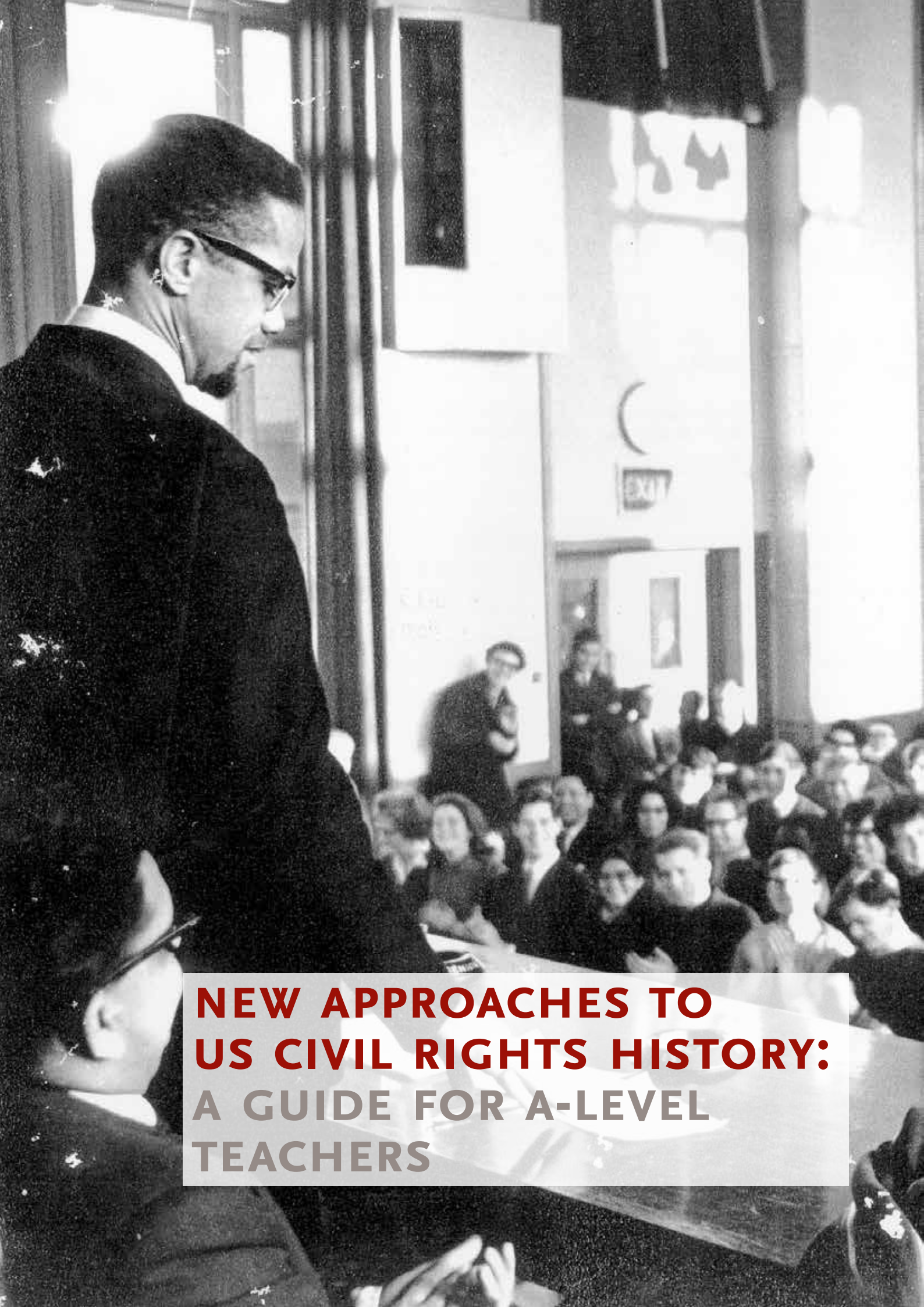

NEW APPROACHES TO US CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY: A GUIDE FOR A-LEVEL TEACHERS

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A Brief Introduction to a Long Civil Rights Movement

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The primary aim of this booklet is to summarize the main developments in histories and cultural studies scholarship on the US civil rights and Black Power movements written since 2005. The booklet is intended for UK history teachers, rather than their students, though it is made freely available to anyone who might be interested in the topic. It prioritizes new approaches and interpretations to this history, especially those we know from exam board specifications and our advisory group of teachers, are of greatest relevance to how the subject is covered in US history modules at A-Level.

The past fifteen or so years have seen an impressive growth in the study of the US black freedom struggle. They have also been characterized by what one historian called a 'remarkable renaissance' – a moment when lively and innovative work, produced by scholars from across several disciplines, refreshed how we interpret and frame the US black freedom struggle.[1] No one will look back on this period and charge that the field lacked ambition. A burst of new archival discoveries and interpretations led the way, prompting some to suggest a need to 'reinterpret, if not rewrite, the history of the civil rights movement.'[2] US legal history perhaps came closest to realizing this goal, flourishing in these years, and offering in outline 'a new civil rights history.'[3] The work of the economic historian Gavin Wright also brought renewed attention to the Civil Rights and Voting Right acts of the mid-1960s. If the effects of those laws were distributed unevenly, Wright argued that they prompted 'a true revolution' to the US South, marking 'a fundamental break with past trends and behavior' across the region.[4] Broader patterns in historical writing, particularly the advance of transnational history, have also had an effect, lengthening the field's horizon. Indeed, much of the best work now sets America's civil rights movement alongside movements for decolonization in Africa and Asia as a series of postwar insurgencies.

Yet, for all of the advances made by scholars in these years, public understandings of the American civil rights movement – particularly, though not only, in the US – have proven stubbornly unchanging. American national memory largely continues to enlist the movement's history as evidence of the country's democratic traditions, running it alongside those of the American Revolution and the US Civil War as one element of a civic Trinity. At a moment when some popular uses of this civil rights memory have become entangled with legal assaults on the political gains made during the 1960s, and when formal measures are being passed to restrict how such histories can be taught in US high schools, efforts to inspire better understandings of this history are more urgent than ever. It was against this backdrop, and as difficult questions crashed through British political life about the appropriate ways in which

to reckon with our own histories of racial coercion and oppression, that this project took shape.

What follows departs from the premise that if scholars are to change how this important subject is widely understood, we need to write for audiences other than ourselves. We have taken inspiration from sibling projects, and have tried to heed the advice of those US historians now thinking afresh about 'how we might share our scholarship with a wider public.'[5] The thirteen contributors were first-year students, many on the University of Manchester's History and American Studies degree, and their essays summarize some of the major developments in and works of historical scholarship. Their involvement reflects our programme's commitment to training students to think about how historical knowledge operates in contemporary society, and of the importance of engaging audiences outside the academy.

We focus here on studies published since 2005, and do so for two reasons. Firstly, unlike in earlier years, there has been no attempt to synthesize recent historical and related scholarship, certainly none that has addressed a wider audience of readers.[6] Secondly, we take 2005 as our loose starting point because that year saw the publication of a landmark article by the southern historian Jacqueline Dowd Hall, which revitalized and recast many of this field's foundational debates. Writing in the *Journal of American History*, Hall argued for scholars to recover what she called the 'long civil rights movement.' The framework reclaims the 1930s and 1940s as a formative period in this movement's genesis, weighting the pendulum of historical interpretation decidedly towards continuity. The Second World War was 'a major watershed' in the growth of activism, and represented what Glenda Gilmore calls an 'enormous departure' from preceding years.[7] These earlier decades were, in Hall's writing, 'more than a mere prelude to the drama proper', being the 'decisive first phase' of the US civil rights movement. America's civil rights movement neither burst forth in the mid-1950s, nor culminated a decade later with the triumphant passage of national legislation, as the 'tired chronologies' of some older histories, and many popular accounts have it.[8]

Whether one finds the idea of a 'long civil rights movement' persuasive or not, it is now a firm fixture of the field. At the time of my writing, Hall's original article has been cited in almost 1500 articles and books. And it has been contested and argued with productively. The historian Steve Lawson suggests we attend to the 'long origins of the short civil rights movement' instead, arguing that the 'accomplishments' of the 1960s 'remains unparalleled.'[9] And at least one important group of historians has also judged the impact of the Second World War to have been 'decidedly ambiguous.'[10]

Locating the emergence of America's civil rights movement in the 1930s and 1940s, is not only about getting our dates right. It is about sharpening the sense we have of the forces that prompted, propelled, and patterned civil rights activism. Scholars now see this as a 'dynamic freedom movement', never one dimensional, always resistant to neat generalizations.[11] This was not only, or primarily a movement for

the attainment of voting rights, but also one, at different moments, engaged in outlawing discrimination in housing and jobs, in defeating the armies of fascism, in eradicating imperialism, in righting police brutality, and, more recently, in dismantling America's criminal justice system. Above all, though, it was a movement anchored by a sense that economic inequality was inextricably linked to most other forms of discrimination.

It was therefore in the 1930s, amid widespread worker activism and the New Deal's favourable legislation, that labour organizing became a cornerstone of America's modern civil rights movement. The 'long civil rights movement' folded out of the alliance that developed in these years between labour and civil rights organizations – a partnership historian Robert Korstad has called 'civil rights unionism'. Activists had long recognized how US capitalism depended on, and reinforced racial (and gender) discrimination. But starting in the mid-1930s, industrial unions became mass, interracial organizations, lessening the virulent racism of earlier craft unions, and bringing unskilled and semi-skilled workers into their orbits. The view that 'labor rights are civil rights' was a commonplace among tobacco workers in North Carolina and Virginia – including those shown below picketing the Piedmont Leaf Tobacco company in 1946; in the car factories of Detroit; rail yards of Chicago; the shipyards of Newport News, Virginia; the food processing plants of southern California; and many of the mail rooms of the US Postal Service.[12] For those teaching OCR's specification, 'civil rights unionism' is an invaluable tool for explaining and examining these forces.

Although the names of many who advanced civil rights unionism have 'been largely lost to history', historical studies in the last fifteen years have compelled us to see civil rights unionism as a transformative presence in the lives of activists, especially many working-class women.[13] Recent studies have reminded us of activists such as Emma Tenayuca, in Texas, who organized thousands of Mexican American women through campaigns that made demands for improved pay and conditions part of a broader struggle against racial discrimination; Rose Billups in Detroit, who helped to forge a militant union of black autoworkers, and put community issues on labor's agenda; and Esther Cooper Jackson, who worked with the Southern Negro Youth Congress, a vanguard in the labor-oriented civil rights agenda. It was amid this context that Walter White, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP], declared a 'new order of things' had come into view.[14]

While the rising salience of these concepts has thrown light onto forgotten figures, it has also brightened the silhouettes of more familiar ones. Martin Luther King, Jr. is now cast 'not only as a civil rights hero', but, as historian Michael Honey writes, 'also as a labor hero.'[15] In contrast to the large multi-volume biographies of King that held sway more than two decades ago, scholars in the past fifteen years have recovered 'the radical King'.[16] They have foregrounded his campaigns to win passage of a freedom budget, his 'all-out war against poverty', and his attempts to address everyone who was 'perishing on a lonely island of poverty.'[17] It was this King who became the first major

public figure to speak out against the war in Vietnam – and who did so by recognizing how poverty, political disenfranchisement, and violence were all symptoms of US capitalism and the country's 'spiritual death.'

We know that treatments of King in many A-Level History textbooks tend to eradicate these aspects of his activism, and to brush past the last few years of his life.[18] Recent scholarship by contrast offers a wealth of detail about these later years, and they remind us that even though King became 'more overtly radical' from the mid-1960s on, his radicalism, and especially his bristling critiques of capitalism, 'did not just appear in his last tumultuous years.' Rather it was, as Sylvie Laurent argues, 'present consistently throughout his life.'[19] This urgently needs to be factored into how we present this pivotal and complex figure.

King is not alone in undergoing this treatment, for biography has remained a sturdy genre of civil rights scholarship. Recent uses of it, though, have expanded the gallery of subjects, and has been particularly used to recover women whose activism was previously ignored or abridged. Such works have frequently highlighted the steadfast dedication shown by figures such as journalist and political campaigner Anna Arnold Hedgeman; legal theorist and scholar Pauli Murray; community organizer Fannie Lou Hamer; Constance Baker Motley, the first black woman to argue a case before the US Supreme Court, and the first to be appointed to the federal judiciary; and Rosa Parks. It was Parks's 'lifetime of political service' that was most salient in Jeanne Theoharis's 2013 study, which showed the importance of Parks' 'decades of political work' before the Montgomery Bus Boycott vaulted her to national fame, in 1955, as well as the 'forty years of political work in Detroit *after* the boycott.'[20]

If biography tends to spotlight what is remarkable about a life, recent examples of it by civil rights historians have reworked those formulas. In recovering the achievements that marked Motley out as 'a singular figure', or made Hedgeman 'an exceptional woman', studies have attended to what historian Barbara Ransby calls the 'network of contacts' and 'sisterly support' among black women activists.[21] This latter move testifies to the broader conviction that gender, as historian Steve Estes argued in 2005, was 'deeply embedded within this overtly racial conflict.[22] Recent work has greatly enriched our grasp of the concept's influence, building on Estes' pioneering work on the 'masculinist strategies of racial uplift,' to capture how the civil rights movement was 'rooted in African-American women's long struggle against sexual violence,' and, in Ruth Feldstein's absorbing study of black female entertainers, to the ways in which black activism and nascent feminism were increasingly interlaced.[23]

The shear volume of scholarship in this field has also been accompanied by an effort on the part of many scholars to make this history 'harder to simplify, appropriate, and contain.'[24] There are two ways in which this has shaped how we convey the material to those we teach. The first concerns our need to recognize that for activists 'the path forward was far from smooth'. Many organizers encountered resistance at every

turn, 'in tandem' with their own incremental achievements. To recount the history of this movement as only a series of unfolding successes is to overlook how it was 'continuously and ferociously contested'.[25] No root metaphor has so far been coined to express this back-and-forth, advancement-and-setback quality – though the British historian Adam Fairclough's earlier characterization of the decade after the Second World War as defined by 'two steps forward and one step back' is helpful.

Resistance to black political gain not only 'arose in tandem' with activism, it also took many forms. The popular imagination still associates segregation's doughty defenders with the enraged figures of the Citizens Council, the extremists of the Ku Klux Klan, or bombastic police commissioners. But historians now discern 'more civil forms of white resistance,' too.[26] The latter includes the 'practical segregationists' operating in states like Mississippi, who, through 'grudging and measured compliance' with federal laws, made modest public concessions only to delay, and often diminish, more radical challenges to white supremacy – a crucial factor in stifling, and limiting, later activism.[27]

It is no more correct to minimize the diversity of actions among the movement's conservative opponents than it is to expect unanimity of opinion among civil rights activists or groups. Recognizing that America's civil rights movement was always shaped by a rich internal conversation among a diverse ensemble of agents and agendas is the second way in which this theme of complexity has taken root in recent scholarship. There were probably as many opinions about the direction the movement should take at any point, as there were activists within it. Not uncommonly 'disagreement flourished' between lesser-known lawyers and activists, among different organizations, across generations and classes, and over the meaning and desirability of equality.[28] Local activists affiliated with national groups, such as the NAACP, adapted larger campaigns to suit local circumstances, prioritizing certain issues, and 'distinguish[ing] greater from less evils.'[29]

All of this produced a style of activism that the legal scholar Tomiko Brown-Nagin has called 'pragmatic civil rights'. It was a stance characterized by a tendency on the part of activists to try on different poses only to cast some aside and advance others. 'We've gone through different patterns of struggle, we've struggled in different ways,' Malcolm X observed in 1964.[30] At times grassroots activists were stalwart proponents of integration, and sometimes they worked within the structures of segregation. '"I have never been *just* an integrationist,"' Rosa Parks once observed.[31] Even the few black activist-lawyers, such as Constance Baker Motley, who became federal judges, displayed 'judicial pragmatism' in their court decisions, reaching judgments based not rigidly on politics or personal identity, but guided by the case, the circumstances, and the law.[32]

The purpose of these two strands of complexity is not to confound, or unnecessarily complicate how we convey the history of US civil rights. But it is to deepen our students' appreciation of the contingencies and layers *within* this movement, and to

strengthen their awareness of the political negotiations and contests that happened *between* the movement and its opponents. Capturing all of this is not an easy task in any setting. But it is a crucial one in helping students to a sharper understanding of what Edexcel calls the 'changing patterns and approaches' of civil-rights activism across the twentieth century.

The chronological extension of civil rights scholarship to the early twentieth century has been accompanied by the field's geographic expansion. Studies have attended to sites 'other than courts, legislative chambers, and street protests,' and they have established beyond doubt the importance of such activism in the urban north.[33] While this latter move was already underway before 2005, it is now found in clear resolution, collectively called 'Freedom North Studies.' Such work has been distinguished by its attempts to examine how racial segregation operated through financial institutions, administrative practices, and government-led interventions, including urban renewal and highway construction programmes that remade US cities from the mid-1940s. Black and minority urban communities in the North were also subjected to a pernicious conjunction of state neglect and violence. Law enforcement agents 'overpatrolled and under-protected' minority communities, while people of colour were 'medically underserved but also overexposed to the worst jeopardies of medical practice' in these contexts.[34] Out of these structures cascaded stark inequalities in education, health, employment opportunities, and social services.

It is now commonplace to think of civil rights activism, and the conditions of segregation that prompted such organizing, as being national in scope. Increasingly, though, scholars have started to think about the ways in which civil rights in the North and South were, as historian Thomas Sugrue writes, 'intimately intertwined'.[35] Migration offered one set of threads, linking individuals, families, and communities across regions. The organizational strands of national civil rights groups, with headquarters in New York and Atlanta, and offices most other places, offered another. And all were overlaid by a thickening web of media and communications infrastructure, which kept activists in one setting informed of events and outcomes elsewhere. The sit-ins that engulfed southern towns and cities in the spring of 1960 were thus described by legal scholar Christopher Schmidt as 'spontaneous and independent' in their organization, while also spread by informal alliances of 'communication between protest communities.'[36] Black activism on college campuses in the later 1960s was similarly dispersed and densely interlinked, 'indigenous and local,' and yet patterned by what Martha Biondi calls a 'character of simultaneity.'[37] These emerging perspectives will soon furnish us with new ways of thinking – supplanting earlier attention to local/national dynamics with approaches sensitive to the exchanges that took place between North/ South, and between old/ young activists.

If the concept of migration allows scholars to follow linkages between dispersed communities, then focusing on generations is currently encouraging them to slice through the social composition of this movement. Exemplary of this latter perspective

is Donna Murch's study of California's Bay Area. Hundreds of thousands of black migrants moved to this region in the 1940s, drawn there by booming wartime industries, such that cities like Oakland became 'a coastal extension of the South.' These communities were textured by these transplants' 'collective experience as migrants *and* their age.'[38] In fact generation is now a core feature of civil rights scholarship, and it has been used to unpick the role that distinct age groups played (young people organizing alongside their elders), as well as the relationship between society's successive strata (young people who become those elders). Some now identify 'Malcolm's children', and the 'Till generation' as distinct cohorts cast in the image of particular figures or events. A flush of recent studies have also embraced young people as what political scientist Jeanne Theoharis calls 'serious political players.'[39] Those who joined the NAACP's youth councils and college chapters were instrumental in accelerating that organization's desegregation campaigns in the 1940s, for example, and middle and high school students frequently found themselves 'on the front lines of the civil rights movement' in states like Mississippi in the 1960s.[40] One other actor largely based in the North was US media organizations, an ascendant presence in society in general, and one that scholars now recognize not as an adjacent commentator on civil rights, but a key participant in the arena.

Everyone from activists to presidents respected the media as a force able to summon the moral pressure needed to pass meaningful legislation. The activist John Lewis, who grew up fifty miles south of Montgomery, Alabama, was galvanized when he read about that city's bus boycott, and kept 'up with what was going on, on radio, in newspapers.'[41] Those opposed to the movement remained no less respectful of the power of news organizations. Having seen how coverage of Montgomery's year-long bus boycott drew interest from national journalists, swelling sympathy and federal scrutiny, southern newspaper editors thereafter moved to 'keep racial struggles out of the public eye.'[42] When a similar boycott began two years later in Birmingham, Alabama, it received little mention in that city's press.[43]

Studies of the role that the media played in covering civil rights have so far scrutinized newspapers; mass circulation magazines, such as *Life* and *Time*, and especially their use of photographs; and, less extensively, television. Such work, which has largely been advanced by scholars with backgrounds in American Studies, film, and history of art programmes, has shown that media organizations not only commentated on the civil rights revolution, but frequently made it. This work reminds us how media in general, especially following the introduction of television, became a far more pervasive feature of US society after mid-century than it had once been. The structure of the television industry, and its enlarged cultural position, not only overlapped with the 'classical phase' of the civil rights movement, in the 1950s and 1960, it was assisted to that status and scale *through* its coverage of the movement.

While the study of media has, in the past fifteen years, been distinguished by its attention to a diversity of forms, it has uniformly reinforced how reporters and news

groups depicted civil rights in stark moral terms – as a struggle between African American activists, 'mute but dignified and orderly figures in crisp business attire,' and crude law enforcement officers and white vigilantes.[44] Media organizations craved 'the drama of the clash' between the simplified groups it created, delighting in 'a narrative of spectacular violence.'[45] Nightly news programmes offered up this 'televised morality play' for viewers, while mass-circulation magazines filtered their coverage through what historian of art Martin Berger calls a 'predictable', 'limited,' and 'remarkably similar' set of images, cropping some to amplify such distinctions, or pairing with captions that stamped them with those meanings.[46]

These were of course not the only images that photographers took. But they are the photographs that Berger argues got 'endlessly reproduced', and which became inseparable from this history, becoming 'seared' into the national – and in fact international – imaginary.[47] Such photographs, alongside the sibling images that appeared on television, ironically drained black people of agency, fixing them 'in the timeworn position of victim and supplicant,' and allowing white readers to imagine themselves 'bestowing rights on blacks.'[48] All of this is not much less true in the present than it was in past. What images do students tend to see and associate with the US civil rights movement today?

Activists were alert to the ways in which US news organizations operated, and recent scholarship has begun to measure the degree of 'agency' they possessed in shaping how they were portrayed. Activists and civil rights groups, they remind us, emerged alongside America's mid-century media revolution, and many displayed what the visual culture scholar Leigh Raiford calls 'an expansive media consciousness.'[49] If media organizations tried to 'frame' civil rights and Black Power groups, the media studies scholar Jane Rhodes has shown that the Black Panther Party were 'not mere victims' of such coverage, though increasingly scholars understand that these were imbalanced exchanges.[50]

In the last five years, scholarship has punctured the 'heroic role' that US media organizations claimed for themselves as allies of civil rights groups. They have especially circled in on the biases evident in coverage of northern struggles. 'The media was not so noble when it came to struggles in the North and the West,' Brian Purnell and Jeanne Theoharis write in their recent collection.[51] Newspaper editors were 'disinclined to look for racism in their own backyard,' burying such coverage below the folds, and explaining discrimination in the North 'as less systemic and more happenstance.'[52] Television news compounded the issue, using a different set of terms to frame school and neighbourhood desegregation campaigns there. As media historian Matthew Delmont has shown, coverage of efforts to integrate schools in Boston, San Francisco, and Pontiac, Michigan in the early 1970s, gave those events a national prominence, but denied them 'the same moral clarity' as earlier, better-known events in the South.[53] By far the media's most enduring frame, though, was that which it placed around the waves of destruction that began to engulf US cities in these years.

The violence that ripped through America's cities in the decade after the mid-1960s was widely taken to mark the demise of the country's civil rights movement. This was a result of historical coincidence and prior media neglect – the latter feeding a naïve sense that these 'riots' had erupted 'out of nowhere.'[54] Within two weeks of the Civil Rights Act, in July 1964, Harlem was ablaze, and just five days separated the passage of the Voting Rights Act, the following August, from the oblivion that roiled the Watts neighbourhood. Reporters presented these events as the work of 'agitators' and 'radicals'. *Life* magazine typically judged that the violence in Watts was 'purposeless, patternless,' a view the *Los Angeles Times* cemented when it referred to that city's '"summer carnival of riot."'[55] What such coverage missed was the frustration that had been mounting in black urban communities over decades, and which had grown impatient with the refusal of politicians to take seriously persistent neglect and discrimination. As Martin Luther King, Jr., observed, 'a riot is the language of the unheard.'[56]

Mainstream coverage then – and indeed since – termed these events race riots, and took them as a tear in the historical fabric of black activism. Yet, as H. Rap Brown, leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, reflected following the major disturbances in Newark and Detroit in 1967, '"this ain't no riot, brother."' '"This is a rebellion."'[57] Few historians now refer to these events as race riots, designating them uprisings, or, as Brown preferred, rebellions. As this booklet is finalized, this is a strengthening trend among historians, and it stands as an exciting development in current historical scholarship around the black freedom struggle. No longer are these cataclysms seen as a deviation from the longer patterns of black activism. Rather as historian Elizabeth Hinton argues in her bracing new work, *America on Fire* (2021), they were part of 'a sustained insurgency,' and one that runs down to the present.[58] These terms seem set to become staples of future scholarship, and ones whose absorption this booklet hopes to accelerate among those teaching the subject at A-Level.

As well as recasting how we think about the urban unrest of the 1960s, scholars have, in the past few years, given us better information, and bolder ways to think about this moment. Historian Peter Levy estimates that the total destruction that shook US cities between 1963 and 1972 caused almost $1 billion in property damage (in 2017 dollars).[59] The rebellions claimed the lives of scores of black citizens, including 85 people who died in Watts, Newark, and Detroit, many shot by the police. A further 43 people died in the week-long uprisings following King's assassination in April 1968. In the eight years, from 1964 to 1972, 60,000 people were arrested. This was, Levy writes, the 'greatest wave of social unrest since the Civil War.'[60] He counts 750 urban disorders in these years, and he presses us to see these successive 'long hot summers' as a *collective* event.

Of the fields most transformed in recent years it is treatments of Black Power that clearly stand out. Previously understood as what Peniel Joseph quipped was the 'evil twin' of the civil rights movement, Black Power has been substantially reinterpreted in the past decade.[61] Before the early 2000s, few US historians offered serious

dissent from the contemporary denigration of Black Power, which many mainstream commentators imagined possessed 'few political ideas,' and was impoverished as 'a political strategy.'[62] Typically, then, one historian writing in the mid-1990s judged that Black Power had been 'an inspirational slogan rather than a coherent ideology.'[63]

Current studies have obliterated these older interpretations. They have instead presented Black Power as a multilayered political, social, and cultural movement. Earlier caricatures of activists as hustlers and thugs have been assailed and replaced by perspectives that have attended to the sophistication of their critiques of US structural racism, the ingenuity of their organizing, and their sincerity towards urban communities. These trends have been crowned by the publication of several important biographies. Among the most eminent is Manning Marable's Pulitzer Prize-winning work, which reclaimed Malcolm X as 'a truly historical figure,' and illuminated the many strands of his 'revolutionary vision.'[64] Malcolm's political outlook, Marable argued, was pieced together from a raft of influences and traditions, exemplary of his 'metamorphosis' as a political thinker, his extraordinary talents of 'reinvention.'

Our sense of the reach of Black Power has also been enhanced by the move to place it among 'the global currents of the black freedom struggle'.[65] Alongside books that have described Martin Luther King, Jr's visit to Newcastle, we have read about Malcolm X's travels to Oxford, and, courtesy of the *Black Power Mixtape* (2011), watched footage of Carmichael's trips to Stockholm, and Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver's stay in Algiers. After he was removed from the Nation of Islam, Malcolm spent half of 1964 abroad, mostly in the Middle East and Africa – and also briefly in Manchester, as the cover photograph attests. Like his earlier trips outside the US, these journeys proved a 'transformative experience'.[66] 'His international travels were a response to changes in his outlook,' historian Stephen Tuck writes, 'but they also caused his outlook to change in turn.'[67]

The programmes of later Black Power groups were similarly crossed by global movements for decolonization and anti-imperialism, especially as the shadow of US imperialism darkened across South East Asia. Black Power 'travelled the world' scholars now affirm, circulating 'beyond the borders of the United States,' and interacting with indigenous political cultures.[68] It assumed a commanding place in the Caribbean, where the First Regional Conference on Black Power was held, in 1969. Sean Malloy's vibrant study of the Black Panther Party has positioned that group within 'a long tradition of anticolonial theory', showing it to have been an important actor in Cold War geopolitics.[69] Party members met with officials from Korea, China, and Cuba, and several women activists built informal alliances with Japanese anti-Vietnam activists and the European New Left. The US Panthers also inspired dozens of international affiliates, including the British Black Panther Movement, which formed in Brixton in early 1968. This 'transnational political formation' became a potent force outside the US, and it played a leading role, as Rob Waters persuasively argues, in 'reorienting the politics of race' in Britain through the 1970s and early 1980s.[70]

One expression of Black Power's connection to the Third World was its borrowing of the language of 'colony' to describe the conditions of US black urban neighbourhoods. Amiri Baraka, the poet and activist, pronounced Newark a 'bankrupt ugly colony,' depleted of wealth by white institutions, while the Panthers invoked the term to parallel US military occupations overseas and the policing of American cities.[71] Such language also testifies to these activists' intense commitment to community-based organizing, which fuelled their critiques of America's crumbling urban infrastructure, and fired their efforts to address those failings. It was in this context that the Black Panther Party organized a battery of social and welfare programmes.

All of these, and countless other initiatives happened only though coalitions, flourishing on a latticework of collaboration. Chicago perhaps best exemplifies a trend that was widespread, hosting a multitude of civil rights and Black Power groups, which 'found and forged common ground,' especially around the need to reform the police.[72] It was on that city's north side that a 'rainbow coalition' developed in 1969 between African Americans, Puerto Ricans, and white Appalachian migrants, fused through shared experiences of urban deprivation and police harassment. In Oakland, the Panthers and Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers organized a nationwide boycott of California table grapes, while in the southern Illinoisan city of Cairo, the United Front, an umbrella group of Black Power organizations, depended on donations from the black church, 'an important…source of coalitional support for Black Power.'[73] Once more, prevailing historical interpretations of Black Power resist easy generalization, and emphasize the variety and pragmatism that the movement displayed in particular settings.

'Protest lies on a great chain of being,' the American writer Darryl Pinckney wisely observes.[74] The resurgence of black activism in the past decade, and especially the rise of Black Lives Matter since 2013, has given renewed charge to thinking about the history of black activism in the intervening four decades. This remains of course an ongoing project among a wide group of scholars, but it is possible to detect some emerging positions. Firstly, no longer do scholars write as if this movement ended in the 1960s, or shortly thereafter. 'Black activism was neither over nor not needed in the 1970s,' Harvard historian Ruth Feldstein affirms.[75] Rob Waters similarly dates the demise of radical blackness in British political life to the early 1980s. The energies that advanced America's civil rights revolutions indeed persisted in black communities, though as Thomas Sugrue notes, they did 'take new forms' in later years. An emergent body of work is now tracing their course through black feminist groups, health activist networks, police reform movements, and battles over public housing.[76]

What also seems increasingly evident is the growth in scale of the American state's repression in response to black political mobilizations and the gains made in these years. Black advancement and protest sparked an expansion of policing on an unprecedented scale, and brought about what lawyer Michelle Alexander memorably called 'a new Jim Crow' in the form of mass incarceration. It is these patterns that historians are now inspecting with remarkable ambition – recognizing the degree

to which US investment in such policies was a reaction to earlier advancement and rebellion. In the ongoing work of Elizabeth Hinton, Heather Ann Thompson, and others, we are starting to comprehend how militarized forms of policing and the more punitive sentencing that have accreted in the US since the 1970s have shaped black organizing and politics 'down into our own time.'[77] According to Hinton, the US federal government's response to sustained black protest created 'the cycle': subjecting black and minority urban communities to more intense forms of policing; which sparked moments of black resistance; and in turn provoked more draconian reprisals and legislation. Examining this dynamic offers one way to grapple with this recent and contemporary history. And invites us to reckon with a political culture that has furnished such sharply contrasting legacies over the past four decades.

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2 Danielle McGuire, *At the dark end of the street: black women, rape, and resistance – a new history of the civil rights movement from Rosa Parks to the rise of Black Power* (New York, 2010), xx.
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'Protest at Piedmont Leaf Tobacco Company, 1946'
Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library Photograph Collection, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, US.

Foundations and Formations: A Long Civil Rights Movement

Georgina Mullins

In 2005, historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall introduced her 'long civil rights movement' framework. This framework, which has become integral to historical scholarship, encourages us to think about the periodisation of the US civil rights movement. When did this movement start and end?

Hall's framework directs our attention away from a 'classical phase', focused on the celebrated moments of 1954 to 1965, and relocates it to the grassroots of this movement. Hall identifies the bubbling climate of the 1930s and 1940s as crucial to bringing about a 'rights consciousness' among African Americans. These were the years that historian Robert Korstad characterizes as being shaped by a 'civil rights unionism.' The dawn of this period emerged out of the turmoil of the Great Depression, the inadequacies of the New Deal, the sacrifices of black men in the Second World War, and the stifling racism of the American Federation of Labor [AFL]. All of these factors pedaled the proliferation of black-led unions from the early 1930s on – including the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, affiliates of the Congress of Industrial Organizations [CIO], and broader alliances with the Communist Party [CPUSA]. Under the leadership of black men and women as labour feminists, thousands of black workers were integrated into unions, recognizing their 'individual rights' and their 'labor rights.'

While there were fleeting victories nationally, such as the establishment of the Fair Employment Practices Committee [FEPC] in 1941, what was more enduring from this period was how the activists of this era influenced later civil rights organizing. Although the anti-Communist crusades of the late-'40s and early-'50s inhibited further gains, these Left-leaning formations were pivotal in ensuring that subsequent civil rights platforms incorporated economic goals alongside political aims. This combination is even found in the March on Washington in 1963, which was anchored by demands for freedom *and* jobs.

Civil Rights in the Urban North

Molly Nootт

During the postwar years, African Americans could drink from the same water fountains as white people in New York, sit with white passengers on the bus in Chicago, and even use public restrooms without the fear of arrest in Detroit. Few formal Jim Crow laws existed in the urban North. Yet invisible lines of racial division ringed these northern cities – buttressed by the hyper-segregation of neighbourhoods and extended through racially homogenous public schools. In 1967, speaking to an overflowing crowd in New York City, Martin Luther King, Jr, stated that the racial issue 'is not a sectional but a national problem.'

Even though the liberal North was divided by race, the rights struggle there was overshadowed by the movement in the South. Activists often had to prove that the principle of racial segregation even existed in northern schools – a point highlighted by the New York City school boycott of 1964. The boycott involved 400,000 students, and was done to expose the fact that, despite the *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) decision, northern schools in black neighbourhoods were overcrowded, with few licensed teachers, and half-day schedules for many students. New York City had thirty-two separate school boards to ensure that white neighbourhoods remained segregated. In Detroit, colour-blind postal zones maintained racially restrictive housing, trapping black residents in poorer neighbourhoods. Tensions around housing in Detroit would be a major factor in causing that city's 'long, hot summer' in 1967.

Five million black people settled in the urban North during the postwar migration from the South. In California and elsewhere, black people sought what historian Donna Murch has called 'possibilities unimaginable' in the Jim Crow South. This 'historical interplay between southern migration and Black radicalism,' would intensify in the postwar decades, and would heighten connections between regions. Such patterns, as Murch has shown, meant that the struggle against racial discrimination and segregation was, after 1945, a deeply national movement.

More than a Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr after 1963

Eve Watson

Popular interpretations of Martin Luther King, Jr. have tended to erase the radical views he developed and advocated throughout his life. Such accounts present King as a straightforward champion of nonviolence, diminishing his more critical views to fit his activism into a progressive narrative. Yet throughout his life King expressed support for economic justice, was committed to restructuring America's system of capitalism, and spoke out against the Vietnam War. It was during the last three years of his life – a period often glossed in many accounts – that such beliefs made him a truly controversial public figure.

Standard treatments of King, historian Jacqueline Dowd Hall argues, tend to present a figure 'frozen in 1963'. Such a perspective disregards his later movement for economic justice, including his Poor People's Campaign, in 1967-1968. Through that campaign's Economic Bill of Rights, the group aimed to shift government spending away from Vietnam to a 'guaranteed annual income' for every American. This was supported in King's public calls for a 'revolution' against growing inequalities in wealth.

In April 1967, King delivered his 'Beyond Vietnam' speech at New York's Riverside Church. This made him one of the first major public figures to condemn the Vietnam War. In the speech, King criticized the US government for its imperial policies, and he argued that the war was a 'symptom of a deeper malady within the American spirit,' employing violence to protect America's international investments. King condemned the 'arrogance' of the West for 'investing huge sums' overseas without much concern for those countries' social betterment or the international tensions that such policies created.* One month later, in a speech in Atlanta, he proclaimed that capitalism's 'evils…are as real as the evils of militarism and evils of racism'.**

A richer understanding of King's views is formed by extending the study of his activism beyond 1963, and attending to his growing calls and campaigns for societal reform. In these latter years, King demonstrated unwavering radicalism without any attempt to filter his opinions or to appease politicians. This is a far cry from many popular depictions of him as a moderate, and in turn offers us a sharper perspective on the character of the civil rights movement of these years.

* Martin Luther King, Jr., 'Beyond Vietnam: A time to break silence,' New York, April 4, 1967.
** Martin Luther King, Jr., 'The three evils,' Atlanta, May 10, 1967.

The Till Generation

Cara Barclay

In the aftermath of Emmett Till's murder, in August 1955, African American students and young people came to play a crucial role in shaping and advancing civil rights organizations throughout the US. These young people catalyzed change in several realms, transforming the movement in the early 1960s through innovative methods of protest.

Politicized from a young age, many were stirred to activism by Till's murder. The Chicago-born Till had been visiting his uncle in Money, Mississippi, when he was dragged from his home and brutally murdered. For millions of black children, many born in the North to southern parents, they could identify with Till. United across the nation through fear and frustration, they possessed a growing awareness that these acts of violence could happen to any one of them. Historian Krystal D. Frazier calls them 'the Till Generation' – a group defined by patterns of migration and by a common experience of racial violence.

The memory of Till's murder remained as these young people came of age and as many entered college in the 1960s. Legal scholar Christopher Schmidt credits these students with launching the direct action phase of the movement, beginning with the sit-ins of spring 1960. No longer relying on litigation, or the leadership of older activists, young people transformed the movement to fit their personal experiences and political understandings. In the shadow of the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcom X, nearly two hundred protests erupted on college campus between 1968 and 1969, with one wing of the civil rights struggle evolving into a student-centred movement. Historian Martha Biondi emphasizes how the assertiveness of these black students – almost forgotten today – brought about successful change to the structure of US higher education, which continued through the 1970s.

Till's murder shaped a new generation of civil rights activists – one which developed its own voice, and expanded this movement's reach. It was in these shared experiences that a powerful movement was born to reform the structures and institutions of US society.

Community Builders and Grassroots Organizers

Abigail Cann

In the last decade, there has been growing attention to the place and role of women in the civil rights movement. Tens of thousands of women of all ages, races and classes, proved central to organizing, lobbying, and marching from the 1930s through the 1970s. African American women were denied leadership roles in the movement, resulting in them remaining in the shadows – and sustaining what historian Ashley Farmer has called a popular 'half-truth' about this movement's male-dominated character. But this did not prevent women seeking out opportunities for change. The examples of Rosa Parks and Anna Arnold Hedgeman testify to the vital role women played during the movement's heightened phase, of the 1950s and 1960s, as well as to their lifetime commitment to such organizing.

Born in Marshalltown, Iowa, Hedgeman spent six decades advocating for civil rights. She became the first African American woman to serve in the cabinet of New York Mayor Robert Wagner from 1957 to 1958. A few years later, in 1963, Hedgeman worked tirelessly to recruit from New York's religious organizations for the March on Washington. She brought some 40,000 members of Protestants churches to the nation's capital, and her work showed the importance of grassroots organizers for making possible national events.

Rosa Parks was born in 1913 in Alabama. Her public activism began amid the Second World War, and she joined the Montgomery branch of the NAACP in 1943. This was a decade before that city's bus boycott, which projected her into the national spotlight. Although Parks' role in the boycott is remembered in the popular narrative, her lifelong dedication to the movement, which stretched over five decades, is frequently forgotten. Facing abuse following the boycott, including restricted opportunities for work, Parks moved with her husband to Detroit in 1959. Between 1965 and 1988 she worked for John Conyers, a member of the US House of Representatives. She continued to be an active member of the Detroit NAACP and joined community groups focused on voter registration. Jeanne Theoharis's study of Parks argues that this latter stage in her life is 'treated like a postscript,' while revealing it in fact to have been a lively period in her activist commitments, and a foundation for later Black Power and feminist work.

'Invisible Activists': Ella Baker and Black Women at Mid-Century

Emelia Shaw

Ella Baker was one of the central pillars of the civil rights movement. From 1940 until 1966, she played a pivotal role in the three most influential black freedom organizations of mid-century: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP]; the Southern Christian Leadership Conference [SCLC]; and, the group she helped to establish, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [SNCC]. Although prominent within the NAACP, as director of branches from 1943 until 1946, Baker was neither the first, nor the only black woman in the most important civil right organization of the early twentieth century. Women were in fact responsible for sustaining NAACP branches in the first half of the twentieth-century, and they performed a myriad of roles within it across the US.

Baker's most significant and lasting relationships were with a group of female activists, some of whom still remain unnamed. They formed a powerful yet invisible network of activists who sustained civil rights causes. This group of women, including Ruby Hurley, an activist of non-violent legislative activities, and Lucille Black, the long-serving membership secretary of the NAACP, formed the foundations for later black feminists. Baker's life-long activism reveals a bridge that connected civil rights activism with feminist organizing, and which continued far beyond the 1960s.

Baker helped to redefine the civil rights movement, broadening it from what her biographer Barbara Ransby called a 'single end' to an 'on going means.' Ransby's study, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (2003), described Baker as an 'outsider within,' overshadowed by the better-known men she worked alongside. Such figures included Martin Luther King Jr., and Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP's leading attorney, among others. Yet it is undeniable that Baker's efforts from the 1940s through to the 1960s were vital to the movement's eventual success. For Baker, the civil rights movement was far broader than attaining the right to vote. It was a challenge of gaining acceptance in society, which as seen by the recent Black Lives Matter campaign, is still ongoing.

Civil Rights on the Small Screen

Clara Wicks

Television played a crucial role in influencing mainstream understandings of, and reactions to the US civil rights movement. In the words of media studies scholar Aniko Bodroghkozy, television became the 'chosen instrument of the movement.' By 1961, 91 percent of US households owned a television set, ensuring that the broadcasts of the three main networks – NBC, CBS, and ABC – reached a national audience. Nevertheless, commentators criticized networks in the late 1950s for failing to fulfil their 'public service responsibilities,' and, amid the Cold War, for contributing to a 'poorly informed American public.'* To establish themselves as serious journalists, television networks developed prime-time documentaries, and in 1963 introduced half-hour nightly news programmes, offering neatly packaged stories with evocative visuals. The civil rights movement provided the foundations for television's first on-going national story.

Channels tended to focus their coverage on the US South. They primarily televised mass protests, and emphasized the peaceful goals of black activists, while condemning other forms of activism. Network news was generally sympathetic towards the movement, with journalists lending their support to scenes of peaceful protest. The visual nature of television meant that footage tended to distort the reality of demonstrations. Such images exaggerated, for example, the white participation at the 1963 March on Washington, presenting what Bodroghkozy calls a harmonious 'racial utopia' to maximize sympathy from largely white audiences. Events that became disorderly or unpredictable were often subjected to criticism, such as the arrest of Annie Lee Cooper in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Cooper had been harassed constantly by police while waiting to register to vote, and eventually retaliated. CBS reporters framed her beating by police as justified.

By making the civil rights movement synonymous in these ways with peaceful protest, television set the ground for America's Black Power movement to seem less legitimate. As Peniel Joseph has argued, the national media, including television reporters, 'defined Black Power as violent, angry, controversial and anti-white.'** Television offered US viewers a filtered version of the civil rights movement, one addressed mostly to white audiences, and which ultimately contributed to the sharp divide between peaceful, 'progressive' southern civil rights activists, and the Black Power movement of later years.

* Aniko Bodroghkozy, *Equal time: television and the civil rights movement* (Urbana, IL, 2012), 8.
** Peniel E. Joseph, 'The Black Power movement: a state of the field,' *Journal of American History* 96 (Dec., 2009), 756.

Truth in Photographs

Lucy Armitage

Much of what Americans know about civil rights – at the time, and since – has derived from photographs. News magazines, television broadcasts, and newspapers reprinted and broadcast scores of images of civil rights, many of which won sympathy for social reform.

The historian of art Martin Berger has recently explored these images, and found that the best-known are 'remarkably similar', and continue to be widely circulated today.* The catalogue includes, black school children being attacked by their white classmates; well-dressed black activists being attacked at lunch counters in Greensboro, North Carolina; protesters being knocked over with fire hoses, and set upon by police dogs in Birmingham, Alabama. Most of these now iconic images depict, in one way or another, white-on-black violence. Such images generated widespread sympathy for the movement. But they also, Berger argues, presented black activists as having limited power, and thus reassured anxious white Americans that the racial order was not under threat.

Photographs showing black action, or overt violence against black women, were generally only printed in black newspapers. In spring 1963, during the Children's Crusade in Birmingham, Alabama, a black woman named Annie Lee Cooper was photographed being tackled to the ground by white police officers and beaten. The image was only published in black newspapers, such as the *New York Amsterdam News*. Images of 'blacks exerting power' were rarely published in white newspapers, as it antagonized what Berger calls the preferred aesthetic of white people in control.** The photographs Americans saw – and those they did not see – shaped how the country imagined civil rights during the 1960s. The wider patterns Berger detects in how images of civil rights have been used remain evident today, including in historical textbooks.

* Martin Berger, *Freedom now! Forgotten photographs of the civil rights struggle* (Berkeley, CA, 2014), 9.
** Martin Berger, *Seeing through race: a reinterpretation of civil rights photography* (Berkeley, CA, 2011), 119.

Unsung Heroines: The Politics of Black Female Performers

Ciara Paris

US cultural organizations and media outlets presented platforms of national and international reach by midcentury. Through music, cinema, and dance, black entertainers and artists found a way of bringing the civil rights movement into US culture and society. Many black female entertainers rose to prominence within these industries, and used their talent and positions in the arts to spread awareness of the movement. These women were most influential in the 1950s and 1960s. Many prioritized the success of the movement over their own successes, and faced professional setbacks as a result, including the loss of fans and the boycotting of their music, concerts, and films, especially in southern states.

Black female entertainers faced far greater penalties than their male counterparts when they attempted to channel political activism through their creative work. Politically vocal black female entertainers were often classed as divas, as Harvard historian Ruth Feldstein has shown in her luminous study.* Black female entertainers helped to expose the innate sexism within the civil rights movement, highlighting what Feldstein calls the movement's 'gendered vision of black freedom and culture'.

An example of a black female entertainer who incorporated civil rights activism into her creative work was the internationally renowned jazz singer Nina Simone. Simone raised tens of thousands of dollars for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [SNCC] through her many performances at rallies and benefits, including at the Selma to Montgomery march in 1965. Similarly, the actress Lena Horne used her talent to fight against black stereotypes in Hollywood. The soul singer Aretha Franklin also contributed to the movement, most notably by offering to pay the bail fees for political prisoner Angela Davis in 1970. The creative work, performances, and careers of these and other black women expanded civil rights activism into the cultural sphere, carrying its message to millions, including its many consumers outside the US.

* Ruth Feldstein, *How it feels to be free: black women entertainers and the civil rights movement* (New York, 2013).

Manipulating the Black Power Movement

Bing Baring

In the late-'60s and early-'70s the Black Power movement transformed America's civil rights struggle. The new movement embraced the outlook of Malcolm X, which meant achieving equality 'by any means necessary.' Stokely Carmichael and Angela Davis were among the movement's leading proponents, known for their strident opposition to structural racism and state violence. The emergence of the Black Panther Party, first in Oakland, California in 1966, and then, by 1970, across some sixty US cities, marked the wider embrace of this approach.

The stark differences – in philosophy, tactics and presentation – from earlier civil rights groups were immediately grasped by the US mainstream media. US media organizations frequently distorted or omitted elements of Black Power, often presenting it as excessively radical or violent. Such approaches were evident across coverage in newspapers, television, and on radio. The *New Orleans Press* produced lengthy articles on Black Power, but focused on murders and shootings involving the Panthers, and said little about the Party's 'community survival programs.' In some cases, the press abstained from covering Black Power altogether. These examples demonstrate how mainstream US media tailored the image of Black Power in ways that influenced contemporary perceptions of it.

Larger media corporations, including the television station CBS, interspersed their live broadcasts of Black Power protests with commentators who reassured viewers that police control had been maintained. This associated the image of Black Power with violence and alienated mainstream society. However, the Black Power movement countered this negative portrayal through its own use of the media. Stokely Carmichael was particularly adept at using the media as a means of his own self-representation. As media studies scholar Jane Rhodes notes in *Framing the Black Panthers* (2007), the media was very significant for the movement. During this period Black Power activists and groups disseminated their ideas through various mediums, including in books, music, and visual art. Through such careful presentation these activists tried to reclaim an enduring and powerful image for the movement.

'Malcolm X speaking at the University of Manchester', Dec. 4, 1964
Copy courtesy of Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, Manchester City Council. Permission granted by Najma Rajah.

A 'Great Uprising': Race Riots and the 1960s

Robert Vann

The urban riots of the mid- and late-'60s marked a significant moment in the civil rights struggle. The major riots of the 1960s were in the Watts neighbourhood of Los Angeles (1965), Detroit (1967), Newark (1967), as well as the week-long disturbances following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968. Each saw widespread arrests and violence, with businesses raided and burned, especially those with a reputation of treating African Americans poorly.

It is important to understand that these events were not caused by agitators, as many commentators at the time suggested. *Life* magazine dismissed the destruction in Watts in August 1965 as a 'slag heap of anonymous, purposeless, patternless and leaderless mob frenzies.' In fact disorder was a reaction to the persistent conditions faced by African Americans, which included job discrimination and high unemployment, exploitative rents for dilapidated housing, and crumbling schools. Major urban disorders were also sparked by incidents of police brutality, such as the assault on Newark taxi driver John Smith, whose beating sparked mass protests in the city in spring 1967.

To interpret these events, historian Peter Levy has coined the term, 'The Great Uprising.' It is a term that prompts us to think of the more than 700 urban disorders in these years as an extended moment of political rebellion, not a series of isolated events. The actions of the rioters were an expression of political defiance. Historian Daniel Matlin's study of social psychologist Kenneth B. Clark similarly showed that some prominent African American commentators claimed the riots demonstrated community resilience, the survival of hope for social change.* The riots were in the view of historian Thomas Sugrue part of the wider black insurgency of the 1960s, 'that taped deep roots of discontent but also manifested the political and cultural sensibilities of the era.'**

* Daniel Matlin, *On the corner: African American intellectuals and the urban crisis* (Cambridge, MA, 2013), 868.
** Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet land of liberty: the forgotten struggle for civil rights in the North* (New York, 2010), 350.

'All Power to the People': Community-Based Activism

Andrew Scoltock

The idea that guns, violence, and berets were at the centre of the Black Panther Party is a dated view. In reality, the Party's 'community survival programs' occupied a larger place in the organization. The Panthers created a battery of community-based services, beginning with its Free Breakfast for School Children program in 1968, and expanding to include the provision of free medical care, and, by the early 1970s, a free education program through the Oakland Community School. Many of these programs endured until the Party's demise in the early 1980s.

The Party's programs were put on to protect black communities, meeting needs which were otherwise ignored by municipal and state officials. Deborah Johnson, a Black Panther activist, claimed that she and other Party members felt 'that an enemy was trying to destroy us,' referring to the lack of financial aid received from the state government. Sociologist Alondra Nelson argues that the creation of these welfare ventures was intended to 'help poor blacks cope with the surveillance and harassment they experienced,' including by the police and welfare officials.

To showcase its provision of welfare services, the Oakland-based Panthers held a Black Community Survival Conference in March 1972. A mixture of a rally and a block party, the gathering introduced the Oakland Community School, the Breakfast for School Children program, as well as health clinics, police patrols, and food and clothing giveaways. While these programs began in Oakland they rapidly spread across the West Coast, reaching other black communities where chapters of the Panthers were active. The People's Free Medical Clinic in Berkeley inspired the creation of free health clinics in Chicago and Kansas City, for example.

Many of the Party's survival programs were overseen by, and certainly sustained through the work of black women. This was largely due to the mass incarceration of black men, especially after the federal government's COINTELPRO program took effect. Black women taught in the Party's community school, cooked free breakfasts, and volunteered in many of its health clinics. Attending to these community programs offers us a sharper grasp of the positive contributions made by Black Power groups, and affords a more complex view of the Panthers than what contemporary media tended to depict.

Black Power on a Global Scale

Mae Connolly

Black Power activism and its ideology was rooted in, and informed by, a long tradition of anti-colonial texts that linked the oppression persons of colour faced around the world. Books such as Frantz Fanon's revolutionary *The Wretched of The Earth* (1961), which dealt mostly with the experience of colonial subjects, were hugely influential among Black Power's American followers. Fanon's text in fact became known as the 'Black Bible' due to the popularity of its psychological analysis of the effects of colonialism. Chairman Mao's Little Red Book won similar acclaim within the movement, as historians Robin D. G. Kelley and Betsy Esch write, and the Black Panther Party, which formed in Oakland, California, particularly embraced China as an example of Third World revolution. Popularity and ownership of these and many other texts was seen in itself as a form of dissent across the US New Left, especially among students on US campuses.

This movement's transnational connections were a pronounced feature of its organizing and identity, and placed it, as historian Peniel Joseph writes, 'at the centre of global liberation narratives.' Prominent Black Power figures, such as SNCC activist Stokely Carmichael, visited newly independent African countries, and took inspiration from the emerging leftist governments in places such as Algeria and Cuba. Other Black Power figures' visits to Europe engaged minorities with their appeals to a shared history of oppression. In late 1964, Malcolm X addressed students at the universities of Oxford, Manchester, and Sheffield, and helped to bring Black Power into an intellectual sphere. In West Germany, the Free Angela Davis Movement became prominent in the early 1970s. Elsewhere throughout Western Europe and Asia, Black Power groups formed in alliance with US organizations, and included the British Black Panther Movement, based in London. That group helped to mobilize British blacks, as well as the country's Asian population, through its concept of political blackness. The global outlook that Black Power developed, and the global connections it enabled, were essential to the movement as a whole.

This booklet summarizes the main developments in recent histories and cultural studies scholarship on the US civil rights and Black Power movements. It is co-written by staff and students in the University of Manchester's American Studies programme, and is aimed at UK A-Level teachers. It prioritizes new approaches to the subject, and connects these to how the subject is covered in existing exam specifications.