

The African American Civil Rights Movement

The African-American Civil Rights Movement was an ongoing fight for racial equality that took place for over 100 years after the Civil War. Leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Booker T. Washington, and Rosa Parks paved the way for non-violent protests which led to changes in the law. When most people talk about the "Civil Rights Movement" they are talking about the protests in the 1950s and 1960s that led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Background

The Civil Rights Movement has its background in the abolitionist movement before the Civil War. Abolitionists were people that thought slavery was morally wrong and wanted it to come to an end. Before the Civil War, many of the northern states had outlawed slavery. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves with the Emancipation Proclamation. After the war, slavery was made illegal with the thirteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution.



*March on Washington Aug 28, 1963
from the United States Information Agency*

Segregation and the Jim Crow Laws

After the Civil War, many southern states continued to treat African-Americans as second class citizens. They implemented laws that kept black people separate from white people. These laws became known as Jim Crow laws. They required separate schools, restaurants, restrooms, and transportation based on the color of a person's skin. Other laws prevented many black people from voting.

Early Protests

In the early 1900s, black people began to protest the Jim Crow laws that southern states were implementing to enforce segregation. Several African-American leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells joined together to found the NAACP in 1909. Another leader, Booker T. Washington, helped to form schools to educate African-Americans in order to improve their status in society.

The Movement Grows

The civil rights movement gained momentum in the 1950s when the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in schools was illegal in the case of Brown v. Board of Education. Federal troops were brought in to Little Rock, Arkansas to allow the Little Rock Nine to attend a previously all white high school.

Major Events in the Movement

The 1950's and early 1960's brought about several major events in the fight for the civil rights of African-Americans. In 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat on the bus to a white passenger. This sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott which lasted for over a year and brought Martin Luther King, Jr. to the forefront of the movement. King led a number of non-violent protests including the Birmingham Campaign and the March on Washington.



*Jim Crow Drinking Fountain
by John Vachon*



*Lyndon Johnson signing Civil Rights Act
by Cecil Stoughton*

Civil Rights Act of 1964

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson. This act outlawed segregation and the Jim Crow laws of the south. It also outlawed discrimination based on race, national background, and gender. Although there were still many issues, this law gave the NAACP and other organizations a strong base on which to fight discrimination in the courts.

Voting Rights Act of 1965

In 1965, another law was passed called the Voting Rights Act. This law said that citizens could not be denied the right to vote based on their race. It outlawed literacy tests (a requirement that people be able to read) and poll taxes (a fee that people had to pay to vote). Interesting Facts about the African-American Civil Rights Movement The Civil Rights Act was originally proposed by President John F. Kennedy. The 1968 Civil Rights Act, also known as the Fair Housing Act, outlawed discrimination in the selling or renting of housing. The National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee was once the Lorraine Motel, where Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot and killed in 1968. Today, African-Americans have been elected or appointed to the highest positions in the U.S. government including Secretary of State (Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice) and President (Barack Obama).

To learn more about Civil Rights:

Movements:

- African-American Civil Rights Movement
- Apartheid
- Disability Rights
- Native American Rights
- Slavery
- Abolitionism
- Women's Suffrage

Major Events:

- Jim Crow Laws
- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- Little Rock Nine
- Birmingham Campaign
- March on Washington
- Civil Rights Act of 1964

Civil Rights Leaders:

- Susan B. Anthony
- Ruby Bridges
- Cesar Chavez
- Frederick Douglass
- Mohandas Gandhi
- Helen Keller
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Nelson Mandela
- Thurgood Marshall
- Rosa Parks
- Jackie Robinson
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- Mother Teresa
- Sojourner Truth
- Harriet Tubman
- Booker T. Washington
- Ida B. Wells

Read more at: http://www.ducksters.com/history/civil_rights/african-american_civil_rights_movement.php

Civil Rights Movement - African Americans

Test Quiz

Questions on this quiz are based on information from
Civil Rights Movement - African Americans.

1. What Constitutional amendment made slavery illegal?
 - a. 2nd
 - b. 5th
 - c. 9th
 - d. 13th
 - e. 19th
2. What were people called who worked to outlaw slavery?
 - a. Prohibitionists
 - b. Abolitionists
 - c. Federalists
 - d. Slavers
 - e. Legalists
3. What Supreme Court ruling said that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional?
 - a. Dred Scott v. Sanford
 - b. Marbury v. Madison
 - c. Brown v. Board of Education
 - d. Miranda v. Arizona
 - e. All of the above
4. What were the laws called that separated black people from white people?
 - a. Jim Crow laws
 - b. Amendments
 - c. New Deal laws
 - d. Emancipation laws
 - e. Lincoln laws
5. What civil rights leader refused to give up their seat on the bus to a white person?
 - a. W.E.B Du Bois
 - b. Rosa Parks
 - c. Ida B. Wells
 - d. Martin Luther King
 - e. Harriet Tubman
6. What president signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law?
 - a. John F. Kennedy
 - b. Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - c. Lyndon Johnson
 - d. Jimmy Carter
 - e. Gerald Ford
7. Which of the following laws said that citizens could not be denied the right to vote based on their race?

- a. Social Security Act
- b. Emancipation Proclamation
- c. Labor Relations Act
- d. Fair Labor Standards Act
- e. Voting Rights Act of 1965

8. Where is the National Civil Rights Museum located?

- a. Georgia
- b. Alabama
- c. Vermont
- d. Tennessee
- e. California

9. Who became the leader of the Civil Rights Movement during the Montgomery Bus Boycott?

- a. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- b. Lyndon Johnson
- c. Ida B. Wells
- d. Frederick Douglass
- e. None of the above

10. What was it called when people had to pay a fee to vote?

- a. Segregation
- b. Voting dues
- c. Poll tax
- d. Ballot price
- e. Right to vote

About this quiz: All the questions on this quiz are based on information that can be found on the [Civil Rights Movement - African Americans](#) page at /history/civil_rights/african-american_civil_rights_movement.php.

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