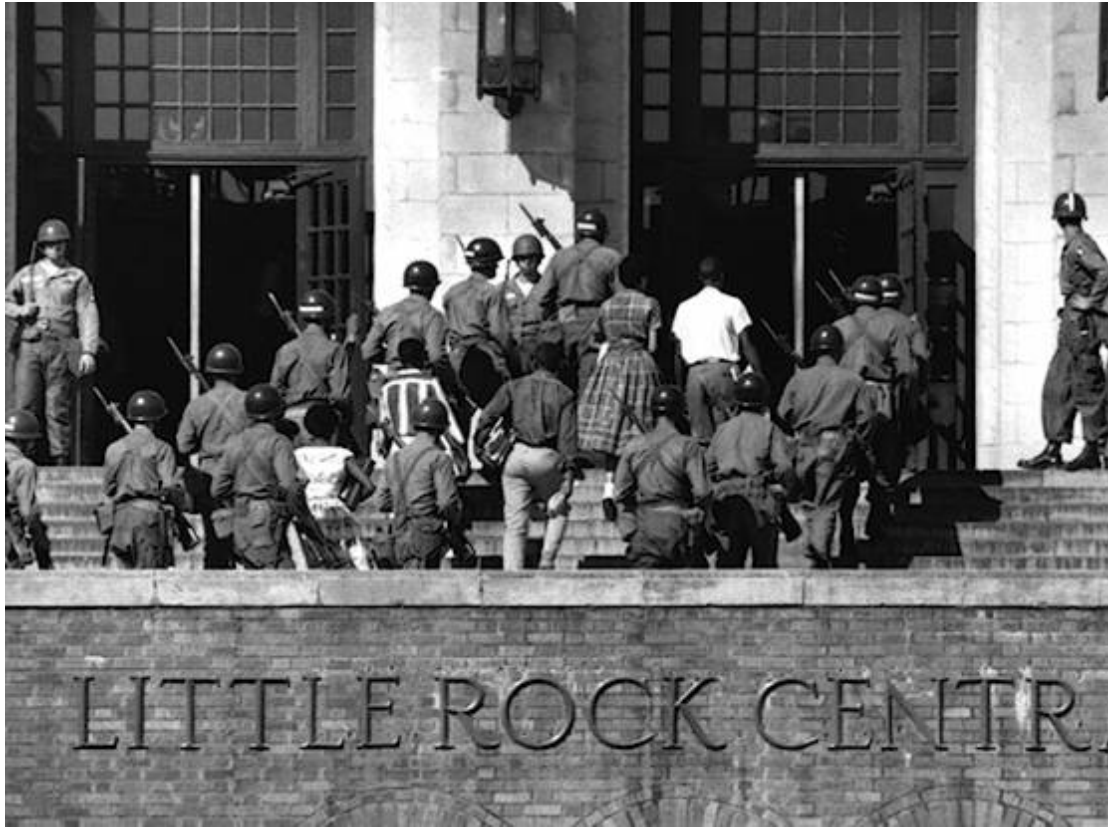
Even though Elizabeth would one day be known as a member of the Little Rock Nine, at first she was all alone, which makes her the first African-American student to integrate a white southern high school.



As 15 yr-old Eckford tried to enter the school, soldiers of the National Guard, under orders from AK Governor Faubus, stepped in her way to prevent her from entering. She eventually gave up and tried to flee to a bus stop through a mob of segregationists who surrounded her and threatened to lynch her. A reporter, Benjamin Fine, thinking of his own 15-year-old daughter, sat down next to her and tried to comfort her saying, "don't let them see you cry." She was also protected by a white woman named Grace Lorch who escorted her onto a city bus.



Hazel Bryan, a student at Little Rock High school, shouts at Elizabeth Eckford as she walks to school in 1957 (center, in front of man with hat). This photograph, taken by Will Counts, has been named by the Associated Press as one of the top 100 photographs of the 20th century.



## Eyes on the Prize: Little Rock Nine

(start @ 5:53)



# The Sit-In Movement

## February 1, 1960

Four black college Greensboro, NC students begin a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Although they are refused service, they are allowed to stay at the counter. The event triggers many similar nonviolent protests throughout the South. Six months later the original four protesters are served lunch at the same Woolworth's counter. Student sit-ins would be effective throughout the Deep South in integrating parks, swimming pools, theaters, libraries, and other public facilities.

In this photo, students Joseph mcNeil, Franklin mcCain, Billy Smith, and Clarence Henderson (left to right) protest the whites-only counter at Woolworth's.

The original Sit-In Counter is preserved in the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of American.





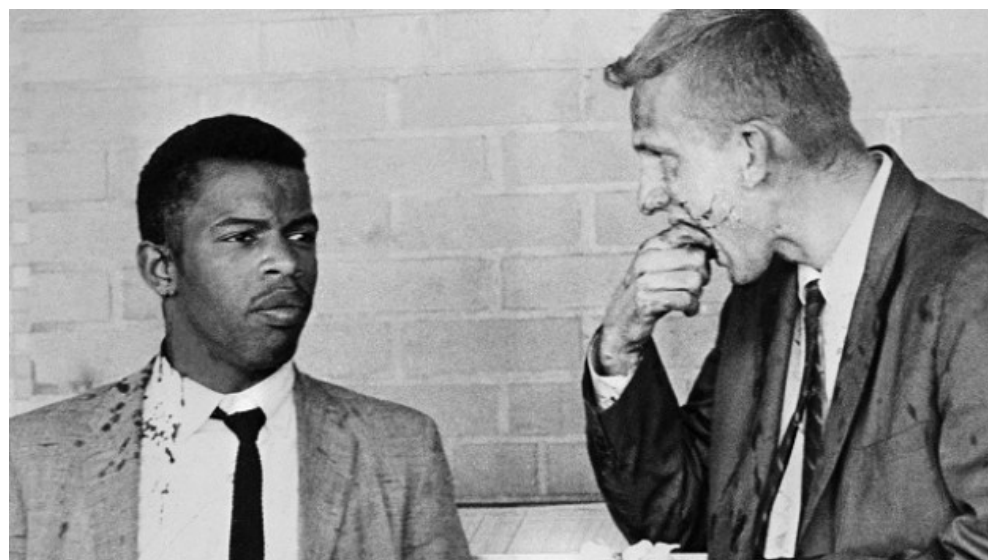


# Freedom Riders

## May 4, 1961



Over the spring and summer, student volunteers begin taking bus trips through the South to test out new laws that prohibit segregation in interstate travel facilities, which includes bus and railway stations. Several of the groups of "freedom riders," as they are called, are attacked by angry mobs along the way. The program, sponsored by The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), involves more than 1,000 volunteers, black and white.





# CIVIL RIGHTS

## Empathy from a man who said he came from "lily-white Appleton" ...

Jim Zwerg exited a Greyhound bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and walked into an angry crowd that deemed him a traitor to his race.

"All the nigger-loving son of a bitch!" yelled several women. Zwerg bowed his head and prayed as the crowd bashed his head, kicked in his front teeth, and pounded his spinal cord on May 20, 1961.

Zwerg had left his home in Appleton to study at Beloit College and entered an exchange program at the mostly black Fisk University in Nashville. He joined the Freedom Riders and deliberately violated Jim Crow laws by riding on an integrated bus through the South. His public beating turned an abstract injustice into a clear moral dilemma for white Americans in Appleton and across the country. American uneasiness with this type of violence forced President Kennedy to integrate bus travel by 1962.

*Caption:* The women in the crowd used the word "nigger" as an insult to Zwerg and to African Americans. The offensive language is used here to show the extreme hatred and bigotry of the time.

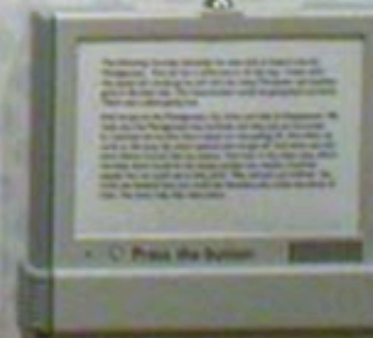


Route of the Freedom Riders, 1961  
Source: PBS

## Jim Zwerg

### Jim Zwerg Speaks

Press the button to hear Jim Zwerg talk about his experience with the Freedom Riders.



Many white Americans became aware of racial injustice after seeing this picture of a beaten Jim Zwerg in their local newspapers, May 20, 1961.

Source: PBS

# James Meredith - University of MS

## October 1, 1962

James Meredith becomes the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi. The town of Oxford erupted. It took some 30,000 US troops, federal marshals, and national guardsmen to get James Meredith to class after a violent campus uprising. Two people were killed and more than 300 injured. Some historians say the integration of Ole Miss was the last battle of the Civil War.



James Meredith is escorted by US Department of Justice Officials and Federal Marshals as he enrolls at the University of Mississippi.



An angry mob gathered in 1962 outside Ole Miss' signature building, the Lyceum, to prevent James Meredith from entering and integrating the school. Forty years later, the school issued an apology to Meredith from the very same spot.

# The Birmingham Campaign

## April 12, 1963

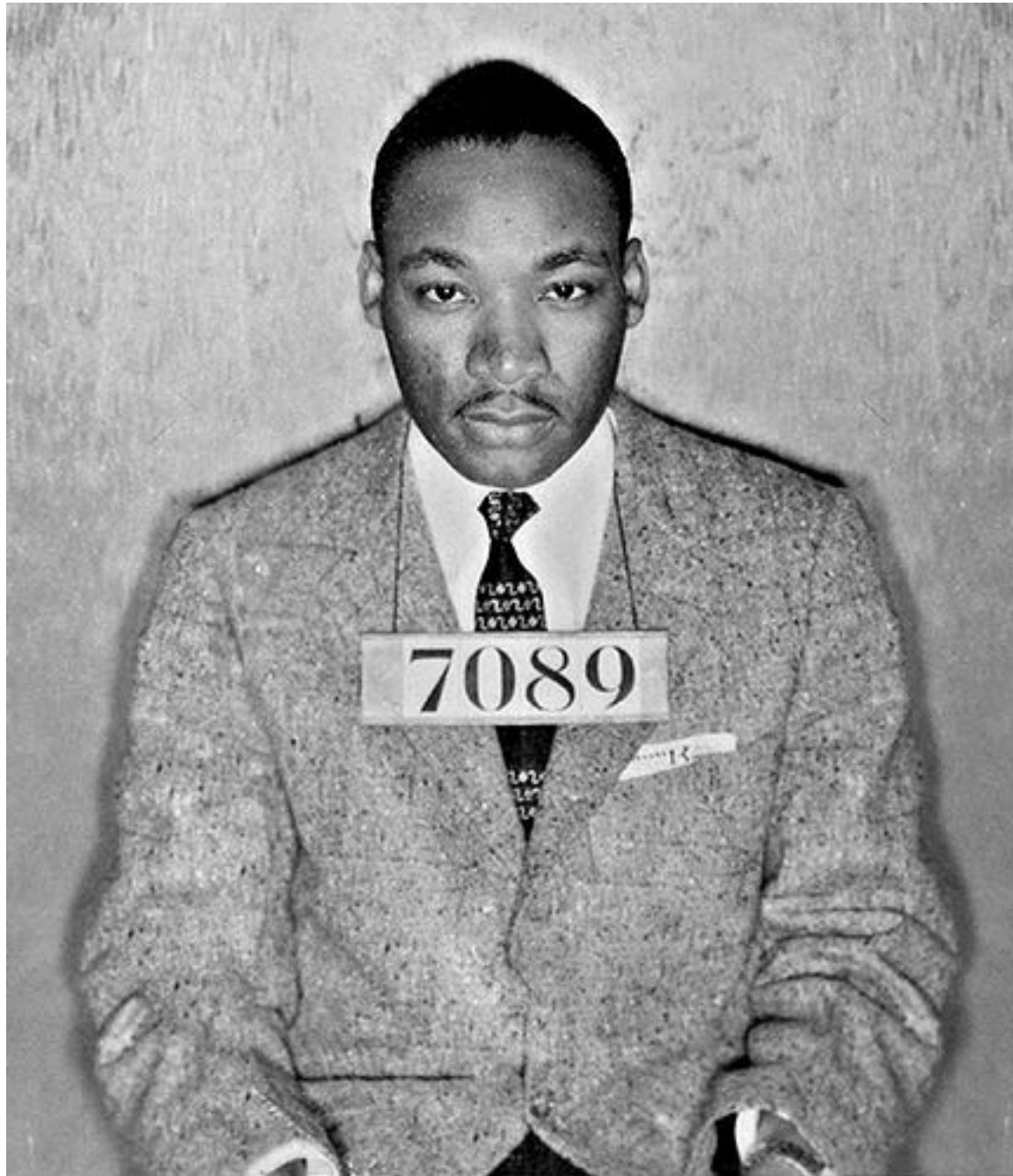
The Birmingham campaign was a movement organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to bring attention to the unequal treatment that black Americans endured in Birmingham, AL. On April 10, 1963, Bull Connor obtained an injunction barring the protests and subsequently raised bail bond for those arrested from \$300 to \$1,200 (\$2,000 to \$9,000 in 2013). Martin Luther King is arrested and jailed during anti-segregation protests in Birmingham; he writes his seminal "Letter from Birmingham Jail," arguing that individuals have the moral duty to disobey unjust laws.



Rev. Ralph Abernathy, left, and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., right are taken by a policeman as they led a line of demonstrators into the business section of Birmingham, AL.



Martin Luther King being arrested in Montgomery, Alabama 1963



*"We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."*



# May, 1963

During civil rights protests in Birmingham, AL, Commissioner of Public Safety Eugene "Bull" Connor uses fire hoses and police dogs on black demonstrators. These images of brutality, which are televised and published widely, are instrumental in gaining sympathy for the civil rights movement around the world.



Eyes on the Prize:  
Birmingham  
(start @ 27:00; then 36:38)



# Medgar Evers Assassination June 12, 1963

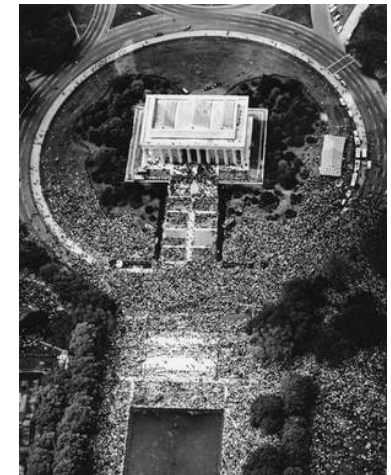
Mississippi's NAACP field secretary, 37-year-old Medgar Evers, is murdered outside his home in Jackson, MS. Byron De La Beckwith is tried twice in 1964, both trials resulting in hung juries. Thirty years later he is convicted for murdering Evers.



# March on Washington August 28, 1963



About 200,000 people join the March on Washington. Congregating at the Lincoln Memorial, participants listen as Martin Luther King delivers his famous speech, "I Have A Dream".





# Four Little Girls

## September 15, 1963



Four young girls attending Sunday school in Birmingham, AL are killed when a bomb explodes at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, a popular location for civil rights meetings. Riots erupt in Birmingham, leading to the deaths of two more black youths.



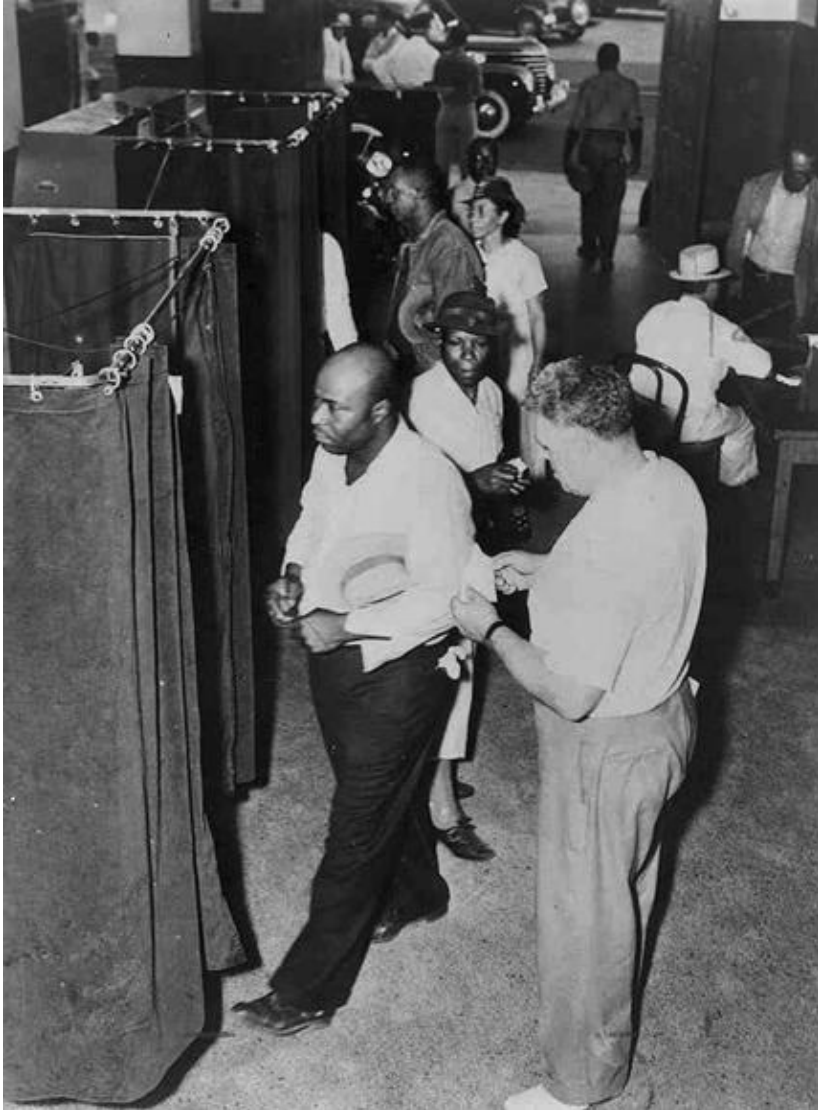
Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, and Addie Mae Collins



# 24th Amendment

## January 23, 1964

The 24th Amendment abolishes the poll tax, which originally had been instituted in 11 southern states after Reconstruction to make it difficult for poor blacks to vote.

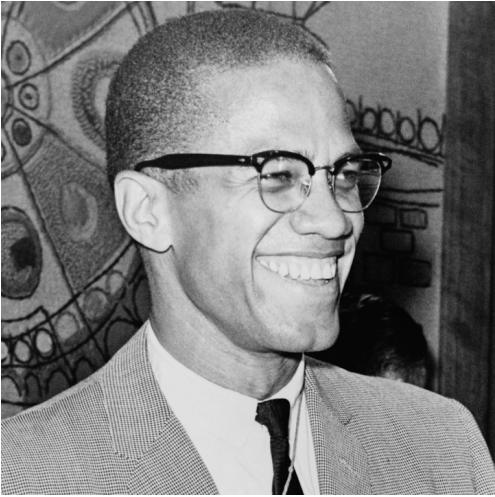




# Malcolm X Assassination

## February 21, 1965

Malcolm X, black nationalist and founder of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, is shot to death in Harlem, NY. It is believed the assailants are members of the Black Muslim faith, which Malcolm had recently abandoned in favor of orthodox Islam.



LIFE

**DEATH ON THE ROSTRUM.** These pictures were taken within a minute or two after the killers fired their pistol and shotgun fusillade. At left, Malcolm X lies dying near the hospital, while his supporters who rallied off their his bullet-riddled chair, in top picture above, a young Negro woman mourns. Bottom picture shows a young Negro woman mourning. "They killed him."

### THE VIOLENT END OF THE MAN CALLED MALCOLM X

His life coming out through a half dozen or more gunshot wounds in his chest, Malcolm X, once the sharpest voice for Black supremacy, lay dying on the stage of a Manhattan auditorium. Moments before, he had stepped up to the podium, and 400 of the faithful had settled down expectantly to hear the sort of speech for which he was famous—laying the blame on white men. Then a scuffle broke out in the hall and Malcolm's bodyguards hurried from his side to break it up—only to discover that they had been faked out. At least twenty with pistols rose from the audience and jammed bullets into the speaker, while a third cut loose at close range with both barrels of a sawed-off shotgun. In the confusion the pistol men got away. The shotgunner lunged through the crowd and out the door, but not before the guards came to their wits and shot him in the leg. Outside he was swiftly overtaken by other supporters of Malcolm and very

likely would have been strangled to death if the police hadn't saved him. Most shocking of all to the residents of Harlem was the fact that Malcolm X had been killed not by "whites" but by members of his own race. The country's Negro community was suddenly faced with the possibility of a fratricidal war. Almost before Malcolm X's body was cold, someone put the torch to the Black Muslims' big Harlem mosque, and Malcolm's dedicated followers served notice that arson alone would not do. Their vendetta was whetted by the memory of Malcolm's predictions. From the time he broke with the Black Muslims a year ago to form his own militant cadre, he had said that Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad was out to get him. Elijah, now the hunted, took refuge in his Chicago headquarters behind a screen of bodyguards, from whence he denied any part in the murder.

# Selma to Montgomery March

## March 7, 1965



Blacks begin a march from Selma to Montgomery, AL in support of voting rights. The first march, called "Bloody Sunday," takes place on March 7, 1965 when 600 marchers are attacked by state and local police with billy clubs and tear gas. The second march, the following Tuesday, results in 2,500 protesters turning around after crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Fifty marchers are hospitalized after police use tear gas, whips, and clubs against them. The march is considered the catalyst for pushing through the voting rights act five months later.

# Voting Rights Act

## August 10, 1965

Congress passes the Voting Rights Act of 1965, making it easier for Southern blacks to register to vote. Literacy tests, poll taxes, and other such requirements that were used to restrict black voting are made illegal.



# Martin Luther King Assassination April 4, 1968

Martin Luther King, at age 39, is shot as he stands on the balcony outside his hotel room in Memphis, TN. Escaped convict and committed racist James Earl Ray is convicted of the crime.



Mug shot of Ray taken in 1955

