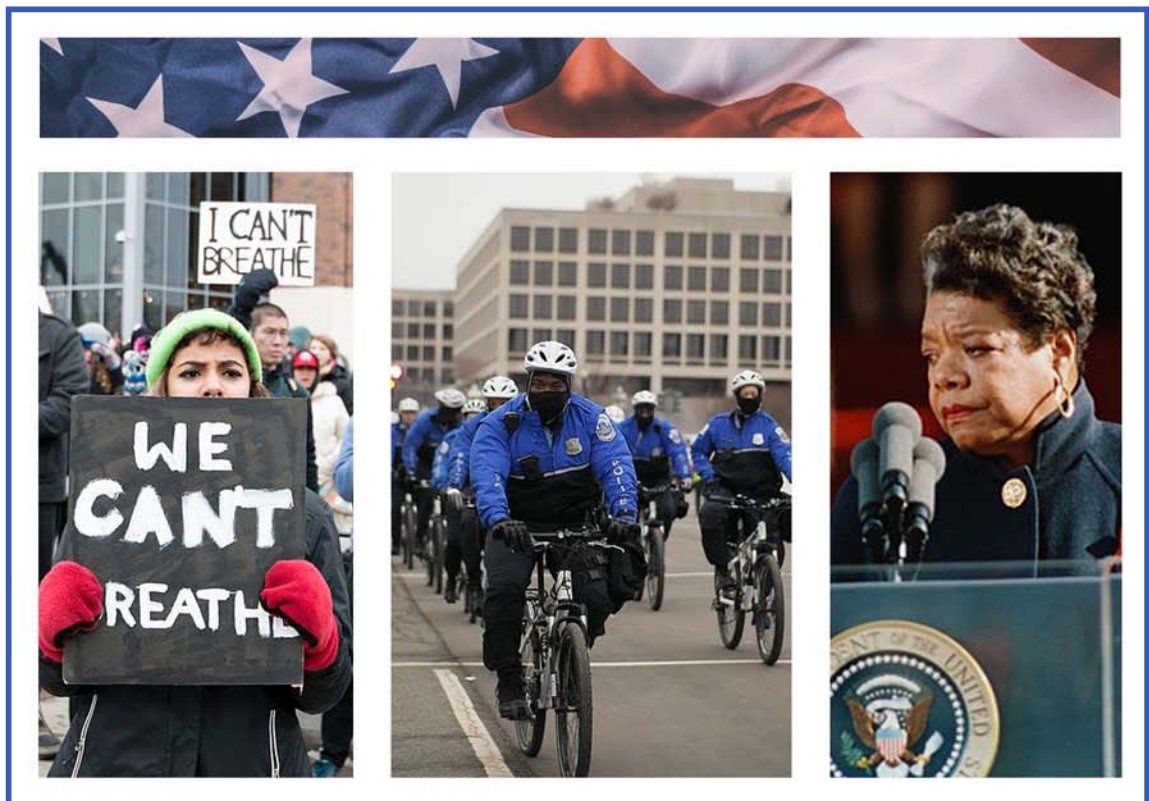




SOCIAL STUDIES NOTES



A summary based on

*The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the
Awakening of a Nation*

Supplemental Reading | Additional Resources



Social Studies Notes 2018-2019

TOPIC: U.S. Civil Rights: Fulfilling a Nation's Promise

Written by
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Edited by
Hexco Academic

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INTRODUCTION

Social Studies Notes is a time-tested 'tool kit' for building a solid annual topic foundation. Covering concepts, documents, terms, people, themes, events, and a plethora of significant facts, *Social Studies Notes* is arranged to facilitate full-topic comprehension and the order of discussion may differ from the actual test. In this regard, students will be able to form their own unique ideas and opinions, which are especially useful in the essay portion of the contest as well as in everyday life. We encourage students to become familiar with the format of the contest, which consists of 45 multiple-choice questions and an essay, while reading.

UIL High School Social Studies contest test format is as follows, for a possible total of 100 points.

- Part 1—General Knowledge = 20 points (20 questions, 1 point each)
- Part 2—Primary Reading = 30 points (15 questions, 2 points each)
- Part 3—Supporting Documents = 30 points (10 questions, 3 point each)
- Essay = 20 points

MEET THE AUTHOR

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Social Studies Notes

2018-2019

BACKGROUND

The United States was a nation founded on philosophies espousing the existence of a natural equality for all and due to that innate equality there were fundamental abilities and protections the people were owed by their government. That concept is one that has guided this country for the last two and a half centuries, but the interpretation of equality or the rights that should be shared equally among all inhabitants has developed and changed as has the nation seeking to protect that ideal. The advancement of equality in the U.S. has not progressed in an even manner or even always advanced. It has grown in fits and spurts and faced obstacles new and old. The study of the arc of the numerous areas and interpretations of civil rights history as it "bends towards justice" is what this topic centers on.

SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS

Black Civil Rights

The movement towards equality for the black population in the U.S. begins before equality was even dreamed of, let alone discussed by most people in the U.S. The hope for basic human rights and freedom mark the beginning of the civil rights movement and tie it to the abolitionist movement of the mid-1800s. Keeping the movement from accelerating at more than a glacial pace even into the mid-20th century was the concept that when or if blacks were afforded freedom or eventually equality, the races would not be able to cohabitate. These antiquated philosophies helped justify the Jim Crow system of laws that prevailed in the South and many aspects of the government to separate blacks from whites, even after the end of slavery. The brief advancements in status and opportunity achieved during Reconstruction were quickly wiped away by the 1880s and some scholars rate the sharecropping system that came to dominate the lives of most southern blacks to be on par with the injustices of slavery.

Attempts to advance opportunities and deliver on the rights the Constitution was supposed to afford to all citizens continued, but came from varied and often conflicting perspectives. Booker T. Washington represented the conservative view and sought internal improvements within black communities while not addressing the second-class citizenship of those communities. W.E.B. Du Bois and the Niagara movement tried to develop legal challenges to systemic oppression and called for immediate advancements in civil rights that seemed radical to some. Whereas individuals such as Marcus Garvey promoted the belief that complete separation was the only way to improve the lives of blacks.

World War I forever altered the demographic landscape of the U.S. with millions of blacks leaving the South for the industrial centers and increased economic opportunities of the North. The growing professional class as well as increased awareness of the plight of blacks in the South and other parts of the country led to a more vocal call for equality, but also a stronger response by those that would oppose it. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) reached new levels of size and influence in the 1920s, especially in areas not traditionally associated with the Klan.

World War II had a major impact on blacks that had courageously volunteered to defend freedom abroad but came home to the same limited rights as before the war. This incongruity of ideals and pressure from the NAACP and others led to the integration of the armed forces and began the process of eventually desegregating the federal government. Continuous pressure by the Legal Defense Fund resulted in mounting victories that chipped away at the "separate but equal" doctrine handed down by

the Supreme Court at the end of the 19th century, until finally reaching the crowning achievement of *Brown v. Board of Education* that would sound the death knell for legalized segregation.



PhotoQuest/Getty Images

Though the foundation for the integration of public accommodations had been created, the process of building such a reality would take a tortuous path. Legal precedents would have to be slowly built upon and wins in the courtroom rarely translated to actual integration in practice.

The battles to put these new precedents into practice would rage across the country and became especially violent in the Deep South. News coverage of the newly coordinated civil rights movement gave it an inertia it had not previously experienced. Television coverage highlighting the brutality faced by nonviolent protesters brought the entire nation's focus to the movement and created new impetus for legislation and lasting change. Despite the achievements of the movement under the direction of Martin Luther King, Jr., fractures began to surface as the diversity of age, location, and economics within the black population led to disagreements over goals and tactics. Though the pace of reform had quickened, the younger generation desired more immediate equality and groups such as the SCLC, SNCC, CORE and others diverged in their missions. Militancy became more popular as the ideas of Malcolm X and Black Nationalism gained more adherents. Economic stagnation and frustration at the pace of change in urban centers led to more confrontations and eventually riots. The achievements of the civil rights movement were truly historic in their scope and continuing impact, but the force and focus of the movement weakened considerably by the 1970s due in no small part to the assassination of several movement leaders. The case for civil rights and equality continues today with debates over some of the same issues raised over a half century ago, namely the suppression of voting rights, the treatment of blacks in the justice system, the use of racial profiling, and excessive force by law enforcement.

Women

The women's movement in the U.S. is like many social developments in that it has not progressed uniformly but has enjoyed marked areas of notable progress. It generally has its development divided into three distinct waves. These waves are not especially easily demarcated with concrete beginning and end points, but they are unmistakably different in tone and specific goals.

The same Great Awakening that birthed the full embodiment of an abolitionist movement in the U.S. also helped create a more fully formed women's movement. The leadership roles and political involvement that the abolitionist, temperance, and other reform movements afforded to women were

- b. Its first issue was published Feb. 28, 1955 and its response to *Brown II*, the voter registration efforts, and Citizens' Councils was moderate and much more progressive than the Hederman papers.
- 8. Sullens put a black border around the front-page editorial about *Brown* titled, "Blood on the White Marble Steps," and it claimed a violent response would be coming and it would be the fault of the SCOTUS.
- I. The Emmett Till murder case would show the movement towards national coverage of the growing race beat.

VII. Chapter 7: The Till Trial

- A. Emmett Till's murder in 1955 was not seen as connected to any civil rights issues, but it helped move black newspapers and reporters to agree on a growing movement that they were a part of.
- B. The case brought white reporters to the South in unprecedented numbers to cover a racial story and led to the response Myrdal had predicted: northern shock.
- C. On August 24, 1955 inside Bryant's Grocery and Meat in Money, Mississippi, Emmett Till was accused of whistling at Carolyn Bryant and bragging about being with other white women (the whistle may have been a stutter or may not have happened at all).
 - 1. Three nights later, Bryant's husband Roy and his half-brother J.W. Milam took Till from his great-uncle Mose Wright's house in the middle of the night.
 - 2. Roy Bryant was taken into custody (and eventually Milam) for the kidnapping but claimed he had let Till go.
 - 3. Three days after being taken, Till's body was found in the Tallahatchie River.
 - a. He appeared to have been tortured and beaten with an axe. His neck was wrapped in barbed wire attached to a cotton gin fan, and he had been shot in the head.
 - b. He was still wearing his dead father's ring.
- D. Many papers still treated the charges with doubt and carelessly wrote about it, misspelling names of several people.
- E. A stronger and broader reaction came at the Till funeral.
 - 1. It was held in Chicago and the body was brought to the Illinois Central station where the coffin was opened for his mother (Mamie Bradley) to identify him and part of the corpse fell out.
 - 2. His mother insisted on an open casket funeral, so others could see the condition of her son.
 - 3. *Jet* magazine carried close-up photos and sold out, but nationwide exposure of it was limited due to Johnson publications owning the rights.
 - 4. Hodding Carter accused the NAACP of staging the funeral to incite scorn for Mississippi.
 - 5. Much of the northern and national press was sympathetic.
- F. The trial began 14 days after the indictments; the testimony lasted four and a half days; the jury deliberations took one hour and seven minutes. Only 30 days had passed since Till encountered Carolyn Bryant and the not guilty verdict was returned.



Emmett Till
Pinterest/ Public Domain

4. Beatings and hosings turned the riders into hardened organizers.
- L. New Freedom Riders headed to the South but were being arrested and coverage became rare.
- M. In June 1961, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that *The New York Times* and Salisbury could not be sued in Alabama, but Louis Loeb (the lead *New York Times* attorney) said *The New York Times* reporters should still stay out of Alabama unless it was a huge story like the rioters attacking the riders.

XV. Chapter 16: Albany

- A. The civil rights movement was becoming more structured.
- B. Leaders on all sides noticed that the greater the violence the greater the coverage for an event.
 1. Police chief of Albany, Georgia (seat of Dougherty County and home to the all-black Albany State College), Laurie Pritchett noticed the relation to violence and press coverage.
 2. He studied the movement in different areas.
 3. He understood the goal of the movement was to overflow jails like Gandhi had.
 4. He made sure his officers kept violence down and made arrangements with other jails to hold protesters.
 5. He would charge protesters with more local, harder to overturn charges rather than for violating segregation laws.
 6. He had a quick temper but tried to woo national reporters and the local TV, radio, and newspaper (owned by James Gray who was already pro-segregation).
 7. Pritchett even invited Sitton and Fleming over for drinks (he drank buttermilk).
- C. Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon of the SNCC were in Albany in the fall of 1961 and trained students and organizations to start a local movement with Dr. William Anderson as the chairman.
 1. The goal was to attack segregation and register voters, but after being unsuccessful in desegregating train and bus stations, they began street marches.
 2. Mass arrests for parading without a permit followed.
 3. The new director of SNCC led nine Freedom Riders to Albany in December.
 4. Pritchett arrested them for obstructing traffic.
- D. Robert H. "Bob" Gordon of the *United Press* in Atlanta was rushed to Albany by a chartered flight despite the reputation of *United Press* to "down hold" expenses.
 1. He focused his reporting on the black churches.
 2. He watched Sitton of *The New York Times* and Fleming (an orphan from VA) of *Newsweek* working as a team for the first time (mainly for safety).
 - a. *Newsweek* was purchased by the *Washington Post* in 1961 and the new owners wanted to compete with *Time* (owned by Henry Luce).
 - b. The *Newsweek* editor John Denison of Louisiana put a renewed focus on the South with a straightforward approach as opposed to *Time's* habit of patronizing.
 3. Gordon had only taken one suit in his hurry to reach Albany and couldn't afford to buy a new one.
 - a. When he sent the suit out to be cleaned, the largest march yet took place outside his hotel.
 - b. He dictated the story from his window and the story of his pants-less coverage was put on the front page of the *Albany Herald*.
- E. Anderson urged King to come to Albany after hundreds of marchers had been arrested and new protestors were getting harder to recruit.
 1. SNCC objected but King's arrival generated new attention.

SUPREME COURT CASES

1857 – *Dred Scott v. Sandford*

Background: Dred Scott was a slave in Missouri. From 1833 to 1843, he resided in Illinois and the Wisconsin Territory (present-day Minnesota) – where slavery was outlawed by the Missouri Compromise. After returning to Missouri, Scott sued for his freedom in the Missouri state courts, claiming that his residence in free territories had made him free. Scott initially won in the Missouri courts, but the Missouri Supreme Court, in violation of their own precedent, overturned those rulings. Scott then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. John Sandford, acting on behalf of his sister (Scott's "owner"), argued that no Negro who is a slave or descendant of slaves could be a United States citizen in the sense of Article 3 of the Constitution, so Scott did not even have the right to use the courts to seek his freedom.

Chief Justice: Roger Taney

Issues: states' rights, jurisdiction, slavery, property rights, and substantive due process

Articles/Amendment involved: Article 3 Section 2, Fifth Amendment

Question: Was Dred Scott a free U.S. citizen with rights to sue, or a slave?

Decision: 7-2 for Sandford

Opinion written by: Taney

Conclusion: Taney reached the conclusion that no person of African descent could be a citizen of the U.S. for Article 3 purposes. Under Article 3, only a citizen of the U.S. could be a citizen of a state. If a person was not a citizen, then they did not have the right to sue in the federal court. This meant that the ruling by the Missouri Supreme Court was upheld and Scott was a slave. Taney also cited the Fifth Amendment that forbids Congress from seizing personal property (a slave was considered property) without proper compensation. The court then held that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional because it banned slavery in territories, which was something Congress did not have the power to do. This was further reasoning why Scott could not be declared a free man. The outcome of this case so divided the country that it is cited as one of the main factors leading to the Civil War. Justice Benjamin R. Curtis was so appalled by the decision that he resigned from the court. Over the years, scholars have denounced the decision as the worst Supreme Court decision ever made.

1883 – Civil Rights Cases

Background: Five cases combined together to argue against the Civil Rights Act of 1875 which banned racial discrimination in access to public services. The African American plaintiffs were suing theaters, hotels, and transit companies for refusing to allow them service. The cases questioned whether Congress had the authority to regulate private affairs under the 14th and 13th Amendments.

Chief Justice: Morrison Waite

Issues: states' rights and civil rights

Amendments involved: 10th, 13th, and 14th Amendment

Question: Does the Civil Rights Act of 1875 violate the 10th Amendment of the Constitution which reserves all powers not granted to the national government to the states or to the people?

Decision: 8-1 for defendants

Opinion written by: Bradley

Dissent written by: Harlan

disease. They are the enemies and not our fellow man, not our neighbor. And these enemies too, poverty, disease and ignorance, we shall overcome.

"The bill that I am presenting to you will be known as a civil rights bill. But, in a larger sense, most of the program I am recommending is a civil rights program. Its object is to open the city of hope to all people of all races. Because all Americans just must have the right to vote. And we are going to give them that right. All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race."

1966 – Black Power, Stokely Carmichael

Summary: This speech was delivered by Stokely Carmichael in front of a crowd at the University of California, Berkeley after he was arrested for protesting in Greenwood, Mississippi. He rejects the teachings of King and the nonviolent movement and suggests for African Americans to take their rights.

Quotes:

"Now, then, in order to understand white supremacy we must dismiss the fallacious notion that white people can give anybody their freedom. No man can give anybody his freedom. A man is born free. You may enslave a man after he is born free, and that is in fact what this country does. It enslaves black people after they're born, so that the only acts that white people can do is to stop denying black people their freedom; that is, they must stop denying freedom. They never give it to anyone."

"And that we maintain, whether they like it or not, we gonna use the word "Black Power" and let them address themselves to that; (applause) but that we are not goin' to wait for white people to sanction Black Power. We are tired waiting; every time black people move in this country, they're forced to defend their position before they move. It's time that the people who are supposed to be defending their position do that. That's white people. They ought to start defending themselves as to why they have oppressed and exploited us"

1968 – I've Been to the Mountaintop, Martin Luther King, Jr.

Summary: King gave this speech on April 3rd, 1968, the day before he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. The speech called for unity and the use of nonviolent protest after the Memphis Sanitation Strike, specifically suggesting that the strike be expanded to boycott the purchase of items to spread out the protest. At the end of his speech, King refers to the threats on his life and claims that he is not afraid of death as he has been to the mountaintop and seen the promised land.

Quotes:

"Go out and tell your neighbors not to buy Coca-Cola in Memphis. Go by and tell them not to buy Sealtest milk. Tell them not to buy - what is the other bread? Wonder Bread. And what is the other bread company, Jesse? Tell them not to buy Hart's bread. As Jesse Jackson has said, up to now, only the garbage men have been feeling pain; now we must kind of redistribute the pain."

"Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live - a long life; longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. 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. So I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

1978	The Moscone-Milk assassinations in the San Francisco City Hall by former Supervisor Dan White took place on November 27 th . White was subsequently convicted of voluntary manslaughter, rather than first-degree murder, leading to the "White Night riots."
1982	By the year of expiration for the ERA, 35 of the required 38 states had ratified it.
1985	The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is founded in New York City to protest against the <i>New York Post's</i> derogatory coverage of Gay rights issues and AIDS.
1987	Fifty thousand gay rights activists marched on Washington to demand that the Reagan administration address the growing AIDS epidemic.
1990	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law by President George Bush on July 26 th .
1992	In Los Angeles, four police officers that had been caught beating Rodney King were acquitted of any wrongdoing. In response, riots in south-central LA lasted over three days and killed more than 60 people, injured almost 2,000 people, and caused nearly \$1 billion in damage.
1997	California's Prop. 187 was ruled unconstitutional in U.S. District Court three years after it was passed.
2000	On April 26 th , the first civil unions between same-sex couples in the U.S. became legal in the state of Vermont.
2003	Latinos surpass blacks to become the nation's largest racial minority group.
2009	The inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44 th president of the U.S. took place on January 20 th marking the first time a citizen of any minority group became president.
2009	The Hate Crimes Prevention Act, or the Matthew Shepard Act, was signed into law by President Obama on October 28 th , 2009 over 10 years after Matthew Shepard was singled out by his attackers because he was gay. He was tortured and left to die.
2010	Gay Americans are allowed to serve openly in the armed forces after the National Defense Authorization Bill repeals "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."
2014	July 17 th , Eric Garner died in Staten Island after a NYPD officer put him in a headlock while arresting him for selling loose cigarettes. "I can't breathe" protests against excessive force and police brutality spreads.
2014	Unrest in Ferguson, Missouri began the day after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown by white police officer Darren Wilson on August 9 th leading to a national debate about the militarization of police and the use of force. Protests and riots broke out again in Nov. after a grand jury failed to indict Wilson.
2016	Colin Kaepernick begins sitting for the national anthem during the 49ers preseason games to protest oppression of people of color and ongoing issues with police brutality.
2017	The Women's March on January 21 st took place to advocate policies regarding women's rights. It occurred directly after the inauguration of Donald Trump as president of the U.S. and was the largest single-day protest in U.S. history involving 3-5 million people.
2017	The "Me Too" movement spreads virally in Oct. 2017 as a hashtag used on social media to spread awareness of sexual assault and harassment following allegations against Harvey Weinstein.

IWSA became the International Alliance of Women and Catt worked to spread the vote to women in countries across the globe. In 1923, her work *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* was released. Her message, which was inspirational to women, sometimes used prejudice of other groups to garner support, specifically when comparing how suffrage was extended to some minorities, but not white women. She died of a heart attack in New Rochelle, New York at the age of 88.

Cesar Chavez

(1927-1993)

Cesar Estrada Chavez was born in Yuma, Arizona on his Mexican American family's ranch. After his family lost their land during the Depression, he moved with them to California to become migrant farm workers. He left school in the eighth grade to begin work himself. After serving in the Navy in the late 1940s, he returned to work in the fields where he became an organizer for the Community Service Organization. He became the national director of the CSO in 1958 and organized voter registration drives for Latino communities. In 1962, he co-founded the National Farm Workers Association (later United Farm Workers) with Dolores Huerta. In 1965, he helped lead the Grape Boycott to protest for higher wages and marched with striking pickers from Delano to Sacramento in California. The strike lasted five years and the tactic of focusing protests in the cities led to a higher profile of the workers' needs. Similar strikes took place across the country and the mounting pressure from another march in 1975 from San Francisco to a winery in Modesto led to legislation forcing agricultural companies to recognize the right of workers to organize and collectively bargain. Chavez continued to work for more labor protection, but also pushed for protections of Latino civil rights. He focused on nonviolent protests and led several fasts in the example of Gandhi. He continued to travel and provide a voice for those in situations that often caused their concerns to be marginalized, such as immigrants. He died in 1993 and the next year was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

W.E.B. Du Bois

(1868-1963)

W.E.B. Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts on February 23rd, 1868. His full name is William Edward Burghardt Du Bois. In 1885, he began attending Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Having not experienced significant limitations in his educational opportunities in Massachusetts, the introduction to Jim Crow life in the South was jarring to Du Bois. He returned to Massachusetts to receive his master's degree at Harvard University and in 1895, he became the first black student to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. He published *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* in 1899 and started growing in prominence while a professor at Atlanta University discussing avenues for blacks to improve their status in the U.S. His very public disapproval of Booker T. Washington's accommodationist views and his calls for full equality led him to become the public face of the movement for black equality in the U.S. He published *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903 and began pushing for a national movement and a shared dialogue about experiences and needs. As a leader of the Niagara Movement, he helped found



W.E.B. DuBois
Library of Congress/ Public Domain

Lorraine Hansberry- (1930-1965, born in Illinois) She was an African American playwright and is best known for *A Raisin in the Sun*, which depicts racial segregation and tension in Chicago. She later worked at a Pan-African newspaper in which she fought for civil rights and sexual freedom.

Judith Heumann- (1947-present, born in New York) She was a lead activist in the 504 Sit-in and the push to have Section 504 enforced. She has worked in the Clinton and Obama administrations in the State and Education Departments and for the World Bank dealing with disability rights.

J. Edgar Hoover- (1895-1972, born in Washington, D.C.) He became the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 1924-1972. He actively sought to discredit some civil rights movements and leaders through official and unofficial agency operations.

Pollie Ann Myers Hudson- She was an Alabama NAACP member and classmate of Autherine Lucy who in 1952 attempted to gain admission to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Hudson was denied admission for "ethics" reasons while Lucy went through a protracted court battle and protests.

Dolores Huerta- (1930-present, born in New Mexico) She is a civil rights activist and supporter of the Chicano Movement. She co-founded the National Farm Workers Association with Cesar Chavez and helped to organize the grape strike in 1965. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama in 2012.

Langston Hughes- (1902-1967, born in New York) He was a poet, playwright, and author during the Harlem Renaissance. Many of his works of art focused on racial injustices and African American oppression.

Jesse Jackson- (1941- present, born in South Carolina) He is a civil rights leader and Baptist minister. He marched alongside Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Selma marches and became a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He founded Operation PUSH or People United to Save Humanity and the Rainbow Coalition that sought equal rights for African Americans, women, and homosexuals.

Lyndon B. Johnson- (1908-1973, born in Texas) He was the President of the U.S. from 1963 to 1969 and signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law. He gave an address to Congress stating "We Shall Overcome" when calling for legislation to be passed.

Paul Johnson- (1916-1985, born in Mississippi) He was the son of the governor and part of a politically influential pro-segregation family in Mississippi. He became lieutenant governor of the state in 1960 as the civil rights movement was gaining steam and was governor from 1964-1968 during the Freedom Summer and other events.

John F. Kennedy- (1917-1963, born in Massachusetts) He was the president of the U.S. from 1961-1963 during which the Freedom Rides and the March on Washington protests occurred. Kennedy met with Martin Luther King, Jr. after the March on Washington to discuss a civil rights law that was later enacted in 1964 by his successor.

Robert F. Kennedy- (1925-1968, born in Massachusetts) He was the attorney general during his brother John F. Kennedy's presidency. He was in charge of coordinating protection via U.S. Marshals for various integration efforts such as the Freedom Rides. He was assassinated in June 1968 during his campaign for presidency.

Coretta Scott King- (1927-2006, born in Alabama) She was a civil rights activist and wife of Martin Luther King, Jr. She was a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. After her husband's assassination, she founded the Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta and established the annual African American author award known as the Coretta Scott King Award.

Bernard Lee- (1935-1991, born in Alabama) He was a founding member of the SNCC as a student at Alabama State College. He later became part of the SCLC and travelled with King as his personal assistant through most of the 1960s and was by his side when he was assassinated.