Why is the Civil Rights Movement Taking so long?

C3 IDM

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DID WE OVERCOME RACISM YET?

9-12 Grade Inquiry with the Library of Congress Resources C3 Hub John Lee • Ann Canning • David Hicks • Greg Giardina			
Compelling Question	Why is the Civil Rights Movement taking so long?		
Standards and Practices	Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past. (D2.His.16.9-12)		
Staging the Question	List and discuss three ways that Civil Rights have been in the news this year.		
Supporting Question 1		**Supporting Question 2**	**Supporting Question 3**
What were some of the economic and social conditions that led to the Long Civil Rights Movement?		What were some of the actions taken to secure civil rights for African Americans?	What issues has the Civil Rights Movement faced since the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964?
Formative Performance Task		**Formative Performance Task**	**Formative Performance Task**
Analyze the oral history interviews listed below using Library of Congress and SCIM-C analysis tools.		Analyze the oral history interviews listed below using Library of Congress and SCIM-C analysis tools.	Analyze the oral history interviews listed below using Library of Congress and SCIM-C analysis tools.
Library of Congress Featured Sources Transcripts and Video Excerpts		**Library of Congress Featured Sources** Transcripts and Video Excerpts	**Library of Congress Featured Sources** Transcripts and Video Excerpts
1. Fountain Hughes 2. John Hope Franklin 3. Toni Morrison 4. Joan Mulholland		5. Jamila Jones 6. Freeman Hrabowski 7. Ray Charles 8. Mildred Roxborough	9. Sam Mahone 10. Purcell Conway 11. Derrick Bell 12. Ruby Sales
Summative Performance Task	**Argument**	Write an argument made up of claims with evidence that responds to the compelling question, "Why is the Civil Rights Movement taking so long?"	
	Extension	Use your argument to write a letter to Abraham Lincoln telling him what progress or lack of progress we have made for racial justice since he wrote the Gettysburg Address. In your letter incorporate competing viewpoints and an evaluation of specific claims from a variety of historical sources.	
Taking Informed Action	1. Use the Question Formulation Technique to brainstorm and determine what Civil Rights Movement questions would be most appropriate to ask a contemporary Civil Rights Activist from your community. 2. Conduct an individual or group interview with a Civil Rights Activist from your community about the Long Civil Rights Movement here and now. Record your interview with the StoryCorps App or your own recording device. 3. Design an action plan to share the recording and make your community aware of these issues.		
Authors	Ann Canning, TPS Eastern Region Greg Giardina, Sacred Heart Elementary School, Pittsburgh John Lee, N.C. State David Hicks, Virginia Tech		

Long Civil Rights Movement Featured Oral History Interviews

Compelling Question: Why is the Civil Rights Movement lasting so long?

Supporting Question #1: What were some of the economic and social conditions that led to the Long Civil Rights Movement?

1. Fountain Hughes – Former Slave
    a. Audio
    b. Transcript p. 2-3
2. John Hope Franklin – Civil Rights Historian
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 4
3. Toni Morrison – Author
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 5-6
4. Joan Mulholland – White Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video (Excerpt: 6:47-13:40)
    b. Transcript p. 7-8

Supporting Question #2: What were some of the actions taken to secure civil rights for African Americans?

5. Jamila Jones – Gospel Singer and Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video (Excerpt: 6:47-13:40)
    b. Transcript p. 9
6. Freeman Hrabowski - University President and Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video (Excerpt: 30:00-37:08)
    b. Transcript p. 10-11
7. Ray Charles - Musician
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 12
8. Mildred Bond Roxborough – NAACP Secretary
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 13

Supporting Question #3: What issues has the Civil Rights Movement continued to face?

9. Sam Mahone – Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video (Excerpt: 56:55-1:03:21)
    b. Transcript p. 14-15
10. Purcell Conway – Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 16-17
11. Derrick Bell – Lawyer and Civil Rights Pioneer
    a. Video
    b. Transcript p. 18-19
12. Ruby Sales – Civil Rights Activist
    a. Video (Excerpt: 1:04:00 – 1:09:00)
    b. Transcript p. 20

Fountain Hughes (Listen to Excerpt 1:25-4:17 and 10:00-13:00)
Library of Congress: Voices from the Days of Slavery: Stories, Songs and Memories
Interview with Fountain Hughes, Baltimore, Maryland, June 11, 1949
http://www.loc.gov/podcasts/slavenarratives/podcast_hughes.html

Excerpt: (1:25-4:17)

Hermond Norwood: Yeah, when you were a slave. Who did you work for?

FOUNTAIN HUGHES: Well, I belonged to Burness [*unclear*], when I was a slave. My mother belonged to Burness. But...we…was all slave children and …soon after.. when we found out that we was free, why then, we was…bound out to different people…[*names unclear*] and all such people as that. And we would run away, and wouldn't stay with them. Why then, we'd just go and stay anywhere we could. Lay out at night anywhere. We had no home, you know. We was just turned out like a lot of cattle. You know how they turn cattle out in a pasture? Well, after freedom, you know, colored people didn't have nothing. Colored people didn't have no beds when they was slaves. We always slept on the floor, pallet here, and a pallet there just like…a lot of…wild people…we didn't…we didn't know nothing. [The slave owners] didn't allow you to look at no book.

And then there was some free-born colored people…why, they had a little education, but there was very few of them where we was. And they all had…what you call…I might call it now…jail sentence…[it] was just the same as we was in jail. Now, I couldn't go from here across the street, or I couldn't go through nobody's house without I have a note or something from my master. And if I had that pass…that was what we called a pass…if I had that pass, I could go wherever he sent me. And I'd have to be back…you know…when whoever he sent me to, they… they'd give me another pass and I'd bring that back so as to show how long I'd been gone. We couldn't go out and stay a hour or two hours or something like that. They send you [back]. Now, say for instance, I'd go out here to [unclear] place…I'd have to walk. And I would have to be back…maybe in a hour. Maybe they'd give me an hour…I don't know just how long they'd give me. But, they'd give me a note so there wouldn't nobody interfere with me, and [it would] tell who I belonged to. And when I come back, why, I carry it to my master and give that to him…that'd be all right. But I couldn't just walk away like the people does now, you know.

It was what they call… we were slaves. We belonged to people. They'd sell us like they sell horses and cows and hogs and all like that. Have an auction bench, and they'd put you on…up on the bench and bid on you just same as you bidding on cattle, you know.

FOUNTAIN HUGHES: I don't know, to tell you the truth when I think of it today, I don't know how I'm living. None, none of the rest of them that I know of is living. I'm the oldest one that I know that's living. But, still, I'm thankful to the Lord. Now, if… if my master wanted to send me, he'd never say…you couldn't get a horse and ride…you walk, you know, you walk. And you be barefoot and cold. That didn't make no difference. You wasn't no more than a dog to some of them in them days. You wasn't treated as good as they treat dogs now. But still, I didn't like to

talk about it. Because it makes, makes people feel bad you know. I could say a whole lot…I don't like to say. And I won't say a whole lot more.

I remember when the Yankees come along and took all the good horses and took all the.. throwed all the meat and flour and sugar and stuff out in the river and let it go down the river. And they knowed the people wouldn't have nothing to live on but they done that. And that's the reason why I don't like to talk about it. Them people…and if you was cooking anything to eat in there for yourself and if they…they was hungry, they would go and eat it all up, and we didn't get nothing. They'd just come in and drink up all your milk.. just do as they please. Sometimes they'd be passing by all night long, walking, muddy, raining. Oh, they had a terrible time! Colored people that's free ought to be awful thankful. And some of them is sorry they are free now. Some of them now would rather be slaves.

Excerpt: 10:00-13:00

HERMOND NORWOOD: Which had you rather be, Uncle Fountain?
FOUNTAIN HUGHES: Me? Which I'd rather be? You know what I'd rather do? If I thought… had any idea that I'd ever be a slave again, I'd take a gun and just end it all right away! Because you're nothing but a dog. You're not a thing but a dog! Night never come without you had nothing to do. Time to cut tobacco…if they want you to cut all night long out in the field you cut. And if they want you to hang all night long, you hang…hang tobacco. It didn't matter about your tired…being tired. You're afraid to say you're tired. They just…well …[voice trails off]

John Hope Franklin, Historian and Educator
National Visionary Leadership Collection (AFC 2004/007)
Library of Congress American Folklife Center
Racism in My Childhood
Interviewer: Renee Poussaint, 1999-08-26
http://tinyurl.com/TPS-CRM2

Franklin: When I was seven years-old and living in a village in Oklahoma, my mother and my sister and I took the train from that village to a town six miles away—Checotah—where we did our shopping. We flagged the train. It stopped. We got on, and we sat down, and then the train began to pull off, and by the time it got a mile or so down the road, the conductor came through and said we couldn't sit there, and my mother said, "Why?" He said, "This is a seat for white people. This is a coach for white people." She says, "Well, I can't move my children while the train is moving. If the train were not moving, I'd be glad to move."

He said, "I'll stop the train." And he did. And he put us off, instead of letting us go to a so-called Black coach, he put us off. And when we got off and started trudging our way back to the village where we lived, I began to cry, and my mother said, "Why are you crying?" I said, "That man put us off the train." She said, "You shouldn't ever let that bother you."
She said, "That's a mere law that says that you can't ride with white people. But you're as good as any of the white people on that train, or anywhere else, and I don't want you to spend your energy and your time worrying and fretting about that. Just forget them. Understand that they are the sick people, and that you are well, and that you just proceed with your life. Don't ever let me see you fretting or crying about your mistreatment by white people."

That was my first experience, at seven years old. Another experience was when I was about ten or eleven, and we had moved, by that time moved to the big city of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and I was walking downtown one day and a man threw two quarters down in front of me and said, "Start dancing." Well, I didn't know that he thought that young boys who are Black should dance for white men for the price of 25 cents, or whatever it was. And so I kept walking. And he shouted at me once or twice. But that was the extent of his harassment of me and I went on about my business.

Within another two years, still in Tulsa, I had the experience of being a Boy Scout, and being a Boy Scout, I wanted to do my good deed every day, and I was walking downtown and I saw a white woman who was trying to navigate herself off the sidewalk, onto the street, and cross the street. And I saw immediately that she was having problems, and that she probably was blind. And so I ran across the way and said, "Lady, can I help you across the street?" My one good deed for the day. And she said, "Oh, yes; by all means." And we started across the street, chatting,merrily, and she all of a sudden asked me if I were white or Black. And when I told her I was Black, she said, "Take your filthy hands off me and let me alone."And in the middle of the streets, the only thing I could do was to take my hands off her and let her struggle all the way across the street through that traffic without my guidance. I said that if she preferred to run the risk of being injured, to having my arm assist her across the street, that was a strange kind of reaction for anyone, human being to have, and so my notion of race was further shaped.

Toni Morrison, Author
National Visionary Leadership Collection (AFC 2004/007)
Library of Congress American Folklife Center
Why my parents fled to Ohio from the Jim Crow South in the 1920s
Interviewer: Camille O. Cosby, 2004-11-05
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/multimedia/toni-morrison.html

Camille Cosby: Where were your parents born?
Toni Morrison: My mother was born in Greenville, Alabama. My father was born in Cartersville, Georgia.
CC: (Laughter) Two Southerners!
TM: That's right.
CC: Please share a little bit about your parent's background. Why they left the South and what life was like for them before they went to Ohio.
TM: Well, their stories of their childhood are rather painful. Uh – h –h my mother left with her mother and all of their siblings. There were seven or eight of them. And they left Greenville, Alabama at a crisis moment when my grandmother, her mother said that she couldn't stay there any longer because white boys were circling their farm. She had a lot of girls. I never quite understood what they meant then. That was the only phrase.

And then later, of course, I understood exactly what they meant. Her husband, my grandfather had gone to Birmingham on a – to earn some addition money which he did by day work. But he also played the violin and he earned money that way and sent some of it back. So she was literally a woman alone with all these children, young children. My mother was six. Some of the girls were older so she was frightened. So she got on a train and sent a message to her husband that if he wanted to see them again he would be on such and such a train at such and such a time.

And my mother remembers getting on the train and they couldn't tell anybody they were leaving in the middle of the night. They were sharecroppers. You know if you were in debt, they didn't let you go anywhere. And they were not sure that their father was on that train. And the train pulled out of the station and they were all weeping because he didn't show up. But when they got about sixty miles outside, he showed up. He had sort of been hiding and there was all this glee!

My father's exit was a little bit different. I didn't know much about it. I just know he left when he was around fourteen years old and he went to stay with an older brother who was in California. Then eventually made his way back or toward Ohio. But I learned later, much later after he died that he had witnessed lynchings of people in that town where he was a teenager. Neighbors.
CC: In his Southern town?
TM: In his Southern town. They were businessmen who had just been taken out and whatever. And there were several in a matter of eighteen months. So I guess it was like – you know, he left!
CC: Yes!
TM: He left!
CC: Yes!
TM: Yes. So their recollections were, you know, miserable.

Toni Morrison, Author
National Visionary Leadership Collection (AFC 2004/007)
Library of Congress American Folklife Center
Segregation and Racism in Lorain, Ohio
Interviewer: Camille O. Cosby, 2004-11-05
http://tinyurl.com/TPS-CRM3

Toni Morrison: They never had the laws that said ...that they had in other parts of the country. But what they did have were understandings and I became aware of them with my mother and her brothers who were very interested in new places that opened up in the town like a new theater. My mother was always on her way to the theater the day it opened. Oh yes! A little sit-down. She would go in Saturday morning, the first day just to see where the ushers were directing all black people. They would never have a sign but they might wave their little flashlight because they had been told to put them all over here and she would always deliberately go some place else. Or she would make us sit in these places where we didn't want to sit because none of our friends were there just to make sure they were not going to impose any de facto segregation on us.

Same for swimming pools. I remember my Uncle going into Islay's ice cream store where they had a counter and booths and we all knew we could go in to get ice cream. You could get the cream and leave but we knew you couldn't sit down. So he goes in and orders and he sits down in the booth and then there's a little altercation there.

Camille Cosby: But they couldn't actually get rid of him?

TM: They could not! But there was this concerted effort to make sure when ever there was a new business in town. And there were places where we were not welcome. You know like Lake Erie.

CC: Yes

TM: And a little park, the city park. And there was another place that was unprotected that the black people had created on the Lake that they went to. So there was that.

I suppose that the biggest thing would have been, if I had been paying close attention to it, would have been the social life. Dating. Because at 15-16-17, we were not allowed to date any way. My mother would walk us to these little parties we went to, you know and it was all very watched. So it was sort of out of one's mind. I do know that for something like a prom, it would never occur to me or to somebody else that that would be an international date. That day would never happen.

Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, Civil Rights Activist
Library of Congress Civil Rights History Project
Interview completed by John Bishop for the Southern Oral History Program 2013
http://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0079/

Excerpt: 6:47-13:40

John Dittmer: Um-hmm. In 1955, Emmett Till was murdered. He was your age. For black activists in the South, this was a turning point, something that they would never forget and made them realize how vulnerable they were and how rotten the system was, if they didn't already know. Did the lynching of Till have any impact up here? Were you aware of it?
Joan Mulholland: I don't even think I was aware of it.
JD: Yeah.
JM: You know, I may have heard of it, but it was not a big deal.
JD: That was the same thing in Indiana. I vaguely remember and saying, "Oh, that's too bad." But—
JM: Yeah, but I was—grew up down at Grandma's in Georgia, that there would be discussions of the Leo Frank lynching.
JD: Uh-huh.
JM: So, the concept of lynching was not shocking, because there would always be these big debates as to whether Leo Frank was innocent or guilty. And the lynch mob had gone by my aunt's house, as I understood.
JD: Oh, really?
JM: So, you know, lynching was not breaking news.

JD: What was it like at Grandma's when you were visiting?
JM: So, it was wonderful! Fresh biscuits every meal, and grits, and snap beans, and great time!
JD: Did you go every year?
JM: Every year we'd go down for two weeks. My mother would load the girls in the car, me and my sister, and drive down, three-day trip, back before the interstate.
JD: Um-hmm. Where did your grandmother live in Georgia?
JM: Oconee, which at that point was a company town out in the swamps for the logging.
JD: Oh, wow! Yeah, I know that area.
JM: The *town* was Oconee, down near It's not Oconee County.

JD: Um-hmm. What was it that motivated you to become involved in the civil rights struggle that was just now beginning, in the late 1950s, was beginning to attract attention? You had Martin Luther King and the Montgomery bus boycott, you had the Little Rock Nine.
JM: Well, I think, you know, going back to this memorizing the Bible verses, and then, we had the Declaration of Independence in high school. We had to memorize it. And once, when I was down at Grandma's—I must have been about ten—this girl that I used to hang out with, sort of dared each other to go walk through "Nigger Town," we called it, and just the striking disparity. Of course, everyone just sort of evaporated as we—saw these two white girls coming down the road. But I could see with my own eyes the difference between the black school and the white school that was a new brick building and all that. And that really struck me. And then, in high

school, the girl next to me in Spanish class had been in one of those jurisdictions in Virginia where the schools were closed. So, instead of enjoying her senior year, she was sent to live with relatives or somebody and doing eleventh grade a year late. And just seeing the effect of segregation and knowing the hypocrisy of it from what our founding documents and the *Bible*, I just sort of felt, as a Southerner, that we needed to change. And when I had my chance to help do something, I would seize it.

JD: You're anticipating my next question, and that is a broader question that Southerners were the first white people to seek out the young black activists in SNCC and CORE—talking about people like you, Bob Zellner, Casey Hayden. Why do you think it was white Southerners who were first in the Movement rather than Northerners?
JM: Because those Yankees up there were looking down their nose at us. [Laughter] And, well, we were at home. We were working at home on what we saw as our own problems. You know, think globally, act locally; bloom where you're planted. Those things came in later. But back then, we were very local-oriented, particularly in the South. We had to be able to place people, know where you were from, who you were related to, very community-minded. A trip to the next state was a big deal; for some people, to the next county. And so, I think it was natural, between our community orientation and our deep religious convictions.

JD: Um-hmm. Well, Casey was saying that it was through the Methodist church, going to interracial meetings interracial meetings out of state, that she first became involved in activities.
JM: And for me, it was the Presbyterians, my Presbyterian youth group, and then I went to Duke University, because my mother wanted me to go to a name school that was safely segregated.
JD: What would have been your first choice?
JM: It was some small church school in the North, I think, maybe Ohio. But I had gone to such a massive high school that it was just totally overcrowded with growing suburbia in the fifties that I wanted a small place where you were known, for better or worse, but not where you were lost in the mob. And Mother was afraid of integration, a product of her environment, and she was all about status.
JD: Um-hmm.
JM: So, I went to Duke. But it was there, after the sit-ins got going in Durham, that our Presbyterian chaplain—and I was going to their Sunday evening meetings—told us, and it was like déjà vu, that some students from North Carolina College who were doing the sit-ins would be coming over next week. "Don't spread the word unless it's somebody you think would really want to come, because the administration could lock us out, the police could show up, or the local rowdies could visit us." And these well-dressed, well-spoken students came over and explained all about the sit-ins, legally and morally, and at the end, invited us to join them.
JD: Before we get to—
JM: That was my moment!

Jamila Jones, Civil Rights Activist and Singer
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress, 2011
Interview completed by Joseph Mosnier for the Southern Oral History Program
http://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0009/

Excerpt 31:08 -36:05

Joseph Mosnier: [Laughs] I have read two different accounts for how, uh, you are credited with adding a very important verse to "We Shall Overcome." Can you share that story with us?

Jamilla Jones: You know what? I don't know how much light I can, uh, place on that, because you have to remember that I was at Highlander when I was probably fourteen years old. And we weren't thinking at the time, "Oh, I said this; I did this." That was not upon our minds. So that I can remember that, uh, when we went to Highlander, uh, we had workshops to prepare us for different things that we would face. And one of the things that Reverend Seay, who drove us there, uh, said to us is that we are going to leave by night. And the reason for that is when you get into Monteagle, Tennessee, the population of, uh, blacks is – the population is just one, and that was Septima Clark. And so, to go in by night, we would not be noticed as we would go in. So we went there by night, and we came back by night.

But one of the things that happened when we were there is the policemen from the city came in. Uh, we were having a movie, I believe, that night, or a song fest, and, uh, they came in. They turned out all the lights – from the city they turned them out. So, we were in complete darkness that night. And, um, we could not see each other. We didn't know where – I didn't know where my sister was. I didn't know where Minnie was. We were just there – wherever we were at the time when the lights went out – careful – that's where we sat.

And so, all these policemen came in. And all we could see, basically, is the billy club, uh, waving, and the, uh, the butts of their guns – you could see it shining on their holster. Uh, and they told us to sit, you know, of course, uh, stay seated, or be quiet, or what have you. And something [pause] said, [begins singing slowly] "We are not afraid," and everybody started singing, [singing] "We are not –," and you could hear people come in. My sister, who is not a singer, I knew she was safe, because I heard her little out-of-tune voice coming in. And I could hear Minnie's bass come in, about, "We are not afraid."

And we got louder and louder with singing that verse, until one of the policemen came and he said to me, "If you have to sing," and he was actually shaking, "do you have to sing so loud?" And I could not believe it. Here these people had all the guns, the billy clubs, the power, we thought [pause] and he was *asking* me, with a *shake*, if I would not sing so loud. And it was that time that I *really* understood the power of our move—our music, [35:00] how powerful it was that this – it unnerved him so much that he had to come and ask that I not sing so loud.

And I can just tell you that I got louder and louder. And somehow even the nature out there in that darkness, because everywhere was dark, but it looked like our voices blended that night to the point of complete harmony and beauty. And from then on, I knew exactly how powerful our songs were.

Dr. Freeman Hrabowski III, Civil Rights Activist and University President
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress, 2011
Interview completed by Josephy Mosnier for the Southern Oral History Program
http://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0032/

Excerpt: 30:00 – 37:08

Joseph Mosnier: So, tell me the story of the [30:00] spring of '63.
Freeman Hrabowski: [Clears throat] Uhm!
JM: You're just twelve and a half years old.
FH: Um-hmm, um-hmm.
JM: And, uh, all of this just torrent of protest –
FH: Um-hmm, sure.
JM: Would unfold in a couple of months there in April and May.
FH: Sure, sure.
JM: How did that history find you there in the city in those months?
FH: I think I told you we were always in church. [Laughs] And I make students laugh sometimes because I say, "I am not going to paint that as a picture where we were so happy to be there all the time." And I did not want to go listen to these different people from outside talk, I mean, and I'm sitting in the back of the room. And the way my parents could placate me was to let me read just my book or do my math. I loved math. And so, I'd sit in the back of the church, because you had to be there, and I'd listen to a bit, and you learned to sing the songs, and the songs were good.

But amazingly, when I heard this man say that what he was proposing – and that is involving children in the march – could lead to children being able to go to any, to the best schools in our city, now that got my attention, because I wanted to see just how smart these white kids were. [Laughs] I didn't think anybody was smarter than I was. And to me, though, smart was not about what you're born with. Smart had to do with how hard you were willing to work. My parents had to sometimes punish me for not going to sleep. I mean, I just wanted to keep working, and they were worried that I was working too hard. And to me, that was smart – when you work really hard and you achieve a lot and you make As, not because you want the grades, but because you want to, you *dare to know*, alright? And, uh – but when he said that, I said, "Now, that's worth listening to."

JM: Do you remember who that was?

FH: And I said, "What's the guy's name? What's this – what's this minister's name?" They said, "King, King." That was my first time – I'll never forget. I said, "King? What a name, King." "No, Reverend King, Reverend Martin Luther King." It was very, very – it was amazing. And, uh – and then I began to listen to him and others and I realized how well spoken they were.

Now, as it turns out, my pastor was also very polished as a speaker. He read a lot. We read books together. So, we were accustomed to polished speakers, but this man was talking about, um, the next level, what it would take to change things. Because what we don't remember is that, while we knew things were not fair, we tended to think, "This is the way of the world." I suppose it's the way my descendants [note: Dr. Hrabowski intended ancestors] felt in slavery. It just is this way. It's awful, but this is the way of the world. And before that King message, that message from Dr. King, the thought was, "Since this is the way of the world, you've got to be really good to get a chance at all." He was changing the model, the vision, and saying, "It doesn't

have to be this way," that we could be empowered to change it. Very different message! And did I believe him? I *wanted* to. Was I convinced it was going to happen? Absolutely not! If you've seen the world one way all of your life, even if it's just twelve years, it is the way it is. The best you can do is have hope and try, and that's what happened.

And so, uh, and – you know, I mentioned that we have this exhibition right now at the Smithsonian, "For All the World To See," done by one of my colleagues, Maurice Berger, here at UMBC. And a part of the message of that exhibition is that the visual culture of the time had a greater impact than people realize. For the first time, people could see, through TV, exactly what was happening. For the first time, America saw the fire hoses, the dogs, the children, children being absolutely abused.

And I'll never forget that first day that I saw that, after hearing Dr. King, I said, "Mama, Dad, I've got to go!" And they said, "Absolutely not! [Laughs] No way!" And I did something you just did not do. I said, "You guys are hypocrites." Well, you see, that may not sound like a big deal today, but at that time you did not say disrespectful things to your parents. My dad could not believe I had said that. He said, "Go to your room. And stay there."

And it was the next morning that they had been up all night – after being up all night, they came in and said I could go. Now, I tell my students all the time, by this point, while I thought my parents were unfair, because my point was you make me go to all these meetings. I hear all this stuff. You tell me to think for myself. I'm thinking for myself. I want to do the right thing. I want to do what Dr. King, somebody you say [35:00] you admire, wants me to do. And yet, you're saying no.

And they came in to explain. It wasn't that they didn't trust me. They did not trust me to be in that jail with those white people who didn't care about our children, about black children. And they said, "You are our treasure. We don't trust you to them." And I understand that now. I often ask myself, "Would I have allowed my child to go?" I'm not sure I would have. But somehow, they came in. They had been praying, and literally their eyes were red. And we prayed together and we cried.

Now, I was crying because I was worried about them worrying about me. But quite frankly, all of a sudden, I got really frightened. I said, "Oh, my God!" [Laughs] And my cousin, who was in the other bed, was laughing, because he said, "No way am I letting those dogs bite me! I am not going!" [Laughs] He was two years older and he said, "Freeman can be stupid if he wants to!" Uh, so it wasn't that I was that courageous. I did believe in the cause, I had said I was going to go, and I couldn't back out. Let's just be honest about it, you know. I wanted to go, but I was frightened. And this is what happens to people so often, right?

And because I was in a higher grade, and kids below fourteen went to the juvenile place, they chose me – and because I was asking a lot of questions in the little training session, they chose me to lead a group of kids. [Someone coughs] And I learned what that meant. You're singing the songs, you're leading people in singing the songs, and you're keeping the kids from focusing on the police officers, because the police officers were trained to try to upset us.

And if you ask any black kid, probably the white kid, too, "What is – who is the one person, uh, that you really don't want anyone talking about?" Your mother! And what were they doing? Oh, yeah. Ohhh, yeah! They were just trying to upset us, because if they could show that we were throwing rocks or doing something violent, then they'd be justified in using the club or whatever. But if we were just walking along, it's very hard to justify the violence.

Ray Charles, Musician
National Visionary Leadership Collection (AFC 2004/007)
Library of Congress American Folklife Center
Playing Without Discrimination
Interviewer: Camille O. Cosby, 2002-10-16
http://tinyurl.com/TPS-CRM5

Camille Cosby: Will you describe the 1961 incident at Paine College in Augusta, Georgia and tell us what you did.
Ray Charles: Well, I'm just kind of weird. My thing has always been. My attitude was that my people made me what I became. Understand what I mean? I had. My hits were big in my community with my people.
CC: That's right.
RC: I never could get it. I couldn't come to gripes with the fact that my people couldn't sit down front to listen. They had to go up in the balcony and I kept saying, Why? And I knew. I mean, I wasn't totally out in left field about it. I knew that if I went against the grain, I was going to get sued. I mean you just…..And I also knew that I'd lose.
CC: uh – hum
RC: Thank you!
CC: Yes
RC: So I wasn't shocked. I wasn't surprised. Because I knew from the outset I was going against the grain. Wasn't supposed to be done, you know. And I got sued for it and like I said, I lost.
CC: But you didn't lose something else, your integrity. Right?
RC: That's right and you know, I had a strange thing happen to me. Just shows what can happen. Nobody would believe this. In Louisiana, they—when I went there it was the same type of thing. I said, "My people are going to have to sit down front with everybody else." And I forget the guy's name. There was a governor at the time. But anyway, he wrote this song, "You are My Sunshine."
CC: Oh really?
RC: Yea. Uh-hum. And so they thought there was going to be a riot and you know how people think. Oh man, you know. We're going to have hell break lose and all this type of thing. And what was surprising was that the people came. All set down together. In Louisiana now. This ain't _____ (unclear) They all set down together. Nobody raised no hell. They all enjoyed the concert. And the governor sent me a letter. He said he was very very pleased. That what we did was very very nice. Of course, you know I had done his song, "You Are My Sunshine" that he wrote.
CC: Yes
RC: That kind of helped out.
CC: A little bit.
RC: But you know, I've always felt. My Mom always tried to teach me to do what you feel in your gut is right. You do what you honestly feel is right 'cause you are going to know yourself when you are wrong. You're going to know whether you want to admit it. You might try to hide it but you know when you are wrong.
CC: That's true.
RC: And she said, "You try to do the best you can and believe in yourself and try to do the right thing. It might displease some people but you have got to deal with yourself when you go to sleep."

Mildred Bond Roxborough, NAACP
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress 2011
Interview completed by Julian Bond for the Southern Oral History Program
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/multimedia/mildred-bond-roxborough.html

INTERVIEWER: Back to the NAACP for a moment, I think many people think of the NAACP primarily as a legal organization. It's an organization that achieved change through legal means through the courts. Do you think this fairly characterizes the NAACP?

MS. ROXBOROUGH: No.

INTERVIEWER: Why not?

MS. ROXBOROUGH: Well, one of the first executive orders that President Roosevelt--not one of the first ones, but an executive order that President Roosevelt issued about the arms services, the preliminary one, was done as a result of the NAACP's lobbying and campaigning and the fact that Ms. Roosevelt was on our board of directors. Walter White and Ms. Roosevelt had a good relationship, and it was possible to get Ms. Roosevelt to work with Walter White and Phillip Randolph, and to get President Roosevelt to understand that an executive order desegregating federal installations should be issued. Of course that wasn't integration, but it was a first step. That was done without any legal action.

The first civil rights law was achieved primarily through lobbying and under the aegis of Clarence Mitchell, the Washington Bureau. Again, that historic was passed by congress as a result of lobbying. It was within the confines of reality, but it wasn't an illegal act. I think the public accommodations are a lot of the same things. There are so many things which widely affect our society, which the NAACP inspired, led and accomplished, which were not legal actions; such actions as far as litigation is concerned.

INTERVIEWER: Again, this may be redundant. Why is it that many people think of the NAACP as primarily a legal organization and these other activities that you've mentioned aren't associated in the public mind with the NAACP?

MS. ROXBOROUGH: I suspect one of the reasons is our lawyers appeared before the Supreme Court so many times. Former general counsel Robert Carter had made some 36 appearances before the Supreme Court and won about 30 of those cases. Before that, Thurgood Marshall, before he became a justice when he was NAACP counsel, appeared before the Supreme Court. I can't remember the exact number now, but it was more than two dozen times and of course most of those cases were won. This of course, the publicity of these cases, set in the minds of people that legal action is responsible for our progress in this country, and to an important extent it is. Without the grass roots lobbying and without the meticulous work of putting before our congressman both on local, state, and federal levels the need to enact certain laws and the pressure from the grass roots, we would not be where we are today.

Sam Mahone, Civil Rights Activist
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress 2011
Interview completed by Hasan Jeffries for the Southern Oral History Program
http://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0063/

Excerpt: 56:55 – 1:03:21

Hasan Jeffries: And so, you sort of migrated back, to a certain extent, to Americus.

Sam Mahone: Yeah.

HJ: Because now you're spearheading this effort to keep the Americus Movement alive on the minds and in the memories of people. Could you just say a word about that?

SM: That is correct. That is correct. In 2007, myself and several other veterans of the Americus Movement decided we were going to convene on Americus once again to—because one of the things we recognize as Movement veterans is that a lot of us hadn't passed on these stories to our kids. A lot of them had no idea what some of their parents have been through. A lot of the history had been lost. A lot of these significant things that we talked about, in terms of the Americus Four and the women who were arrested for trying to vote—all of this was going to be lost if we didn't take up the mantle and try to collect this information and put it out there.

So, we met in Americus in 2007. We met at a place which was our Ground Zero, a place called Barnum's Funeral Home. That was one of the places where we would—a funeral director and his whole family had allowed us to use his place for a meeting place. He was the sole bail bondsman for the Americus Movement. People got arrested; he was the only bondsman who would put bail for us.

We went back and met his daughter, who was one of the—who was also incarcerated at Leesburg, who is now the director of the funeral home there. She allowed us to come there, and we met once again. And we decided that every two years, we're going to have a tribute. And our long range goal was to somehow either build or constitute a museum there to house the materials that we had begun to collect. And we were all about the business of collecting photographs, some of us had kept things from that time, flyers.

We had formed a newsletter among the students at that time and we published the newsletter out of the SNCC House with an old mimeograph machine. It was called "The Voice of Americus and Southwest Georgia." It was a six-page mimeograph, and we assigned people as reporters, you know. We had people going to other counties, you know, reporting on what happened in this county, you know. We have copies of those that we've kept in our archives. And so, that was the long range mission.

The other mission had to do with trying to provide scholarships for kids who were doing things *today* in their communities, service things in their communities. We have started a mentoring program of kids, trying to get adults to mentor kids who we see falling through the cracks, you know. And that mission has led us on a lot of different paths. We are connecting with the

grandkids of some of the veterans of the Movement, who had no idea that their parents were involved.

The fascinating thing is that each celebration we bring out the photographs and we went through all the newspapers that covered the Americus Movement. The *Americus Times-Recorder* literally did no reporting, because they didn't want the word to get out. But papers like the *Atlanta Journal*, *Columbus Ledger*, *Macon Telegraph*, *Atlanta Daily World*—we combed through their archives and we reproduced the news articles, photographs, and we [1:00:50] kind of crude display because we just blew it up with what we had, Xerox machines. At some point, we want to get these things digitized and make a better presentation. But we have these four by six framed pieces that we display every celebration.

And on one occasion, we had—a young lady walked through the—and she was looking at the photographs. She saw a picture of a woman who was pregnant and she said, "That's my mother," okay, "and that's me in her belly!" [Laughter] You know? So, her mother had not told her what she had done. And she just literally wept at that time, because she had no idea that her mother was one of those foot soldiers during that time.

So, it's those things like that that propels you even more to know that the work you're doing is important. So, we're committed to seeing this project through to fruition. We're trying to make some connections with the local university there, who are going to help us with our oral history project. And, hopefully, other things will come as a result, also, as well. This happens to be Jimmy Carter's alma mater, as well, in Americus.

HJ: So, it's not just about—it *is* about, very much about remembering the Movement, but it's also about keeping the spirit of the Movement alive. SM: Exactly, exactly, exactly. We want to—in fact, the whole idea of the scholarship is to nurture a whole new generation of young activists, to get them to see that they stand on the shoulders of some people who have just made some tremendous sacrifices. And we want them to know that this work has to go on, and it will only go on if they take the initiative and take the lead, because the baton has been passed to them. And so, we *expect* them to do it, you know. It's expected of them to do that. And so, that's been our mission. Every two years we do that.

HJ: Sam Mahone, thank you very much.

SM: Thank you. Appreciate it.

Purcell Conway, Civil Rights Activist
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress 2011
Interview completed by Joseph Mosnier for the Southern Oral History Program
http://loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/multimedia/purcell-conway.html
(6:08 min)

Purcell Conway: Now, uh, I recall after the Civil Rights Act was passed, we were, we were, we were kind of pressed to get people to go out to, uh, test, uh, the newly enacted law and we did have people coming in, uh, from out of town, uh, a lot. Uh, I, uh, went out myself on, uh, one demonstration, uh, to St. Augustine Beach, uh, and with a group of, uh, uh, four other teens and this white man.

He drove us out, a tall white man, I think his name was Al Lingo, drove us out to the beach, and we were in the surf maybe about, uh, ten, fifteen minutes when you could see this, uh, large crowd of whites coming from, uh, North and South. They were converging on our location and, uh, we weren't too alarmed because they were at a distance, but they kept getting closer and closer. So, uh, Mr. Lingo said, "Well, I, I guess we'd better get back in the car and leave." Uh, there was a young, young, young teenage girl with us, a black girl, and she was running back to the car as fast as she could. Now we were just casually running back. Uh, she got back to the car before us and she locked all the doors and we could not get her to open them. You know, we had enough time to get in the car and drive off. We kept pleading, "Open the door. Open the door." And she was just hysterical, crying. Uh, she was just frightened, just crying, boo, and we kept pleading, "Open the door. Open." She wouldn't open the doors.

So anyhow, the crowd finally converged around the car. They, we were outside. So Al told us to all get on one side of the car. And, uh, they were taunting. They were threatening. Uh, uh, they went to, uh, one truck and they put out angular weights. Their intent was to bound our hands and feet and take us as far out into the surf as they could and, uh, drop us. And I recall standing there thinking, "Well, Lord, I didn't think I'd go out this way." Now like I said, non- violence was a tactic. My life on the line, you're coming after me. I'm going to make sure that I leave a mark and that was, that was my thing. I was pretty much self-trained in what I thought was a little karate at the time. Uh, so I said, "Alright, well, first guy that comes out me, I got to do what I got to do." But I, uh, I thought about it. I said at one time, well, maybe, uh, uh, uh a run here or there might help us. I said, well, look, I'm in the white neighborhood. I wouldn't know where to run. There's no place to run. I mean, it's all white folk. And at that time, uh, my mindset was that, uh, most of the whites just hate black people. I don't know why, but they just hate us. So I, I just, I had very little trust [30:00] for, uh, uh, pretty much whites, uh, at that time, short of this man that we were with, and I'm, just well, maybe this is God's will. I said, well, if this is God's will, uh, I have to accept it.

But, uh, uh, one white, uh, kid walked past me and he punched me in the face and cut my lip open. I started to jump back at him. I mean, you've got a large mob there with bats and chains and, uh, the white gentleman, Al Lingo, put his hand across my chest and told me to stand my ground. "Don't fight back. Stand your ground." So as, as hard as that was, I did and then he was hit, I recall, over the head with a pipe. The blood hit me in the face and he collapsed pretty much unconscious next to me and at that time now, you could hear at a distance a police car siren

faintly. You could hear it and seconds passed. The, uh, the sound grew loud, louder and louder until at a distance, I could see, uh, coming from the South headed north, this police car, this one lone police car. And as they got closer, the mob dispersed because I think they felt they had killed, uh, this white guy, Al, that they hit. I think they, I, I thought the guy, I felt I thought his head crack open, but, uh, they, they dispersed. Uh, uh, help was called. Uh, he was taken to the hospital and we were taken back to Washington Street.

And, uh, I'll never forget. Hosea Williams was so angered, he said, "Alright. They think they're going scare us away from the beach. We're going to come back stronger." So with that, the, uh, a second demonstration was organized and a large group—uh, this occurred about two weeks later, uh—went back to St. Augustine Beach and I recalled, uh, getting off the bus, a quarter of, uh, helmeted police that we walked down between to the water and I think, I forgot the uh, the pastor's name, uh, uh, that was leading the front of the march. But, uh, whoever was in charge of the troopers at that time, uh, uh, came over to the group. This time I made sure I was going to be in the front. I said, "Well, if I've got to go today, I'm going to jail. I'm, I'm going to be in the front of this march." Because I was still upset. I was hit in the face and, uh, and what have you, but, uh, this policeman, state trooper approached, uh, the front of the group and he told us, "Well, uh, a little problem. Uh, before you can get in the water, we have to, uh, clear it of all these hostile whites in the water. So give us a few minutes to clear it, but I assure you, you will go into the ocean today."

Joseph Mosnier: This is a state trooper.

PC: A state trooper. So we stood there on the, the edge of the surf. Alright, uh, they went in just about waist deep, the troopers, to force this angry mob out of the water. I have never to this day seen a melee like it occurred that day. Uh, the whites in the water had two-by-fours, chains, bats, and the fight was on. I mean, it lasted, to, to me about fifteen, twenty minutes, but the Klan and their sympathizers were beaten into submission.

JM: By white troopers?
PC: By white troopers. I could not believe it. Now I'm really confused now.
JM: Yeah, yeah.
PC: Because I'm saying, "Wow, I can't understand these white men beating up the other white men. That's, that's a new one for me." I, you know, I, I was really shocked, but it was, a, a melee. They were knocking, uh, some of the Klansmen and their sympathizers out and then dragging them up to the, the shoreline and dropping them and going back in for more. When I say they were beaten into submission, believe me. I stood there and watched it. I could not believe it and when it was over, this man in charge of these state troopers came back up to our group and he said, "Well, look, okay. I think it's safe for you to go in now. I, I can't guarantee the quality of the water, but it is safe for you to go in now."

Derrick Bell, Harvard Law Professor
National Visionary Leadership Collection (AFC 2004/007)
Library of Congress American Folklife Center
Advice To Young Americans
Interviewer: Camille O. Cosby, 2005-06-22
http://tinyurl.com/TPS-CRM4

Camille Cosby: What advice would you give to young African Americans today about activism, about their future? Anything that you want to say about that.

Derrck Bell: I think sort of an updated version of what my parents told me. That you need to be the best person you can even in the face of all of this and don't try to sugar coat it. And I think with my own children, it was so hard to get across what y parents got across to me. One of my sons said to me when he was young, "Dad, you and Mom keep talking about this racism. What's that got to do with me? " And of course, because they're living in a nice middle class house, my kids never had…….they always had the children's bathroom. I was raised with three children, two parents, one bathroom. We went someplace and stayed at a cottage. They came back, "This is our room but Mom, Dad, where is our bathroom? So it's much harder for them.

But I think it is very important and I kid, chide Lenora. I said, "You're really getting them through college. I mean through high school and then they'll go on to college. What about the glass ceilings and the discrimination treatment. "Oh", she said, "we'll take care of that in its own time."

CC: But let's take care of what's going on here now.

DB: Yes! Let's get them educated first.

CC: But in terms of African Americans, the young African Americans in relationship to your pessimism about advances during the Civil Rights Movement, Brown vs Board of Education and all. Is there some reality that they need to deal with as they move along here.

DB: You know some people say to me in book reviews and readings, "You're too discouraging to our young people." But it's like racism is permanent. I think that telling the truth as you see it is never discouraging. It can be enlightening

This little white guy up in Boston. He must be in his late 80s but he is still on the case. He wrote to me after reading, "The Face at the Bottom of the Well" talking about the permanence of racism. He said, "You know, Derrick (Harry Seldis [unclear] is his name) when people used to

ask me how long is racism going to last, I would say four hundred years. But I wouldn't believe it and it wouldn't be satisfying to them." Then he said, "Then I read your book!" And he said, "I got it! I got it! Racism is permanent! It's always going to be here!" And he said he was free.

He had this little office. I guess he had some trust money or something. He ran this little civil rights office. He had been running it for years. And now he was going to all his friends and saying, "You know racism's permanent?" He said he recognized that if you looked at it that way then when you had a little success you could celebrate it. But when you had the setbacks and defeats, you weren't defeated. You see because this was part of the thing. You kept going. He said that his example was the alcoholic. That in order for the alcoholic going to various sessions to start getting a grip on it is to stand up and say, I am John Ones. I am an alcoholic and I will always be an alcoholic but today I am going to try to get through without taking a drink.

Ruby Sales, Civil Rights Activist
Civil Rights History Project Library of Congress, 2011
Interviewer: Joseph Mosnier
http://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0007/

Excerpt 1:04:00 – 1:09:00

Ruby Sales: Yes. I think that, um, I prefer to call it, in retrospect, the Southern Freedom Movement, because it was not only a movement for civil rights, but it was also a movement for human dignity. It was also a movement to abolish the violence and terrorism that whites executed against black people for more than a hundred years during segregation. It was also a movement that – where we wanted to move from the small spaces that segregation pressed us down into larger spaces that gave us expression: creative, political, and social expression.

And the reason why I say it was a Southern Freedom Movement, on the other hand, is that the results of this movement not only humanized black people but it had the possibility of opening up the world for white people so that they could lead a more meaningful life. And I – the other part about being a movement is that this was not an event. This was a dynamic process that was connected to many events that had happened in the black community, like the student movement, uh, the Southern Negro Youth Cooperative in the 1940s. So, we just didn't spring up out of nowhere. And so that, the other part about the Southern Freedom Movement is that there was a direct connection between the aims of southern black education and the ultimate explosion of the Southern Freedom Movement.

And I think that when you limit it to "civil rights," you obscure, first of all, the horrors of segregation. You do not have to come to terms with the violence. You do not have to come to terms with the economic oppression. You do not have to come to terms with white people who wanted to turn black schools into plantations. You do not have to come to terms with the fact that no black girl was safe from rape in that society. *No black girl was safe from rape in that society*. You obscure all of that. And, at the same time, you obscure the long hard years of black struggle and the blood and the sacrifice that we have poured into that struggle. I think that it does not do justice by limiting it to – and it's really not *accurate* to limit it to the Movement.

And one other point I want to make about that is that, when we look at Rosa Parks, people often think that she was – she did that because of her civil rights and wanting to sit down on the bus. But she also did that – it was a rebellion of maids, a rebellion of working class women, who were tired of boarding the buses in Montgomery, the public space, and being assaulted and called out-of-there names and abused by white bus drivers.

And that's why that Movement could hold so long. If it had just been merely a protest about riding the bus, it might have shattered. But it went to the very heart of black womanhood, and black women played a major role in sustaining that movement. And so, that's why I think it's really important to see the larger context. I don't think a civil rights movement could have lasted as long as this movement did without the cultural nuances of God, without the theology, without the intimacy, without the connections, and without the strong desire to be first-class human beings.