Chapter 45

The Civil Rights Revolution: "Like a Mighty Stream"

How did civil rights activists advance the ideals of liberty, equality, and opportunity for African Americans?

45.1 Introduction

Four decades later, Cardell Gay still remembered the day—May 3, 1963—when hundreds of young people marched through the streets of Birmingham, Alabama, to protest segregation. "The police were there with their dogs and their hoses," he recalled. "And . . . although they had instructed us to stop, we would not stop. We continued to move closer to them. What they did, they let it fly."

What the police "let fly" was water from a high-pressure fire hose. "It knocked us on the ground," Gay said. "The hoses were so strong . . . [the water] . . . would knock us all over the place, send you tumbling." The force of the blast even rolled children down the street.

It was the second day of marches by young people in Birmingham that spring. Gay was 16 at the time. His high school teachers had influenced his decision to march. "In class, they'd say, 'Don't leave campus or you'll be expelled,'" Gay explained years later. "But in private, they'd say, 'Go on. I can't do it, I'd lose my job. But do it up. Keep it up.'"

More than a thousand young people, some as young as five, marched on May 2, the first day of the protest. Hundreds were arrested for marching without a permit. The following day, an even larger force of young blacks turned out to march. Police Chief Bull Connor ordered them to be dispersed with fire hoses. As the youngsters fled, policemen chased them down with clubs and dogs.

The Birmingham protests showed that African Americans were not going to back down in their struggle for civil rights. They would persist until they reached their goal. "I'll keep marching till I get freedom," one 12-year-old protester declared.

In this chapter, you will learn about key events in the early years of the civil rights movement. The years from 1955 to 1965 witnessed efforts to desegregate buses, schools, lunch counters, and other public places. During these years, civil rights activists also worked to secure voting rights for African Americans.

Hundreds of child marchers were arrested in a Birmingham park in May 1963. Today that park features monuments honoring those children and their fight against segregation.

◀ Young marcher arrested and detained during the Birmingham marches, 1963

Public buses were rigidly segregated in the South. If a bus was full, black passengers had to make way for whites. In 1955, however, activists in Montgomery, Alabama, organized a successful bus boycott and achieved integration on city buses.

45.2 A Boycott in Montgomery Inspires a Movement

Although the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* outlawed segregation in public schools, segregation continued in much of the South. Law and custom still required blacks and whites to use separate facilities, like drinking fountains and waiting rooms, and to sit separately in restaurants and on buses. In 1955, however, a boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, began to shake up the Jim Crow South.

Protesting Unfair Bus Laws In the 1950s, public buses in Montgomery were segregated, as they were throughout the South. African Americans had to sit at the back of the bus. If the bus was full, they were required to give up their seats to white riders. Furthermore, blacks could never share a row with whites.

That was about to change. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a 43-year-old African American woman, refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. Parks, a seamstress, had been active in the Alabama chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Years later, Parks described her motives for remaining in her seat: "This is what I wanted to know: when and how would we ever determine our rights as human beings?"

Leaders of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP had been looking for a test case to fight segregation. Parks, who was well-spoken and had a solid reputation in the community, seemed perfect. E. D. Nixon, a local activist, asked Parks if the NAACP could build a case around her arrest, and Parks agreed.

The following evening, a group of African American ministers met to plan a strategy. They decided to hold a one-day bus boycott on December 5. Black ministers announced the boycott at Sunday services, and activists distributed leaflets asking African Americans to take part.

On December 5, a sign at a Montgomery bus stop read, "People, don't ride the bus today. Don't ride it, for freedom." On that day, 90 percent of African Americans who usually rode the bus honored the boycott.

Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. When told by the driver that he was going to call the police, she calmly replied, "You may go on and do so." Her action served as a catalyst for the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

A Young Minister Becomes a Leader The one-day boycott was so successful that the organizers, who called themselves the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), decided to extend it. To lead the **Montgomery Bus Boycott**, the MIA chose a 26-year-old minister, Martin Luther King Jr.

King was pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Originally from Atlanta, King had come to Montgomery after completing a Ph.D. in theology at Boston University. He had been in town two years when the boycott began. King explained the purpose of the action in a speech to a mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church on the evening of December 5:

> My friends, I want it to be known that we're going to work with grim and bold determination to gain justice on the buses in this city. And we are not wrong, we are not wrong in what we are doing. If we are wrong, the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong. If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong . . . If we are wrong, justice is a lie. And we are determined here in Montgomery to work and fight until justice runs down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream.

To make the boycott work, African Americans in Montgomery organized an elaborate carpool system to get around town. Several thousand people used the carpools daily. Others walked, rode bicycles, took taxis, or hitchhiked.

Many of Montgomery's white leaders did everything they could to stop the boycott and preserve segregation. Some business owners fired black protesters from their jobs. Other people took more drastic action. Some radical segregationists, including members of the Ku Klux Klan, attacked protesters and even set off bombs at the houses of boycott leaders. They also firebombed several churches that served the black community.

In November 1956, the Supreme Court upheld an Alabama court's ruling that segregation on buses was unconstitutional. About a month later, on December 20, the protesters voted to end the boycott, which had lasted 381 days. As a result of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Martin Luther King Jr. earned a national reputation as a civil rights leader.

Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. quickly established himself as a leader in the struggle for civil rights. King's use of nonviolent protest—which he learned from studying the great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi—helped shape the civil rights movement. Here he is walking with two other civil rights leaders, Ralph Abernathy (left) and Bayard Rustin (right).

African American Churches Support the Movement After the boycott, King worked with other ministers and civil rights leaders to form the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)** in 1957. With King as its president, the SCLC would play a major role in the civil rights movement.

The SCLC pledged to use **nonviolent resistance** to redeem "the soul of America." Nonviolent resistance is peaceful protest or noncooperation with authorities that is designed to achieve social or political goals. In a public statement on January 11, 1957, the SCLC explained the strategy:

> Nonviolence is not a symbol of weakness or cowardice, but as Jesus demonstrated, nonviolent resistance transforms weakness into strength and breeds courage in the face of danger. We urge . . . [African Americans], no matter how great the provocation, to dedicate themselves to this motto: "Not one hair of one head of one white person shall be harmed."
>
> —SCLC, "A Statement to the South and Nation," January 11, 1957

Supporters of the SCLC vowed that they would not resort to violence to achieve their ends but would remain peaceful and steadfast in their pursuit of justice. This would prove to be a powerful tactic in the struggle for civil rights.

45.3 School Desegregation

After the *Brown* ruling, some districts and states in the South desegregated their schools quickly. Others, however, resisted the Supreme Court decision. Governors of several southern states staunchly maintained their opposition to integration. The governors of Arkansas and Mississippi, for example, aggressively intervened in an effort to prevent blacks from attending all-white schools. The battle to integrate public schools proved to be long and difficult.

Nine Teenagers Integrate Central High School In 1957, a federal judge ordered public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, to begin desegregation. The Little Rock school superintendent, Virgil Blossom, hoped to postpone the change as long as possible. He set up a plan to integrate just one school, Central High School. Two thousand white students attended Central. In September 1957, nine black students were scheduled to join them. They would later be known as the Little Rock Nine.

Citing public opposition to integration in Arkansas, Governor Orval Faubus declared that he would not support desegregation in Little Rock. Faubus called out the Arkansas National Guard. On September 4, 1957, the day the nine students were to begin classes, the troops appeared at Central High as a show of force and to prevent the students from entering the building. One of the students, Elizabeth Eckford, recalled being surrounded by an angry white crowd outside the school:

> They moved closer and closer . . . I tried to see a friendly face somewhere in the crowd—someone who maybe would help. I looked into the face of an old woman and it seemed a kind face, but when I looked again, she spat on me.
>
> —Elizabeth Eckford, in an interview with NAACP official Daisy Bates

Another white woman later emerged from the crowd and helped to shield Eckford from harm. But Eckford and her fellow black students were kept out of school that day and for days afterward.

Finally, on September 23, the Little Rock Nine returned to Central High. Once again, an angry white mob surrounded the school. This time, though, the mayor of Little Rock sought help from President Eisenhower. Although

In 1957, nine black students, including Elizabeth Eckford (shown here), challenged segregation by enrolling at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. The governor and a mob of angry citizens tried to stop them, but the federal government backed them up. Eventually all southern states integrated their public schools.

Eisenhower did not believe that integration should be accomplished by force, he could not allow defiance of federal authority. The president issued Executive Order 10730, sending in federal troops to maintain order and enforce the integration of the school. Eisenhower also put the Arkansas National Guard under federal control. The students rode to school in a convoy led by army jeeps with guns mounted on their hoods. They also had military bodyguards to protect them—at least for part of the school year.

Despite this protection, the black students were subjected to insults and acts of violence from white students. As one of the nine, Minnijean Brown, said at the time, "They throw rocks, they spill ink on your clothes . . . they bother you every minute." Melba Pattillo was another one of the students. Acid was thrown in her eyes, and only the quick action of her bodyguard saved her eyesight. The students and their families also received death threats.

Eight of the nine African American students finished out the year at Central High. The following year, however, Governor Faubus closed all the Little Rock schools rather than allow another year of integration. It was not until September 1959 that integration continued in Little Rock.

President Eisenhower ordered federal troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to maintain order and enforce integration at Central High School. Members of the 101st Airborne Division are shown here on a Little Rock street in September 1957.

James Meredith Enrolls at the University of Mississippi Public universities were also required to integrate. In 1961, James Meredith, an African American veteran of the Korean War, applied for admission as a transfer student to the University of Mississippi, commonly known as Ole Miss. The university had traditionally been all white, and Meredith knew he would be taking a stand to integrate it.

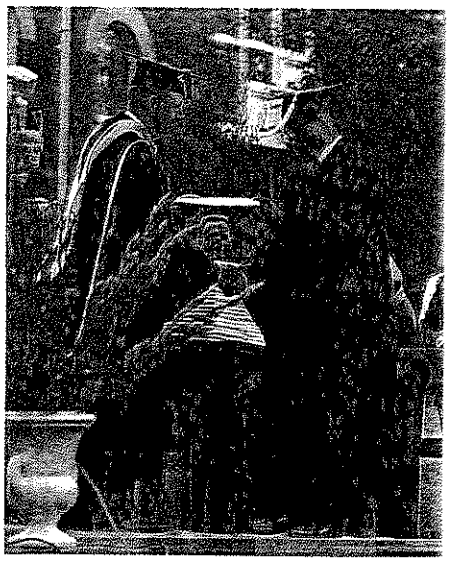
When his application was rejected, Meredith turned to the NAACP to help him take his case through the courts. At first, a district court ruled against him. On appeal, however, a higher court ruled that the university had to admit Meredith. Refusing him admission, the court said, amounted to the state of Mississippi maintaining segregation.

Mississippi governor Ross Barnett vowed that no black student would attend Ole Miss while he was in office. On September 20, Barnett, acting as university registrar, personally refused to enroll Meredith.

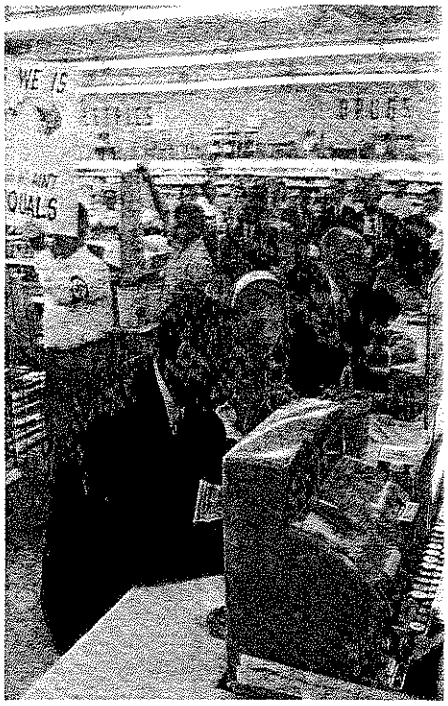
But President John F. Kennedy, also known as JFK, and Attorney General Robert Kennedy were determined to uphold the law as *Brown* had defined it. Although JFK was concerned about losing Democratic support in the South, he was sympathetic to the civil rights movement. In a nationally broadcast speech, he declared, "Americans are free to disagree with the law but not to disobey it."

On Sunday, September 30, 1962, James Meredith secretly arrived on campus. When the news got out that night, a riot erupted. Angry white students burned cars and destroyed property. Before the night was over, two men had been shot and killed.

President Kennedy sent armed federal marshals to protect Meredith so he could attend classes. Meredith survived verbal taunts and threats against his life and the lives of his parents. But he had always known what was at stake. Just days before entering Ole Miss, he had written, "The price of progress is indeed high, but the price of holding back is much higher." Meredith graduated from Ole Miss in the summer of 1963.



James Meredith graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1963. He was the first African American to attend Ole Miss. He later wrote that the country's future "rests on . . . whether or not the Negro citizen is to be allowed to receive an education in his own state."



Across the South, protesters held sit-ins to integrate lunch counters. The demonstrators remained nonviolent, even when local residents taunted them.

45.4 Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides

The campaign to integrate public facilities in the South continued through the 1960s. During this time, a growing student movement influenced the direction of the civil rights struggle. Student protesters challenged segregation in various ways. They sat down in "whites-only" public places and refused to move, thereby causing the business to lose customers. This tactic is known as a **sit-in**. They also boycotted businesses that maintained segregation. And they rode interstate buses that many whites in the South tried to keep segregated.

Sitting Firm to Challenge Segregated Facilities On February 1, 1960, four African American students from North Carolina's Agricultural and Technical College sat down at a lunch counter in the Woolworth's drugstore in Greensboro. They ordered food, but the waitress refused to serve them, saying that only white customers could eat at Woolworth's.

The four students stayed at the counter until the store closed. One of the four, Franklin McCain, explained later that the group did not like being denied "dignity and respect." They decided to return the next day, and about 20 other people joined them. They sat at the counter all day, but were not served.

During the 1960s, sit-ins like this one captured nationwide attention for the civil rights movement. As news of the Greensboro action spread, protesters began sit-ins in towns and cities across the South.

The Greensboro protests continued for months. In April, the city's blacks organized a boycott of Woolworth's and another local store with a segregated lunch counter. Eventually the local businesses gave in. On July 25, 1960, the first African American ate at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro.

Black students also mounted a large sit-in campaign in Nashville, Tennessee. As in Greensboro, Nashville's African American community followed up with a boycott of downtown businesses. And once again, local business owners and public officials gave in. On May 10, 1960, Nashville became the first major city in the South to begin integrating its public facilities.

Students Organize to Make a Difference The sit-ins and boycotts began to transform the segregated South and change the civil rights movement. College students took the lead in the sit-ins, and many became activists in the movement.

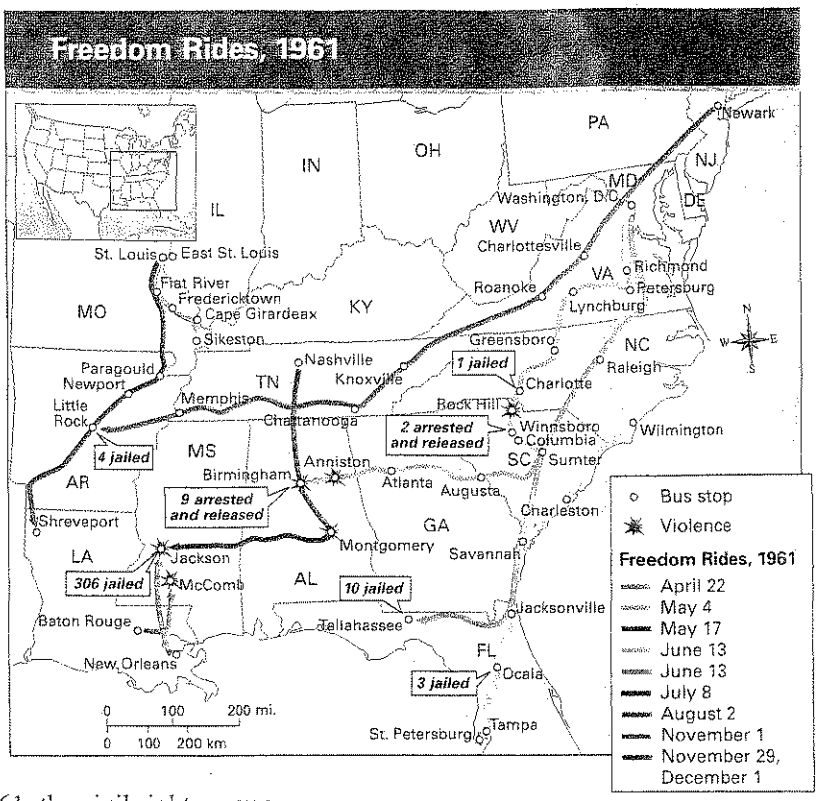
In April 1960, Ella Baker, a leader with the SCLC, called a meeting of student civil rights activists in Raleigh, North Carolina. Although Baker herself was 55 years old and no longer a student, she believed it was important for students to organize and run their own organization.

Under Baker's guidance, the students formed the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**, pronounced "snick." SNCC's Statement of Purpose, written in May 1960, affirmed the new organization's commitment to justice, peace, and nonviolence:

> We affirm the philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose . . . Through nonviolence, courage displaces fear; love transforms hate. Acceptance dissipates prejudice; hope ends despair. Peace dominates war; faith reconciles doubt. Mutual regard cancels enmity. Justice for all overthrows injustice.

SNCC trained students in **civil disobedience,** counseling them to deliberately break laws they considered unjust. SNCC leaders emphasized that protesters must not use violence, even if they were physically attacked. One SNCC training document explained, "You may choose to face physical assault without protecting yourself, hands at the sides, unclenched; or you may choose to protect yourself, making plain you do not intend to hit back."

SNCC members planned and participated in **direct action** throughout the South. Direct action refers to political acts, including protests of all types, designed to have an immediate impact. SNCC members played a major role in various campaigns of nonviolent direct action over the next several years.



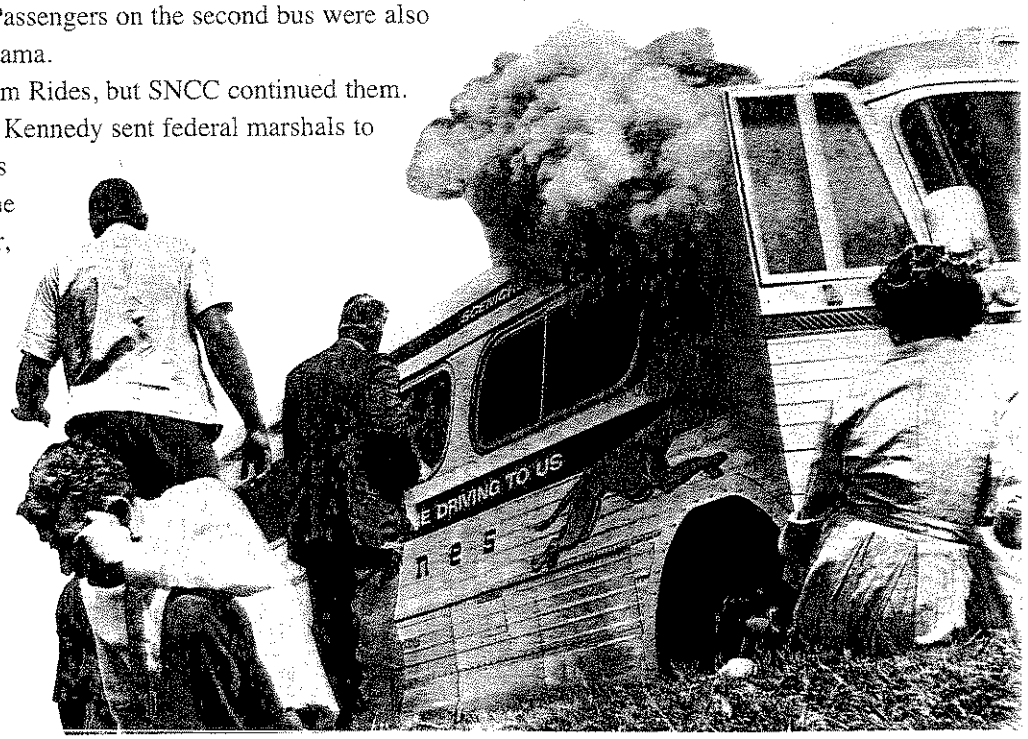
In 1961, the Freedom Riders challenged segregation on interstate buses in the South. They faced mob violence along the way, including the firebombing of their bus outside Anniston, Alabama (shown below). Eventually they traveled with federal escorts to protect them.

Freedom Riders Face Violence One direct action targeted the interstate bus system in the South. In 1960, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in interstate transport was illegal. In the spring of 1961, the civil rights group Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organized Freedom Rides to test whether southern states were complying with the ruling.

On May 4, 1961, seven blacks and six whites boarded two buses in Washington, D.C., and headed south. When the first bus reached Anniston, Alabama, on May 14, a white mob attacked the Freedom Riders. The mob followed the bus as it left town, threw a firebomb through the window, and then beat the passengers as they fled the bus. Passengers on the second bus were also beaten when they arrived in Alabama.

CORE abandoned the Freedom Rides, but SNCC continued them. Finally, Attorney General Robert Kennedy sent federal marshals to ensure safe passage for the riders to Jackson, Mississippi. When the Freedom Riders arrived, however, Jackson officials arrested them. They suffered physical abuse while in jail, but most became even more committed to ending segregation.

In late 1962, the Interstate Commerce Commission issued clear rules stating that buses and bus terminals involved in interstate travel must be integrated. CORE's leader, James Farmer, proclaimed victory for the Freedom Rides.



45.5 A Campaign in Birmingham

In the early 1960s, Birmingham, Alabama, was a steel-mill town with a long history of bigotry. Martin Luther King Jr. called it the most segregated city in the country. As a result, the SCLC decided to focus its attention there in 1963.

Taking Aim at the Nation's Most Segregated City Black residents of Birmingham experienced segregation in nearly every aspect of public life. Virtually no public facility in Birmingham allowed blacks and whites to mix.

Furthermore, Birmingham had a history of racist violence. Between 1956 and 1963, there were 18 unsolved bombings in black neighborhoods. The violence not only targeted African Americans. In 1960, the *New York Times* reported attempts to explode dynamite at two Jewish synagogues as well.

The SCLC stepped directly into this violent climate in the spring of 1963. King and the SCLC joined forces with local Birmingham activists, led by Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth. Together they carefully planned a series of nonviolent actions against segregation.

Hundreds of people were arrested and jailed during mass demonstrations in Birmingham in 1963. This photograph of protesters at the jail was taken through the bars of a paddy wagon. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of those arrested. It was at this time that he wrote his famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." In it he said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere . . . Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

King Advocates Nonviolence in "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" The protests began on April 3 with lunch-counter sit-ins followed by street demonstrations. Thirty protesters were arrested for marching at Birmingham City Hall without a permit. As leader of the Birmingham campaign, King decided the protests and arrests must continue. With little money to post bail, King realized that he would most likely go to jail and stay there for a while.

On April 12, King and 50 others demonstrated and were quickly arrested. While King was in jail, many members of Birmingham's white clergy took out an ad in the local newspaper, criticizing King's tactics: "We recognize the natural impatience of people who feel that their hopes are slow in being realized," the ad said. "But we are convinced that these demonstrations are unwise and untimely." Instead, the clergy urged African Americans to abide by the law and to negotiate with whites to achieve integration.

King disagreed. While he waited in jail, he wrote a response to the ad. In "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," King explained why African Americans were using civil disobedience and other forms of direct action to protest segregation. "The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust," he wrote. "One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws." Concerning the charge that protesters were being "impatient," King wrote,

> We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was "well-timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait!" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see . . . that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."
>
> —Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," April 16, 1963

On May 3, 1963, police in Birmingham turned high-pressure fire hoses on children during a civil rights march. The force of such a blast can tear the bark from a tree and knock a grown man to the ground. Events that day horrified many Americans and helped win support for the civil rights movement.

The Nation Watches in Horror By late April, Birmingham's black leaders realized their protests were running out of steam. Few members of the black community were willing to carry out more direct action at the risk of going to jail. So the SCLC decided to turn to children. Although the decision was controversial, King argued that the children who took part in the demonstrations would develop "a sense of their own stake in freedom and justice."

On May 2, 1963, more than 1,000 African American youths marched from Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church into the city center. The city's public safety commissioner, Bull Connor, had most of them arrested.

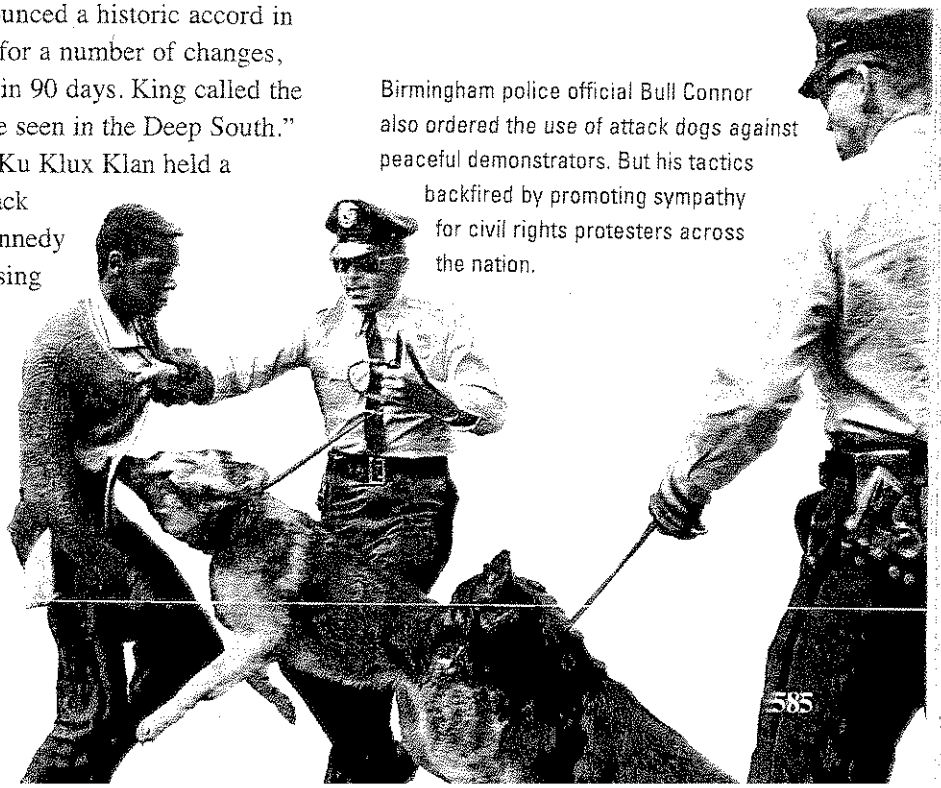
On May 3, more students gathered at the church, preparing to march again. This time, Connor ordered the police to barricade them in. When some students tried to leave, the police used attack dogs and high-pressure fire hoses on them.

News photographers captured scenes of peaceful protesters being knocked down by blasts of water or attacked by snarling dogs. The images in newspapers and on television shocked Americans, many of whom had never imagined that southerners would go to such brutal lengths to maintain segregation.

The protests and the national attention they attracted marked a turning point. At the urging of local business leaders, the city stepped back from confrontation, and on May 10 civil rights leaders announced a historic accord in Birmingham. Their agreement with the city called for a number of changes, including the desegregation of public facilities within 90 days. King called the deal "the most magnificent victory for justice we've seen in the Deep South."

A racist backlash soon followed, however. The Ku Klux Klan held a rally, and bombs later went off at a motel where black leaders had been staying. In response, President Kennedy sent federal troops to a nearby military base, promising to deploy them if necessary to keep the peace.

Birmingham remained calm for several months after that, but then another violent attack occurred. On September 15, during Sunday services, a bomb exploded at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, killing four African American girls. Reverend King later spoke at their funeral, calling them "the martyred heroines of a holy crusade for freedom and human dignity."



Birmingham police official Bull Connor also ordered the use of attack dogs against peaceful demonstrators. But his tactics backfired by promoting sympathy for civil rights protesters across the nation.

45.6 Achieving Landmark Civil Rights Legislation

Some 250,000 people marched in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963. A flyer advertising the event stated the marchers' goals: "Meaningful Civil Rights Laws, Full and Fair Employment, Decent Housing . . . [and] The Right to Vote."

Despite the success of the Birmingham campaign, the city did not change overnight, nor did the events there bring immediate equality for African Americans. But the campaign did have important effects. It increased support for the civil rights movement around the country. More Americans came to identify with the movement's emphasis on rights, freedom, equality, and opportunity.

Following the spring protests in Birmingham, civil rights activists took their concerns to Washington, D.C. There they demonstrated for "jobs and freedom" and urged the passage of civil rights legislation.

Thousands March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom The 1963 March on Washington was a long time coming. A. Philip Randolph, the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, had proposed the march in 1941. His goal was to protest unequal treatment of African Americans in the war industries. He called off that rally, however, in deference to President Roosevelt's call for unity in the war effort.

In 1963, however, the time was ripe for the long-delayed march, which was organized by leaders of the country's major civil rights organizations. On August 28, more than 250,000 people marched in Washington. It was the largest political gathering ever held in the United States. The quarter of a million protesters included about 60,000 whites as well as union members, clergy, students, entertainers, and celebrities such as Rosa Parks and Jackie Robinson.

That day, marchers listened to African American performers, like opera great Marian Anderson, who sang "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." They also held hands and joined in as folksinger Joan Baez sang "We Shall Overcome."

King Inspires the Nation with His Dream The most notable event of the day was Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech, delivered from the Lincoln Memorial. In ringing tones, King spoke of his dream for a better America:

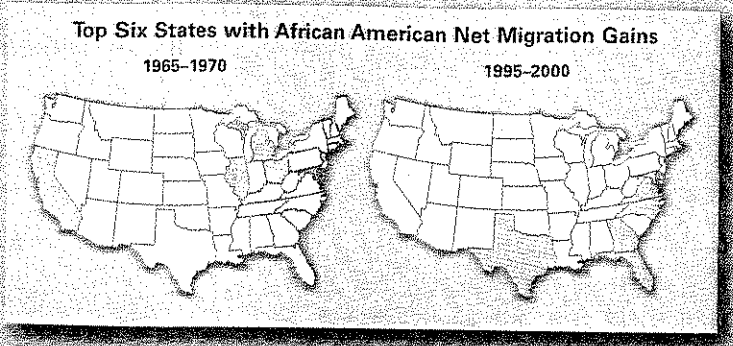
> I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal . . ." When we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when *all* God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"
>
> —Martin Luther King Jr., "I have a dream" speech, August 28, 1963

In his "I have a dream" speech, Martin Luther King Jr. declared, "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note . . . that all men . . . would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

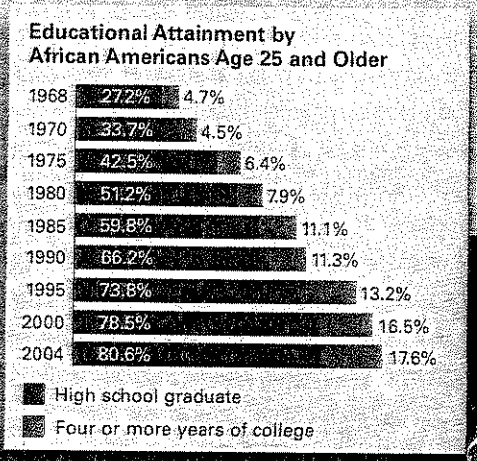
At the time of the march, a civil rights bill cautiously supported by President Kennedy was making its way through Congress. After Kennedy's assassination in November, President Lyndon B. Johnson continued to push for the bill. It stalled in the Senate, however, when senators opposed to the bill **filibustered,** speaking at great length to prevent legislative action. Nevertheless, the bill finally passed and was signed into law on July 2, 1964. The landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin—the most important civil rights law passed since Reconstruction.

How Did the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Affect African Americans?

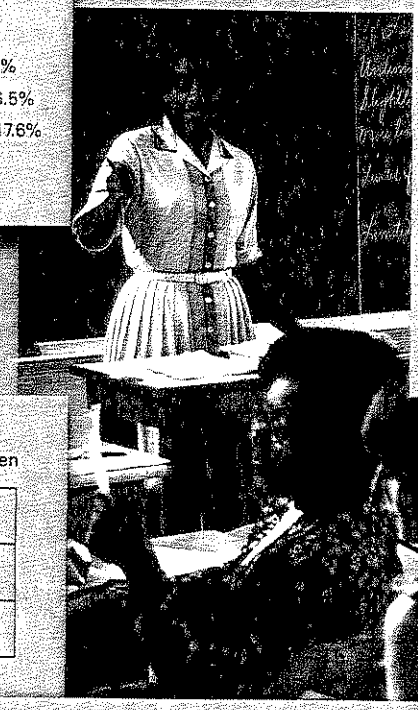
The Civil Rights Act of 1964 transformed race relations in the United States. It outlawed racial discrimination in voter registration, public accomodations, public facilities, public schools and colleges, labor unions, and employment. The effects of this landmark legislation were both widespread and long term.

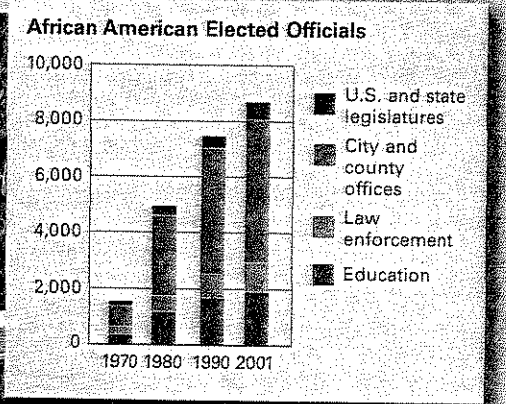


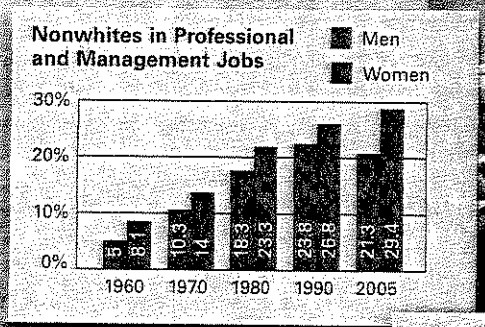
Migration The Civil Rights Act forced southern states to dismantle their segregation laws. The result has been a dramatic shift in black migration patterns. For most of the 20th century, blacks migrated out of the South in search of better lives. In recent years, that pattern has been reversed.



Education The Civil Rights Act gave the federal government the power to enforce school desegregation. Graduation rates for African Americans have risen ever since.



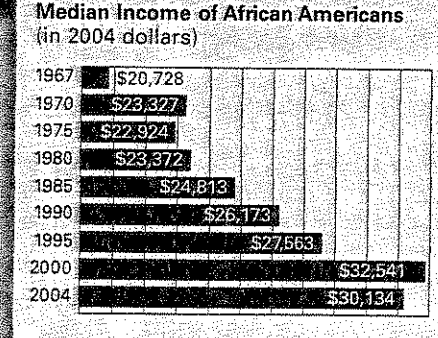


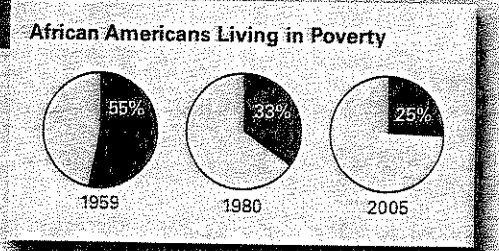


Political Participation The Civil Rights Act's ban on racial discrimination in voter registration was strengthened by the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Since then, blacks have increased their political participation as both voters and officeholders.

Employment The Civil Rights Act opened up white-collar jobs traditionally held by whites to African Americans and other minority groups.

Income With more education and better job opportunities, African American incomes rose. Median income is the middle income in a series of incomes ranked from least to greatest.





Poverty By banning racial discrimination in labor unions and employment, the Civil Rights Act helped pull many black families out of poverty.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Census Bureau. William H. Frey, *The New Great Migration: Black Americans' Return to the South, 1965–2000*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Inst., 2004. Matthew Sobek, "New Statistics on the U.S. Labor Force," Historical Methods (2001): 71–87, in *Historical Statistics of the United States, Millennial Edition On Line*, ed. Susan B. Carter et al., 2006: Cambridge University Press.

45.7 Regaining Voting Rights

In January 1964, the Twenty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. It stated that no U.S. citizen could be denied the right to vote "by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax." Some southern states had used poll taxes to prevent blacks from voting. The Twenty-fourth Amendment was a key victory in the African American struggle for voting rights. But there was more to be done to ensure that black citizens could actually vote.

Voter Registration Rates in Selected Southern States, 1965

State	Percentage of Voting-Age Blacks Registered to Vote	Percentage of Voting-Age Whites Registered to Vote
Alabama	19.3%	69.2%
Georgia	27.4%	62.6%
Louisiana	31.6%	80.5%
Mississippi	6.7%	69.9%
North Carolina	46.8%	96.8%
South Carolina	37.3%	75.7%
Virginia	38.3%	61.1%

Source: Grofman, Handley, and Niemi, *Minority Representation and the Quest for Voting Equality*, New York: Cambridge Press, 1992, as reported at *U.S. Department Justice, Civil Rights Division, Voting Section, "The Effect of the Voting Rights Act,"* www.usdoj.gov.

In the South, large numbers of African Americans were denied voting rights in the early 1960s. One way this was done was to limit voter registration for blacks.

Registering African American Voters in a Freedom Summer In the spring of 1964, CORE and SNCC organized Freedom Summer, a campaign to register black voters in Mississippi. At the time, Mississippi was one of the most segregated states in the country, and voting rights for blacks were severely restricted. Although they made up nearly half of the state's population, only a few African Americans were registered to vote, due in large part to restrictions imposed by state and local officials.

More than 900 people volunteered for Freedom Summer. Most were white college students from the North. They were given training in voter registration and were told to expect violent opposition to their efforts.

That prediction promptly came true. On June 21, three student activists disappeared in Neshoba County, Mississippi, after visiting the site of a burned black church. One of the activists, James Chaney, was black. The other two, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, were white. Six weeks later, the FBI discovered their bodies. They had been murdered.

Other violent acts marred Freedom Summer. There were numerous beatings, shootings, and bombings. At least three other activists suffered violent deaths. Most of these crimes went unpunished.

Marching for the Right to Vote Undeterred by the violence of Freedom Summer, activists continued their registration campaign. Early the following year, the SCLC began to register black voters in Selma, Alabama. In Dallas County, where Selma is located, only 320 of more than 15,000 eligible black voters were registered to vote at the time. For weeks, civil rights protesters held daily marches at the Dallas County Courthouse. By February, more than 3,000 had been arrested, charged with crimes such as "unlawful assembly." At that point, the SCLC called for a march from Selma to the state capital at Montgomery. The marchers planned to present the governor with a list of grievances.

On March 7, 1965, the protesters began their walk. Decades later, civil rights tivist John Lewis recalled,

> As we crossed the Pettus Bridge, we saw a line of lawmen. "We should kneel and pray," I said . . . but we didn't have time. "Troopers," barked an officer, "advance!" They came at us like a human wave, a blur of blue uniforms, billy clubs, bullwhips and tear gas; one had a piece of rubber hose wrapped in barbed wire.

Once again, televised images of the violence that day outraged many Ameri- ns. The civil rights movement continued to gain support around the country.

In August, Congress passed the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**. The act out- wed literacy tests and other tactics used to deny African Americans the right to ıte. The act also called for the federal government to supervise voter registra- ın in areas where less than half of voting-age citizens were registered to vote. ıderal intervention would ensure that eligible voters were not turned away.

Efforts to secure voting rights proved quite successful. In 1964, less than percent of Mississippi's eligible black voters were registered to vote. By 1968, at number had risen to 59 percent. In Alabama, the numbers rose from about) percent to 57 percent during the same four-year period. Overall, the number African American voters in the South increased from 1 million to 3.1 million :tween 1964 and 1968. The civil rights movement had made great strides in e years since the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

African Americans lined up to vote for the first time throughout the South after passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The number of registered black voters grew dramatically in the late 1960s.

Summary

Between 1955 and 1965, many key events took place in the civil rights movement. African Americans made great progress in their struggle for rights and equality.

Montgomery Bus Boycott In 1955, blacks in Montgomery, Alabama, began a lengthy boycott of the city's segregated bus system. As a result, Montgomery's buses were integrated.

SCLC and SNCC These two groups helped organize nonviolent civil rights actions. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was led by Martin Luther King Jr. It played a major role in the Birmingham campaign and other events. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee organized sit-ins and engaged in other forms of civil disobedience.

Freedom Rides In 1961, black and white Freedom Riders rode buses through the South. They were testing southern compliance with laws outlawing segregation in interstate transport. The riders were subjected to violence and eventually received federal protection.

March on Washington A quarter of a million people marched in Washington, D.C., in August 1963 to demand jobs and freedom. The highlight of this event was Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech.

Freedom Summer In the summer of 1964, activists led voter registration drives in the South for African Americans.

Landmark legislation The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed literacy tests, enabling many African Americans to vote.

Chapter 46

Redefining Equality: From Black Power to Affirmative Action

How did civil rights activists change their strategies and goals in the 1960s and 1970s, and how successful were they in achieving racial equality?

46.1 Introduction

In 1966, James Meredith, the first African American graduate of the University of Mississippi, began a campaign he called his March Against Fear. He planned to walk from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi. Along the way he hoped to encourage the African Americans he met to stand up for their rights by registering to vote. Only 30 miles out of Memphis, Meredith was shot by a sniper. He survived but was hospitalized.

A number of civil rights leaders stepped up to complete Meredith's march. Among them were Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Stokely Carmichael, the young leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). On their first day, an angry policeman knocked King down. Carmichael prepared to retaliate, only to be stopped by other marchers. Rather than thanking Carmichael, King scolded him for straying from the strategy of nonviolence. In Carmichael's view, this incident had little to do with nonviolence. "It was," he insisted, "about self-defense."

For days the marchers endured insults and threats from angry whites. When they reached Greenwood, South Carolina, Carmichael was arrested while trying to set up a tent for the night. "By the time I got out of jail," he recalled, "I was in no mood to compromise with racist arrogance." The night of his release, Carmichael addressed a rally in Greenwood. "It's time we stand up and take over," he said. "We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is **black power**." Again and again he asked the crowd, "What do you want?" Each time the crowd roared back, "Black power!"

Carmichael's speech and the crowd's response reflected a turning point in the civil rights movement. For more than 10 years, the movement's leaders had favored nonviolence as their main strategy and integration as their primary goal. With his talk of black power, Carmichael was signaling a change in what many blacks wanted and how they would achieve these new goals.

Stokely Carmichael first spoke of black power in 1966. Martin Luther King Jr. had reservations about the term. "I don't believe in black separatism," he said. "But certainly if black power means the amassing of political and economic power in order to gain our just and legitimate goals, then we all believe in that."

◀ Fists raised in what became known as the black power salute

46.2 The Nation's Black Ghettos Explode

In 1963, the African American writer James Baldwin published an essay on what it was like to be black in the United States. Baldwin reminded his readers that blacks had waited far too long for equality. If the United States did not live up to its ideals soon, he warned, the result could be an eruption of violence.

> If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks . . . do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare . . . If we do not now dare everything, the fulfillment of that prophecy, re-created from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us:
>
> *God gave Noah the rainbow sign,*
> *No more water, the fire next time!*
>
> —James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time,* 1963

Fire did indeed erupt, as anger increased over the slow pace of progress and the federal government's weak support for civil rights. Beginning in 1964, African Americans lashed out in violent protests in cities across the country.

In 1965, Watts, a black neighborhood in Los Angeles, exploded in six days of rioting. The violence left large parts of Watts in ruins. Here, workers clean up the damage from a burned building.

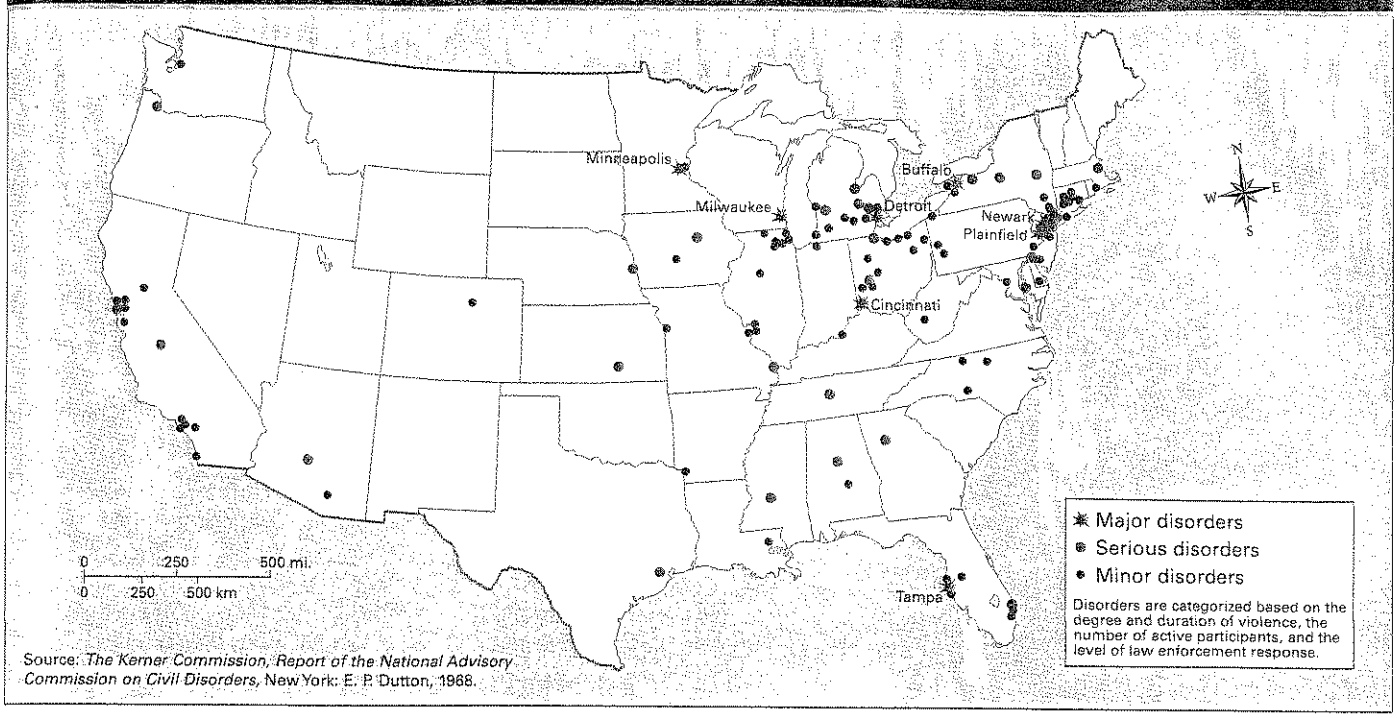
From Watts to Newark: Riots in the Streets By the 1960s, almost 70 percent of African Americans lived in large cities. Urban blacks were often concentrated in ethnic **ghettos**. A ghetto is a part of a city where people belonging to a single ethnic group live. Sometimes people live in an ethnic ghetto because they want to be among people who share their culture. But often people live in such neighborhoods because social and economic conditions prevent them from moving elsewhere. This was true for African Americans. Because of job discrimination, many could not afford to live anywhere else. Even those with good jobs found it almost impossible to buy houses in white neighborhoods.

In August 1965, a race riot exploded in Watts, an African American ghetto in Los Angeles. The immediate cause of the riot was a charge of police brutality. The more long-term cause was African Americans' festering frustrations about poverty, prejudice, and police mistreatment.

The Watts riot lasted for six long days. During that time, 34 people died, almost 900 were injured, and nearly 4,000 were arrested. Rioters burned and looted whole neighborhoods, causing $45 million of property damage. The rioting did not end until 14,000 members of the National Guard were sent to Watts to restore order.

Over the next few years, riots erupted in other cities as well. In 1967 alone, more than 100 cities experienced violent protests. In Detroit, Michigan, 43 people died and more than 1,000 were wounded in an urban upheaval. Eventually the army quelled the riots by sending in tanks and soldiers with machine guns. Riots in Newark, New Jersey, lasted six days and resulted in many deaths and injuries.

Major Urban Riots, 1967



Source: *The Kerner Commission, Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders,* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968.

Beginning with rioting in Harlem and Rochester, New York, in 1964, racial unrest spread out of the North to cities across the nation. This map show major riots in 1967. Other disturbances also occurred that year. The murder of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 triggered the worst violence of the decade. After that, racial unrest subsided.

The Kerner Commission Report: Moving Toward Two Societies It was not until 1967, in response to the rioting that summer, that President Lyndon Johnson, also known as LBJ, established the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to examine what had caused the riots. The commission came to be known as the **Kerner Commission** after its leader, Illinois governor Otto Kerner. Its final report, issued in 1968, concluded that "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal."

Looking deeper, the report found that riots were usually triggered by a specific event that touched off a "reservoir of underlying grievances":

> Social and economic conditions in the riot cities constituted a clear pattern of severe disadvantage for Negroes compared with whites . . . Negroes had completed fewer years of education and fewer had attended high school. Negroes were twice as likely to be unemployed . . . and were more than twice as likely to be living in poverty. Although housing cost Negroes relatively more, they had worse housing—three times as likely to be overcrowded and substandard.
>
> —National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968

The report pointed to "unfulfilled expectations" raised by the civil rights movement. When these expectations were not met, some African Americans had concluded that violence was the only way to "move the system."

The commission called on the country to address the inequalities that the riots had laid bare. "It is time now to turn with all the purpose at our command to the major unfinished business of this nation," it urged. "It is time to make good the promises of American democracy to all citizens—urban and rural, white and black, Spanish-surname, American Indian, and every minority group."

As a Black Muslim minister, Malcolm X supported black nationalism. He said, "The only way the black people who are in this society can be saved is not to integrate into this corrupt society but separate ourselves from it, reform ourselves, lift up our moral standards and try and be godly." Later he broke with the Black Muslims and made a broad, nonracial appeal for human rights.

46.3 The Rise of Black Power and Black Pride

After the Watts riot, Martin Luther King Jr. visited Los Angeles to find out what had happened and why. While touring Watts, King was booed by residents who had lost faith in his strategy and goals. Nonviolent resistance had eroded barriers to integration in the South. But these victories had taken 10 years, and many urban blacks were impatient for change. They were also not sure they wanted to be integrated into a white society that they viewed as racist and corrupt. As activism spread beyond the South, the civil rights movement was changing.

Malcolm X Advocates Black Nationalism One of the leaders of this change was a former convict named Malcolm X. Born in 1925 as Malcolm Little, Malcolm X drifted into a life of crime during his teenage years. Eventually he was arrested and jailed. In prison, he was introduced to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, the leader of a religious group known as the Nation of Islam, or Black Muslims. Muhammad taught that blacks were Earth's first people but had been tricked out of their power and long oppressed by evil whites. Malcolm X later wrote of the appeal of Muhammad's teachings to African American convicts:

> Here is a black man caged behind bars, probably for years, put there by the white man . . . You let this caged up black man start thinking, the same way I did when I first heard Elijah Muhammad's teachings: let him start thinking how, with better breaks when he was young and ambitious he might have been a lawyer, a doctor, a scientist, anything . . . That's why black prisoners become Muslims so fast when Elijah Muhammad's teachings filter into their cages . . . "The white man is the devil" is a perfect echo of that black convict's lifelong experience.
>
> —Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* 1964

After Malcolm Little left prison in 1952, he joined the Nation of Islam and changed his name to Malcolm X. He said Little was the name of a white slaveowner. He chose X as his new last name because "a Negro in America can never know his true family name, or even what tribe he was descended from." He quickly became the Nation of Islam's most effective preacher. In 1959, he was featured in a weeklong television special called *The Hate That Hate Produced,* which brought widespread attention to Malcolm and the Nation of Islam.

As a Black Muslim, Malcolm X rejected the goals of the early civil rights movement. Rather than seeking integration, the Nation of Islam promoted **black nationalism,** a doctrine that called for complete separation from white society. Black Muslims worked to become independent from whites by establishing their own businesses, schools, and communities.

Malcolm X also rejected nonviolence as a strategy to bring about change. Speaking to a group of black teenagers in New York City in 1964, he said,

> If the leaders of the nonviolent movement can go to the white community and teach nonviolence, good. I'd go along with that. But as long as I see them teaching nonviolence only in the black community, we can't go along with that . . . If black people alone are going to be the ones who are nonviolent, then it's not fair. We throw ourselves off guard. In fact, we disarm ourselves and make ourselves defenseless.

By the time he made this speech, Malcolm X had split with the Nation of Islam. During a pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Mecca in 1964, he had met Muslims of all races, including "blonde-haired, blued-eyed men I could call my brothers." On his return home, Malcolm X converted to orthodox Islam and began to reach out to people of all races, making a broader call for human rights. His change of heart upset many Black Muslims. In 1965, three members of the Nation of Islam assassinated Malcolm X while he was speaking in New York City.

SNCC Stands Up for Black Power A year after Malcolm X's death, SNCC leader Stokely Carmichael introduced the idea of black power to the civil rights movement. Black power had a variety of meanings, such as political power, economic power, and pride in being black. In a speech on black power, Carmichael observed that,

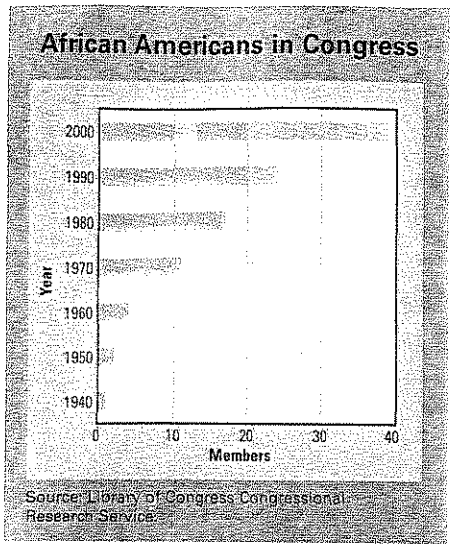
> This country knows what power is. It knows it very well. And it knows what Black Power is 'cause it deprived black people of it for 400 years. So it knows what Black Power is . . .
>
> We are on the move for our liberation . . . The question is, Will white people overcome their racism and allow for that to happen in this country? If that does not happen, brothers and sisters, we have no choice but to say very clearly, "Move over, or we're going to move on over you."
>
> —Stokely Carmichael, speech in Berkeley, California, 1966

The Black Panthers, who were militant black nationalists, called for economic and political equality for African Americans. They dressed in military-style clothing and often carried guns as a symbol of black power.

Carmichael went on to convert SNCC from an integrated organization to an all-black organization. "We cannot have white people working in the black community," he argued. "Black people must be seen in positions of power, doing and articulating [speaking] for themselves."

Black Panthers Work for Self-Determination Among the many African Americans influenced by Malcolm X were Bobby Seale and Huey Newton. In 1966, they founded the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California. In choosing that name, the founders were sending the world a message. An early supporter explained, "The black panther was a vicious animal, who, if he was attacked, would not back up. It was a political symbol that we were here to stay and we were going to do whatever needed to be done to survive."

The Black Panther Party developed a 10-point platform setting out its goals. The first and last points dealt with self-determination. "We want freedom," the platform began. "We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community." Other demands included jobs, decent housing, "education that teaches our true history," and "an immediate end to police brutality." Finally, the platform called on the United Nations to supervise a **plebiscite** among African Americans to determine "the will of black people as to their national destiny." A plebiscite is a vote on a question of importance.



The civil rights movement increased the number of black voters. It also led to increased numbers of African Americans being elected to Congress. When it was founded in 1969, the Congressional Black Caucus had 13 members. By 2005, that number had grown to 43.

The Black Panthers provided many services for blacks in their community, such as free breakfast programs for children, and medical clinics. But they were probably best known for their efforts to end police mistreatment of blacks. They sent observers onto the streets to watch interactions between police and black citizens. The observers carried a law book to provide information about people's rights, a tape recorder to document what was said, and a shotgun to show that they were prepared to defend themselves.

Because Black Panthers carried weapons and were willing to stand up to the police, they were viewed as dangerous radicals by law enforcement agencies. Local police and FBI agents often raided the Panthers' offices and homes. When confrontations with the police turned violent, the Panthers involved were arrested and jailed. By the mid-1970s, with its legal problems mounting, the Black Panther Party fell apart.

Black Power at the Polls Brings Political Gains For many African Americans, black power meant the power to shape public policy through the political process. Supported by the Voting Rights Act of 1965, civil rights groups organized voter-registration drives across the South. Between 1964 and 1968, the number of southern blacks registered to vote rose from 1 to 3.1 million.

Across the nation, African American candidates successfully competed for both black and white votes. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts was elected to the Senate in 1966, becoming the first black senator since 1881. Two years later, Shirley Chisholm of New York became the first black woman to win election to the House of Representatives. In 1969, the African American members of the House of Representatives started the Congressional Black Caucus. Over the years, the caucus has worked to address legislative concerns of African American citizens.

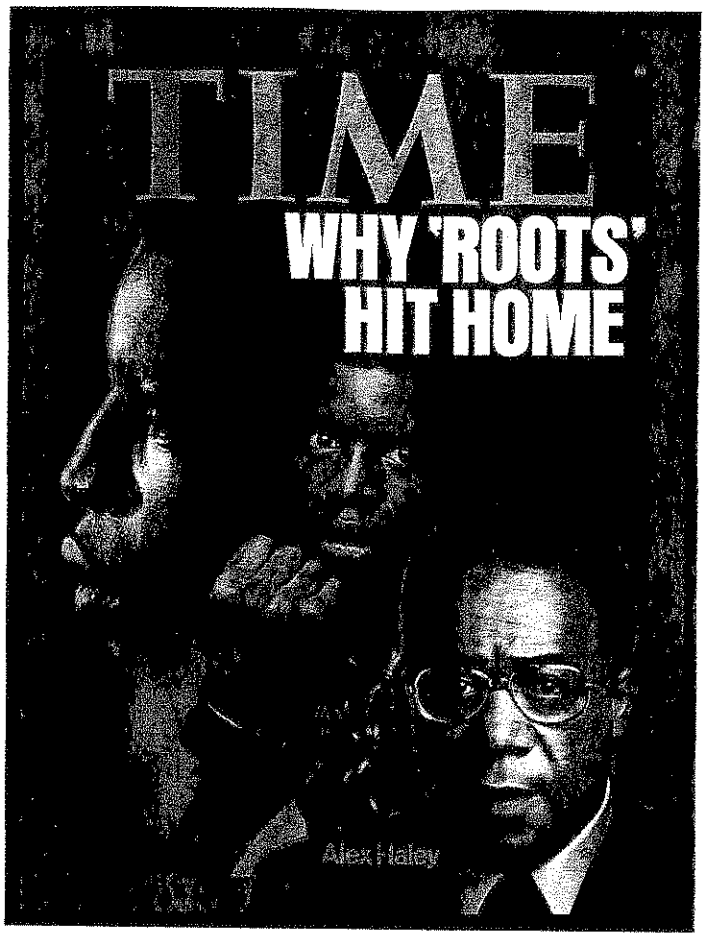
Black politicians were also successful at winning state and local elections. In 1967, Carl Stokes of Cleveland, Ohio, became the first black mayor of a

In 1968, Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman elected to Congress. Chisholm was one of a growing number of African Americans elected to political office as a result of the civil rights movement. In 1972, Chisholm ran for president.

major U.S. city. Six years later, Tom Bradley became the first black mayor of Los Angeles. Bradley won by forging a powerful coalition that included inner-city blacks, the Jewish community, and business and labor leaders. "He built bridges to whites and to other groups," noted a political scientist, "without ever losing his commitment to the black community." Bradley was reelected four times, serving as mayor for 20 years.

African Americans also rose in the judicial branch of the government. Thurgood Marshall, who had argued the *Brown v. Board of Education* case as the NAACP's lead attorney, was named the first black Supreme Court justice in 1967.

Black Pride: The Growth of Afrocentrism For many African Americans, black power meant taking pride in their African heritage. This focus on African history, African culture, and the achievements of African peoples and their descendants in the United States came to be known as **Afrocentrism**. Afrocentric scholars argued that the accounts of history taught in most schools ignored the many contributions of African peoples. In their view, Afrocentrism helped to balance the Eurocentric, or European-centered, view of the past that had long been presented to American schoolchildren, both black and white.



Roots, a television miniseries on slavery, had a huge impact when it aired in 1977. Based on a novel by Alex Haley and starring actor LeVar Burton (shown above), the series told the story of several generations of an enslaved black family. TV executives feared that a show focused on African American history would be a ratings failure. To their surprise, *Roots* became the most-watched television show in history.

African Americans showed pride in their heritage in many ways. College students pushed for the establishment of African and African American studies classes. Museums began to show African American history and art. On a more day-to-day basis, many blacks began to dress in traditional African clothing, wear their hair in African styles called Afros, and exchange their Eurocentric names for Afrocentric ones. In 1966, a black scholar invented an Afrocentric holiday called Kwanzaa, which takes place each year between December 26 and January 1. During Kwanzaa, black Americans celebrate seven principles of African American culture, including faith, creativity, and unity.

Black writers also expanded Afrocentric culture as they wrote about their experiences. Poets like Nikki Giovanni and playwrights like Amiri Baraka and August Wilson brought the struggles of African Americans into their poems and plays. Novelists like Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker wrote widely read novels about African American life, both past and present.

In 1977, a 12-hour television miniseries on African American life called *Roots* became one of the most highly rated shows in television history. Based on a historical novel by Alex Haley, *Roots* told the story of several generations of an enslaved black family. More than 250 colleges planned courses around the broadcasts, while more than 30 cities declared "Roots" weeks. Vernon Jordan, former president of the Urban League, called the miniseries "the single most spectacular educational experience in race relations in America."

"I'm Eight. I Was Born On The Day Of The Supreme Court Decision"

A decade after *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled that schools must desegregate, many had not done so. In 1971, the Supreme Court approved the use of busing to end de facto segregation in large urban districts.

46.4 The Federal Government Confronts Racism

On March 31, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. preached at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. In his sermon, King spoke frankly about racism:

> It is an unhappy truth that racism is a way of life for the vast majority of white Americans, spoken and unspoken, acknowledged and denied, subtle and sometimes not so subtle . . . Something positive must be done. Everyone must share in the guilt as individuals and as institutions . . . The hour has come for everybody, for all institutions of the public sector and the private sector to work to get rid of racism.
>
> —Martin Luther King Jr., "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution," 1968

That hour never came for King. Four days later he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to support a sanitation workers' strike. Riots erupted in more than 100 cities, including Washington, D.C. As dawn broke on April 6, 1968, a thick pall of smoke hung over the nation's capital. In the wake of these tragedies, the federal government increased its efforts to end racism and discrimination in public life.

Banning Racial Discrimination in Housing Before his death, King had shifted his focus from integration to economic equality. As part of this campaign, he took on the issue of racial discrimination in housing. In many U.S. cities, landlords in white neighborhoods refused to rent to blacks. African Americans also found it difficult to buy houses in many neighborhoods. Even when African Americans found a home to buy, they discovered that banks were reluctant to make loans to black borrowers.

Under King's leadership, the black community joined with realtors and bankers to encourage open housing in Chicago. But very little actually changed. Then, in 1968, only days after King's assassination, Congress finally took action. Drawing on King's efforts and on the national grief over his death, Congress passed the **Civil Rights Act of 1968**. This law included a fair-housing component that banned discrimination in housing sales and rentals. It also gave the federal government the authority to file lawsuits against those who violated the law.

Desegregating Public Schools In 1954, the Supreme Court had ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that school segregation was unconstitutional. A year later, it had ordered schools to be desegregated "with all deliberate speed." But a decade later, only 1.2 percent of black children in the South attended integrated schools.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 gave the federal government new powers to promote school desegregation. Government officials pushed school districts to integrate their schools by threatening to cut off federal funds if they did not. By 1968, the proportion of African American students in the South attending schools with whites had risen to 32 percent.

By this time, however, the Supreme Court was losing patience with school districts that were slow to act. In a 1969 case known as *Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education*, the Court took another look at "with all deliberate

speed." The case involved a segregated Mississippi school district that was trying to delay integration. In the Court's decision, Justice Hugo Black wrote,

> There are many places still in this country where the schools are either "white" or "Negro" and not just schools for all children as the Constitution requires. In my opinion there is no reason why such a wholesale deprivation of constitutional rights should be tolerated another minute. I fear that this long denial of constitutional rights is due in large part to the phrase "with all deliberate speed." I would do away with that phrase completely.
>
> —*Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education*, 1969

Three years later, the Supreme Court took another look at school segregation in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*. This case raised the question of whether de facto segregation caused by housing patterns was constitutional. This was the situation in North Carolina's Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. Because most children in the district lived in predominantly white or black neighborhoods, they also attended all-white or all-black schools. In 1970, a federal judge ordered the district to use busing to integrate its schools. Under the judge's desegregation plan, some students, including very young ones, would be bused to schools outside their neighborhoods to create more racially balanced schools.

The school district appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that the judge had gone too far. In a unanimous decision delivered in 1971, the Court supported the judge's busing plan. "We find no basis for holding that the local school authorities may not be required to employ bus transportation as one tool for of school desegregation," wrote Chief Justice Warren Burger. "Desegregation plans cannot be limited to walk-in schools."

Using Busing to Achieve Racial Balance in Schools The Court's approval of busing to achieve racial balance in schools was controversial. Supporters argued that busing was useful for ending school segregation. They quoted studies showing that black children got higher test scores when attending integrated schools.

Many school districts used busing to integrate schools. These children are being bused to a Boston school in 1975. NAACP leader Ruth Baston explained that she favored busing because schools in white neighborhoods were better than schools in black neighborhoods. She observed that where "there were a large number of white students, that's where the care went. That's where the books went. That's where the money went."

Boston's efforts to desegregate schools were marred by protests and violence. White families fled the city, resulting in a school population composed mostly of minority students.

However, many parents, both black and white, felt strongly that their children should attend schools close to home. They worried about the effects of long bus rides, especially on young children. They also feared for the safety of children bused into unfamiliar neighborhoods.

Nowhere was resistance to busing stronger than in the city of Boston, Massachusetts. In 1974, a judge ordered the busing of 17,000 Boston school children to desegregate the city's schools. Large numbers of white families opposed the judge's order. Resistance was especially strong in South Boston, a mostly white neighborhood.

When school began at South Boston High School that fall, 90 percent of its white students boycotted classes. Black students leaving the school to board buses back to their neighborhoods were pelted with rocks. Later that fall, a white student was stabbed in a racial confrontation at the school. In response, an angry white mob trapped 135 black students in the school building for four hours. A force of 500 police officers was assigned to South Boston High—which had only 400 students—to keep order.

Over the next two years, an estimated 20,000 white students left Boston's public schools to avoid busing. Some went to private schools. Others moved with their families to the suburbs. As a result, by 1976, blacks and Hispanics made up the majority of Boston's school population.

Despite public resistance, the courts continued to enforce the *Brown* decision. By 1976, almost half of black students in the South attended schools with a majority of white students. In the Northeast, only 27.5 percent of black students attended integrated schools.

Fighting Racism in the Workplace Through Affirmative Action The Civil Rights Act of 1964 had outlawed discrimination in hiring based on race, religion, gender, or national origin. However, many argued that simply "leveling the playing field" in hiring was not enough. As President Lyndon Johnson observed in a speech to graduates of Howard University,

> You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "you're free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.
>
> —Lyndon Johnson, Howard University, 1965

Johnson argued that more needed to be done to counteract past discrimination that had denied minorities equal opportunities. One way to do this was through a policy known as **affirmative action**. This policy called on employers to actively seek to increase the number of minorities in their workforce.

Affirmative action was first introduced by President John F. Kennedy. In 1961, he issued an executive order that called on contractors doing business with the federal government to "take affirmative action" to hire minorities. President Johnson expanded Kennedy's policy to include women. He also required contractors to have written affirmative action plans. "This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights," Johnson said. "We seek . . . not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result."

President Richard Nixon took affirmative action a giant step further. In an executive order, he required government contractors to develop "an acceptable affirmative action program" that included "goals and timetables."

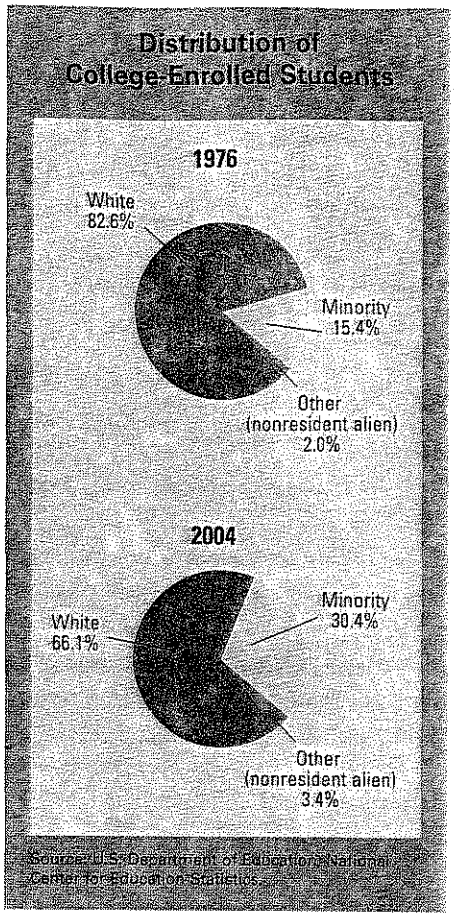
Equalizing Opportunities Through Preferential Treatment Many Americans agree with the goals of affirmative action. However, the practices used to carry out this policy have been controversial. An affirmative action plan may set specific goals, such as numbers of minority or women workers to be hired. It may include a timetable with dates for achieving those goals. It may also prescribe **preferential treatment** for some groups. This means giving preference to a minority or female job applicant because of that person's ethnicity or gender. To many people, preferential treatment looks like unfair discrimination against white males.

During the 1960s, many colleges and universities adopted affirmative action plans to attract more minority students. Members of minority groups were often given preferential treatment over white students who were equally qualified or more qualified. Such treatment was necessary, admissions officers argued, to open opportunities for minorities and to create a diverse student body.

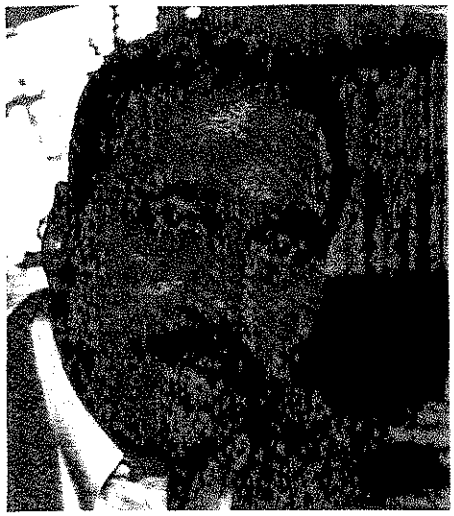
In the late 1970s, a white male named Allan Bakke challenged preferential treatment in university admissions. Bakke had twice applied for admission to the University of California Davis Medical School. He was rejected both times. At the same time, minority candidates with lower grade point averages and test scores were admitted under a special admissions program. Bakke concluded that he had been refused admission because he was white, and he sued the school for **reverse discrimination**.

In 1977, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* reached the Supreme Court. After hearing arguments on both sides, the Court was left deeply divided. Four justices were firmly against any use of race in university admissions. Another four felt just as strongly that race should be used. The remaining justice, Lewis Powell, thought race could be used as a criterion in choosing students but opposed the system of preferential treatment used by the University of California. Writing for the majority, Powell cautioned, "Racial and ethnic classifications of any sort are inherently suspect and call for the most exacting judicial scrutiny."

The Court's ruling narrowly upheld affirmative action by declaring that race could be used as one of the criteria in admissions decisions. However, it also said that racial quotas were unconstitutional—that race could not be used as the only criterion. Therefore, the Court ordered the university to admit Bakke to medical school. The ruling, however, did not end the debate over affirmative action and preferential treatment for women and minorities.



Affirmative action increased the number of minority students attending U.S. colleges and universities. In 1978, the Supreme Court ruled in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* that race could be considered in school admissions. But it could not be the only factor. The term "nonresident alien" in the graphs refers to foreign students.



Shelby Steele is a research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, where he specializes in the study of race relations and affirmative action. In 2006, Steele received the Bradley Prize for his contributions to the study of race in the United States.

Differing Viewpoints

46.5 Is Affirmative Action Still Necessary?

The Supreme Court narrowly approved affirmative action in the 1978 *Bakke* case. But it left many unanswered questions. Is affirmative action a form of reverse discrimination? Which groups should receive preferential treatment in hiring and school admissions? And for how long? In 1996, these questions were put before California voters in the form of Proposition 209, which stated,

> The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.

Proposition 209 was approved by 54 percent of the voters. In other states, however, the debate over affirmative action continues. Here are two contrasting perspectives on this issue.

Shelby Steele: Affirmative Action Hurts African Americans African American scholar Shelby Steele has studied the benefits and drawbacks of affirmative action programs. Such programs, he notes, are motivated by good intentions. "Yet good intentions can blind us to the effects they generate when implemented." In a 1990 article, he wrote,

> I think one of the most troubling effects of racial preferences for blacks is a kind of demoralization [discouragement]. Under affirmative action, the quality that earns us preferential treatment is an implied inferiority. However this inferiority is explained—and it is easily enough explained by the myriad deprivations that grew out of our oppression—it is still inferiority . . . In integrated situations in which blacks must compete with whites who may be better prepared, these explanations may quickly wear thin.

Steele believes that affirmative action encourages blacks to focus on their past sufferings as victims of racism rather than their strengths:

> Like implied inferiority, victimization is what justifies preference, so that to receive the benefits of preferential treatment one must, to some extent, become invested in the view of oneself as a victim. In this way, affirmative action nurtures a victim-focused identity in blacks and sends us the message that there is more power in our past suffering than in our present achievements.

In addition, Steele argues that affirmative action fosters the illusion that helping blacks with preferential treatment can make up for past wrongs:

> This logic overlooks a much harder . . . reality, that it is impossible to repay blacks living today for the historic suffering of the race. If all blacks were given a million dollars tomorrow it would not [compensate] . . . for three centuries of oppression that we still carry today . . . Suffering can be endured and overcome, it cannot be repaid. To think otherwise is to prolong the suffering.
>
> —Shelby Steele, "A Negative Vote on Affirmative Action," *The New York Times Magazine*, May 13, 1990

Coretta Scott King: Affirmative Action Promotes Justice During the debate over Proposition 209, Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King Jr., wrote an article opposing the measure. She began by explaining her husband's support for affirmative action.

> He did indeed dream of a day when his children would be judged by the content of their character, instead of the color of their skin. But he often said that programs and reforms were needed to hasten the day when his dream of genuine equality of opportunity—reflected in reality, not just theory—would be fulfilled.

King went on to explain why affirmative action was still needed, more than three decades after such programs began:

> Those who say that affirmative action is no longer necessary rarely cite statistics to support their argument, for the evidence of continuing pervasive discrimination against minorities and women is overwhelming. Indeed, statistics . . . testify to how precarious our hold is on equal opportunity and how discrimination in our society persists.
>
> Like my husband, I strongly believe that affirmative action has merit, not only for promoting justice, but also for healing and unifying society.
>
> —Coretta Scott King, "Man of His Word," *New York Times,* November 3, 1996

After her husband's death, Coretta Scott King campaigned successfully for a national holiday honoring the civil rights leader. "This is not a black holiday," she wrote, "it is a people's holiday. And it is the young people of all races and religions who hold the keys to the fulfillment of his dream."

Summary

The civil rights movement changed course in the mid-1960s, moving beyond the South and expanding its goals. Some activists also abandoned the strategy of nonviolence.

Black power In 1966, civil rights activists began calling for black power. They wanted African Americans to have economic and political power, as well as pride in their African heritage.

Watts riot In the summer of 1965, the Watts section of Los Angeles exploded in violence. This event was followed by riots in black ghettos across the nation.

Kerner Commission This commission, established by Lyndon Johson to study the riots, concluded that their fundamental cause was pent-up resentment over historic inequalities.

Nation of Islam Also called Black Muslims, the Nation of Islam advocated black nationalism. Its members believed that blacks should live apart from whites and control their own communities.

Black Panther Party The Black Panther Party demanded economic and political rights. Unlike nonviolent civil rights leaders, the Black Panthers were prepared to fight to realize their goals.

Civil Rights Act of 1968 The most important clause in this law bans discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, or sex.

Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education In this decision, the Supreme Court ruled that busing is an acceptable way to achieve school integration.

Regents of the University of California v. Bakke In its first case on affirmative action, the Supreme Court ruled that race may be used as one, but not the only, factor in school admissions.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Chapter 47

The Widening Struggle

Why and how did the civil rights movement expand?

47.1 Introduction

As a schoolteacher in the 1950s, Dolores Huerta taught the children of farmworkers in California's San Joaquin Valley. Huerta had grown up in the valley and knew about the hardships endured by farmworkers and their families.

Huerta liked teaching, but she wanted to do more to help the farmworkers. So she decided to give up her teaching job. "I couldn't stand seeing kids come to class hungry and needing shoes," she explained later. "I thought I could do more by organizing farm workers than by trying to teach their hungry children."

Together with farm labor organizer Cesar Chavez, Huerta formed the National Farm Workers Association. As a small union for migrant farmworkers, the NFWA seemed powerless next to the large corporations that ran farming operations in the San Joaquin Valley. Nevertheless, in 1966 it won a major victory by negotiating a collective bargaining agreement with the Schenley Wine Company. It was the first time a farmworkers' union had signed a contract with an agricultural corporation. Later that year, the NFWA merged with another group to become the United Farm Workers (UFW).

In the decades that followed, Huerta expanded her focus. Through her UFW work, she became an advocate for Latinos. In time she joined the struggle for women's rights, too.

Many groups of Americans experienced discrimination in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of these, like farmworkers, were mounting their campaigns for equal rights while the black civil rights movement was growing in the South. That movement inspired many groups to carry on with their own struggles.

This chapter continues the story of the civil rights movement as it expanded to include more Americans. Following the example of African Americans, other groups—including women, Latinos, American Indians, and Asian Americans—fought for their rights. Disabled, gay, and older Americans began to organize for equal treatment, too.

Dolores Huerta helped to found the United Farm Workers with Cesar Chavez and other labor activists in the late 1960s. She became a powerful advocate for workers' rights.

◀ Poster for a United Farm Workers boycott, 1978

47.2 Women Demand Equality

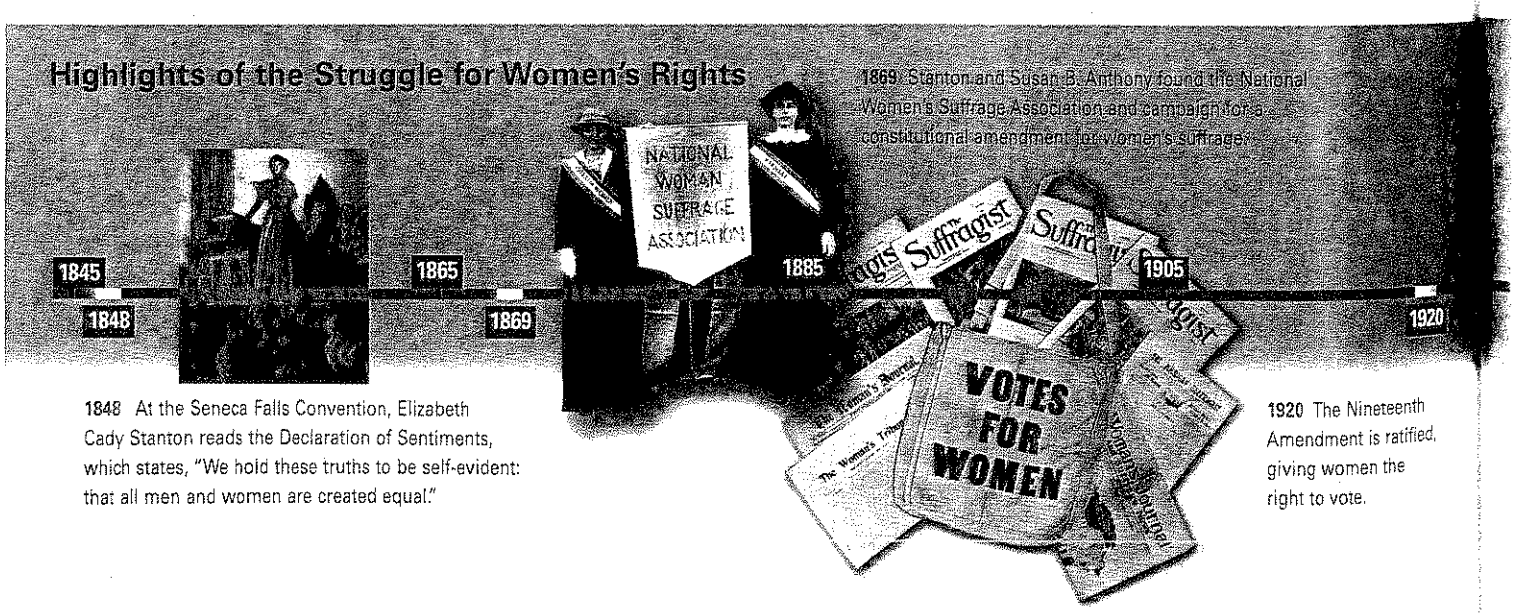
Like Dolores Huerta, many women who fought for civil rights and workers' rights later became active in the movement for women's rights. More than a century before, in the 1830s and 1840s, many women abolitionists had followed a similar path. In fighting to end slavery, they had come to recognize their own status as second-class citizens. These early advocates of women's rights held the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention and launched the women's suffrage movement. In the same way, many women who were inspired by the black civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s went on to forge the women's movement.

One Half of America Although women make up half the American population, in the early 1960s many women felt they were being treated like a minority and denied their rights. They wanted equal opportunity and the same rights as men.

In 1963, author Betty Friedan exposed the unhappiness of many middle-class women in her book *The Feminine Mystique*. She described women who had the things they thought they wanted—marriage, home, family—but were still dissatisfied. As Friedan wrote, the typical housewife wanted something more:

> As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night—she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question—"Is this all?"
>
> —Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique,* 1963

Many middle-class wives had attended college, but few had entered professions. Although the number of women in the workforce was rising, most held what were considered to be "women's jobs." They were secretaries or bank tellers, for example, while men might work as lawyers, doctors, or business executives. Because they held lower-status jobs, they earned less than men. In 1965, they made only about 60 cents for every dollar men earned. Even women in higher positions were paid less than male colleagues. Although the gap has narrowed, it remains significant. In 2004, women earned about 76 cents for every



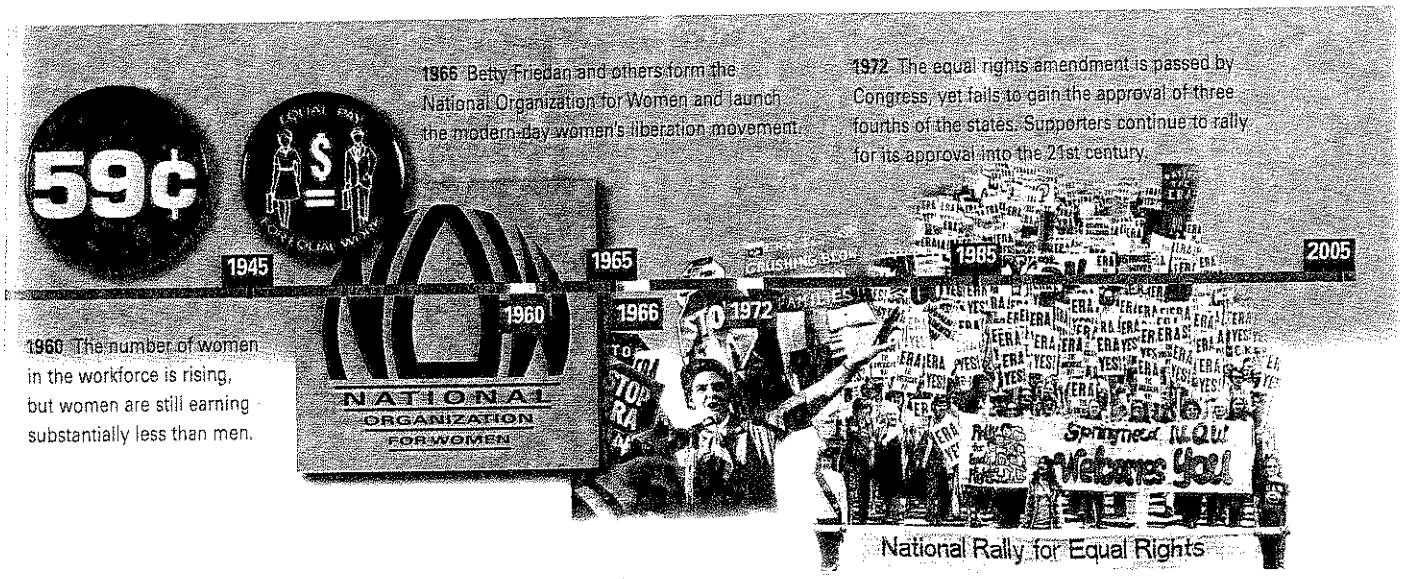
llar men earned. Meanwhile, relatively few women have been promoted to per management. The invisible barrier to women's professional advancement s been called the **glass ceiling**. This term has also been applied to minorities.

rganizing for Action In the early 1960s, Congress passed two laws banning x discrimination, but neither had much impact. The first, the Equal Pay Act 1963, outlawed "wage differentials based on sex" in industries that produced oods for commerce. This law only affected jobs that were nearly identical, owever. Since women and men generally did different types of work, the law id little effect on women's wages. The second law, the Civil Rights Act of 964, also prohibited discrimination based on sex. This law set an important ecedent, but it brought few immediate benefits for women.

To advance women's rights, Betty Friedan and other activists formed the ational Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. This group pledged "to ring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society." OW was made up mostly of middle-aged, middle-class women. Like the ore moderate organizations of the civil rights movement, NOW placed much f its focus on legal reforms and workforce discrimination, demanding equal pportunity for women.

On August 26, 1970, NOW organized the Women's Strike for Equality. he date marked the 50th anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth mendment, which granted women the right to vote. The strikers urged women ot to do their usual domestic tasks that day. Their slogan was, "Don't iron hile the strike is hot." That day, 50,000 women marched in New York City. ltogether, more than 100,000 people around the country took part in the trike, making it the largest action for women's rights in American history.

A more radical branch of the women's movement arose in the late 1960s. It as made up of younger women who had worked in the civil rights movement. hey coined the term **sexism** to describe oppression of women in the workplace nd home. They used the term women's liberation to describe their goal. They anted to emancipate women from customs and laws that kept them subordinate o men. Many of these ideas became part of the broader women's movement.



National Rally for Equal Rights

Phyllis Schlafly was a key leader of the opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment. She argued that the ERA would devalue traditional roles for women and harm the American family. Some opponents also feared that women would have to serve in the military and take on other roles normally associated with men.

Despite the growing prominence of the women's movement, many Americans at the time opposed feminism, the movement for women's equality. They believed that feminism posed a threat to traditional values and would undermine marriage and weaken the American family. They claimed that traditional roles for women gave them a strong and respected place in society and argued that feminists wanted to make women more like men.

Working for Equal Rights One of the main goals of the women's movement was to win passage of the equal rights amendment to the Constitution, or ERA, which stated that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The ERA had been submitted to every session of Congress since 1923. In 1972, for the first time, Congress passed the ERA and sent it to the states to be ratified.

At first it seemed certain that three fourths of the states would ratify the ERA and it would become law. But the amendment provoked a backlash. Some Americans feared that the ERA would devalue the roles of mother and homemaker. Some also believed it would lead to requiring women to serve in the military. As a result, the ERA failed to achieve ratification by the 1982 deadline set by Congress, falling 3 states short of the required 38 states.

Despite that loss, women's efforts to attain equal rights succeeded on many fronts. Some clear examples came in education. Between 1969 and 1973, the number of women law students nearly quadrupled, while the number of women medical students almost doubled. By 1997, women made up the majority of college students and earned the majority of master's degrees. Women's opportunities in education were enhanced by federal legislation. A law called Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in any school program receiving federal funds, including school athletics.

The Fight over Birth Control and Abortion The struggle for women's rights also focused on birth control and abortion. Many feminists believed that to control their lives, women must be able to control when, or if, they had children.

The development of the birth control pill was a major step in this direction. In 1960, the Food and Drug Administration approved the pill, and by 1965, five million women were using it. The pill had a tremendous impact on women's lives, and on society, by allowing women greater control over reproduction.

Some Americans disapproved of the pill. They favored abstinence as a form of birth control and argued that family-planning centers should not advise couples on other methods to avoid pregnancy. But in 1965, the Supreme Court ruled that married couples had a "right to privacy in marital relations" that included access to counseling on birth control, including use of the pill.

Several years later, the Supreme Court extended this right of privacy to the question of abortion. In 1973, the Court ruled in *Roe v. Wade* that the "right of privacy . . . is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy." Feminists considered this ruling a major advance in the struggle for women's civil rights, but the ruling has remained controversial. Opponents argue that life begins at conception and see abortion as murder. Supporters say women have the right to control their bodies and that abortion should remain legal.

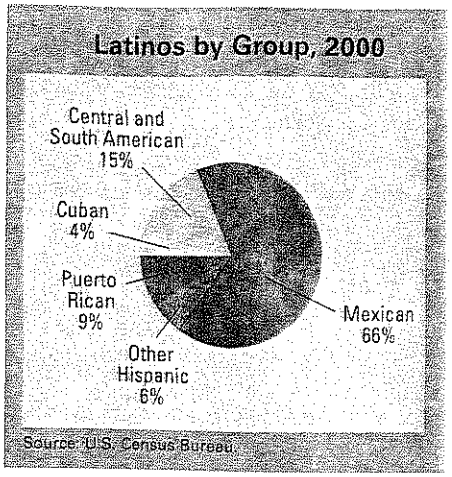
47.3 Latinos Organize to Be Heard

In 1967, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales published a poem called "Yo Soy Joaquin" ("I Am Joaquin"). The poem describes the difficulty of retaining a Mexican identity while living in American society. Part of the poem reads,

> I am Joaquin . . .
> lost in a world of confusion,
> caught up in the whirl of a
> gringo society, confused by the rules,
> scorned by attitudes,
> suppressed by manipulation,
> and destroyed by modern society.
>
> —Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, "I Am Joaquin," 1967

For many Latinos, the poem struck a chord. They saw it as a cultural and political statement, and it became a rallying cry for Latino rights.

Gonzales was one of many Spanish-speaking Americans who cried out for equal rights in the 1960s. As the civil rights movement expanded around the country, Latinos also lent their voices to the struggle for equality.



People of Mexican ancestry make up the largest share of the U.S. Latino population. In 2000, about two thirds of all Latinos in the country fell into this group. "Other Hispanic" refers mainly to people with roots in Spain or the Dominican Republic.

Diverse People Speaking One Language Latinos, or Hispanics, are a diverse group. They include Mexican Americans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and people with origins in Central and South America. Some were born in the United States while others migrated here. Despite their different backgrounds, however, most share some similar cultural traits, including the Spanish language.

In the 1960s, Latinos also faced similar issues. For example, they often experienced employment discrimination. Many had low-wage jobs with few benefits. Many also struggled with language problems in school, where most classes were taught in English.

At the same time, the various Latino groups had their own distinct concerns and perspectives. In the mid-1960s, many Mexican Americans began to identify themselves as Chicanos. This term had originally been used as an insult, but young Mexican Americans embraced the name as an expression of pride in their culture.

Cuban Americans in the 1960s differed in many ways from Mexican Americans. Most lived in Florida, and they tended to be better educated and more affluent than other Latino groups. Most had fled their homeland after the Cuban Revolution and were recent arrivals in the United States.

Puerto Ricans were already U.S citizens when they came to the mainland because Puerto Rico is an American commonwealth, an unincorporated territory of the United States. However, they suffered some of the same injustices as other Spanish speakers. They sought better education and improved conditions in the cities where they lived. They also wanted to end discrimination.

Boycotting Grapes for Recognition One of the most notable campaigns for Latino rights in the 1960s was the farmworker struggle in California. Cesar Chavez, a farmworker born in Arizona, was one of the principal leaders of this effort to improve the lives of migrant workers.

Cesar Chavez was a major figure in the struggle for farmworkers' rights. Having grown up in a family of migrant workers, he understood the hardships they faced. A skilled organizer and leader, Chavez headed the United Farm Workers for many years until his death in 1993.

Chavez helped found the United Farm Workers, along with Dolores Huerta and other labor activists. The union was made up mostly of Mexican American migrant workers. In 1965, the union—then known as the National Farm Workers Association—joined a strike against grape growers. The strike, or "La Huelga," lasted five years. During this time, Chavez organized a national boycott of table grapes that won widespread support. Finally, in 1970, grape growers agreed to a historic contract that granted most of the workers' demands, including union recognition and higher wages and benefits.

Like Martin Luther King Jr., Chavez relied on nonviolence in the struggle for equal rights. Among other tactics, he used hunger strikes as a political tool. He fasted several times over the years to draw attention to the plight of farmworkers and to pressure employers to improve working conditions.

La Raza: A People United In the late 1960s, young Chicanos also began to organize a political movement called La Raza Unida, or "The People United." They used the term *la raza,* meaning "the people" or "the race," to identify themselves and connect with their roots in ancient Mexico. They claimed this heritage, particularly their links to the Aztec people, as a common bond among Chicanos. La Raza Unida became a political party in 1970 and ran candidates in state and local elections across the Southwest.

A key issue for Chicano activists was **bilingual education,** or teaching in two languages. In 1968, President Johnson signed the Bilingual Education Act, legalizing instruction in languages other than English. The courts later ruled that schools must address the needs of non-English speakers, including teaching in students' native languages. Spanish-speaking students continued to face discrimination, though. In 1968 and 1969, Chicano students throughout the Southwest boycotted classes to protest poor education in their schools.

During this time, the Brown Berets also fought for Chicano rights. Founded in East Los Angeles, this group modeled itself on the Black Panthers. It worked to improve housing and employment and instill pride in Chicano culture.

As Mexican Americans fought for civil rights, so, too, did other groups of Latinos. Gradually, Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos began to find greater opportunity in American society.

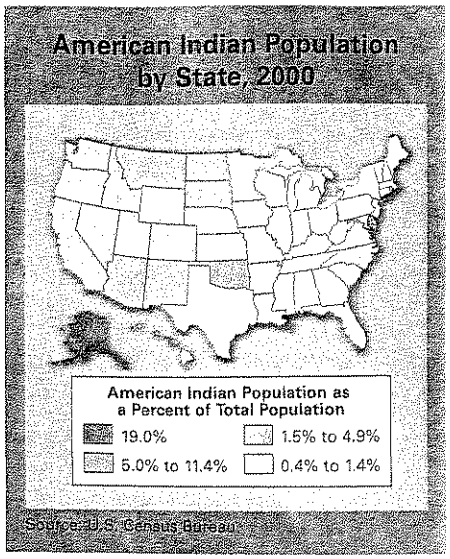
47.4 American Indians Seek Justice

In 1968, 10 percent of the population of Minneapolis was American Indian. However, Indians made up 70 percent of the prisoners in the city's jails. Local activists believed that this imbalance reflected police harassment of Indians. To fight for their rights, Indian activists formed the American Indian Movement (AIM). For much of 1968, they monitored police radios and responded to calls that involved Indians, often arriving at the scene before the police. As a result, AIM prevented the unfounded arrests of many Indians. According to AIM, the number of Indians in jail in Minneapolis decreased by 60 percent that year.

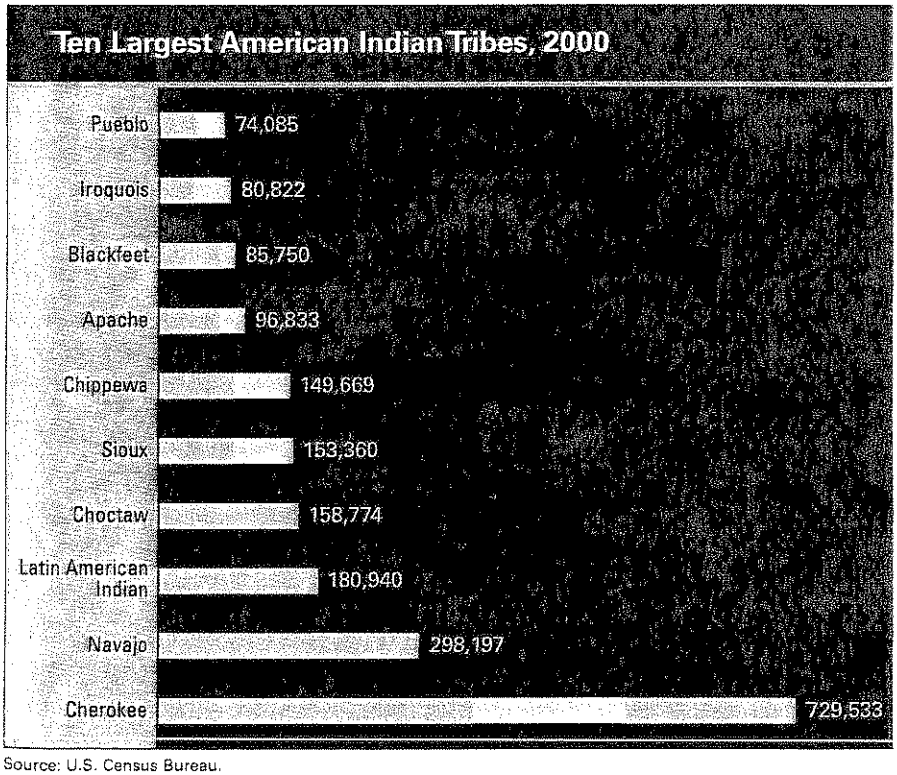
One People, Many Nations Indians come from many tribes, which they often call nations. In the late 1960s, some Indian activists believed that the Indian nations had much in common, including a shared identity as native peoples. And although they lived in different ways and different places—some on reservations, others dispersed throughout society—they shared many of the same problems.

Most American Indians lived in poverty. They suffered greater economic hardship than any other ethnic group in the country. Unemployment was 10 times higher than the national average and was especially high on reservations. The average annual family income was $1,000 less than for African Americans. Life expectancy was also much lower than the national average.

The federal government had tried to help American Indians, but with little success. In 1968, Congress passed the Indian Civil Rights Act. This law was designed to ensure equality for American Indians. It guaranteed Indians protection under the Constitution, while recognizing the authority of tribal laws. It had few concrete effects, though. In practice, American Indians still lacked equal rights and opportunity in American society, and many were losing patience.

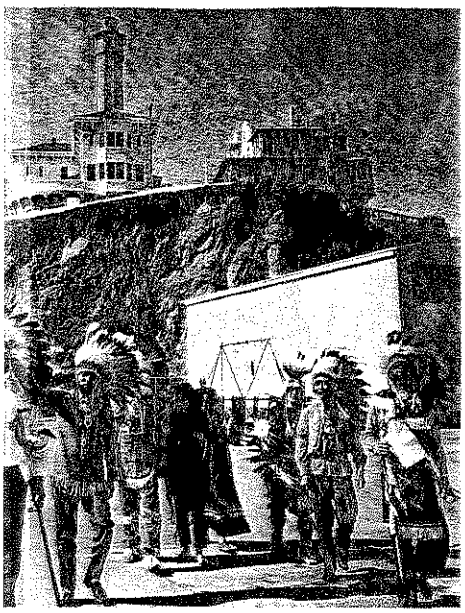


Most American Indians, including Alaska Natives, live in the western United States. As this map shows, the number of native peoples in each state, as a percentage of state population, varies considerably. Note that Alaska Natives made up nearly one fifth of that state's population in 2000.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The 2000 census reported 2.5 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States, or 1.5% of the total population. These native peoples belonged to many different tribes, or nations. This graph shows population figures for the 10 largest tribes in 2000.



In November 1969, American Indians occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. They demanded Indian ownership of the island and funding for an Indian university and cultural center. The occupation lasted until June 10, 1971.

Radicals Make the Cause Known On November 20, 1969, eighty-nine Indians took over Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, occupying the island's deserted prison. The group called themselves Indians of All Tribes. Their Alcatraz Proclamation declared, "We . . . reclaim the land known as Alcatraz Island in the name of all American Indians by right of discovery." In addition to the land, the group demanded that the government fund cultural and educational centers.

The U.S. government rejected the demands. But for the Indian rights movement, also called Red Power, the occupation was a success. As one participant said, "We got back our worth, our pride, our dignity, our humanity." The Indians occupied Alcatraz for more than a year and a half.

American Indians took other actions in their struggle for equality. In 1972, AIM led an event called the Trail of Broken Treaties. A caravan of protesters left the West Coast and traveled to Washington, D.C., to draw attention to Indian concerns. They brought a 20-point proposal to present to the government. The proposal focused on restoring federal recognition of Indian tribes and Indian control on reservations. It also sought protection for Indian cultures and religions.

When the caravan arrived in Washington, some protesters occupied the offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. After six days, they agreed to leave, on the condition that no one be prosecuted and that the federal government agree to respond to the 20 points. After studying the AIM document, however, the Nixon administration rejected its demands.

Tensions increased in February 1973, when AIM protesters occupied the town of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, the site of an 1890 massacre of American Indians. They called for changes in the governing of reservations. They also demanded that the U.S. government honor the Indian treaties it had signed over the years. After 70 days, the FBI stormed the site. Two Indians were killed, and one federal marshal was seriously injured.

In 1978, American Indian activists continued their actions with a five-month protest they called the Longest Walk. The walk started in San Francisco and ended in Washington, D.C. Its purpose was to bring attention to the many times American Indians had been forced off their land.

Courts and Legislation Bring Victories Although the actions of groups like AIM failed to bring dramatic improvements in the lives of most American Indians, they did draw attention to Indian rights and help promote some reforms. In 1975, Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. The law provided more federal money for Indian education. It gave Indians more control over reservations. It also placed more American Indians in jobs at the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Indian tribes also won some legal victories. The government returned control of Blue Lake in New Mexico to the Taos Pueblo tribe, which considers the site sacred. Congress also passed the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act in 1971. The law turned 40 million acres of land over to Alaska Natives. In 1980, Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians in Maine were awarded $81.5 million in exchange for giving up claims to their land. They used some of the money to buy back 300,000 acres. These victories raised hopes for a better life for American Indians.

Asian Americans Raise Their Voices

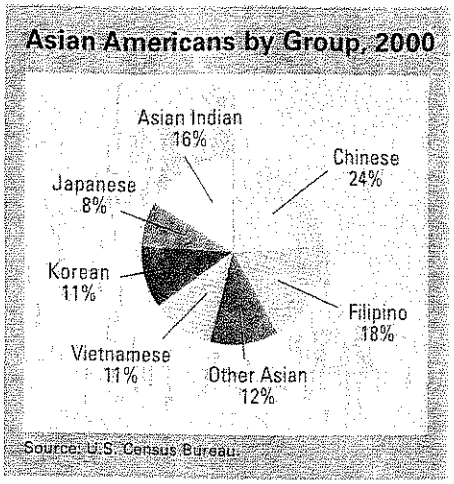
n Americans also joined the broad movement for civil rights in the 1960s. ct, the farmworkers' strike against California grape growers was launched by n American activists. Larry Itliong, one of the leaders of a largely Filipino workers' union, played a key role in this strike. He and other Filipino acti- also helped form the United Farm Workers. They were part of a growing ement for Asian American rights.

"Model Minority" Like Latinos, Asian Americans are a diverse group. have ties by birth or culture to the countries of eastern and southern Asia. n groups with a longstanding history in the United States include Chinese, nese, Filipinos, and Koreans.

Starting in the 1870s, the U.S. government set limits on Asian immigration. Immigration Act of 1965 removed those limits, and the number of Asian igrants increased greatly. In recent decades, people from such countries as , Vietnam, and Cambodia have added even more diversity to the Asian rican population.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, many Asian Americans thrived in the United s. They were sometimes called the "model minority" because they were as working hard and succeeding without protesting or making demands. e people even pointed to their progress as proof that ethnic differences were arrier to success in American society. But these arguments, along with the del minority" label, aroused resentment among other minorities, who some- s felt that Asian Americans received favorable treatment.

The perceived success of Asian Americans was only partly true. Although from 1980 show that many Asian Americans earned salaries higher the national average, more than half lived in just three states: New York, ornia, and Hawaii. These states have a very high cost of living, a measure includes the price of food, housing, and other essentials. People had to earn to live in those states. Also, many Asian American households include ral adult wage earners, a fact that was reflected in higher family incomes. Furthermore, although many Asian Americans had attended college and ed professions, others had not. Many Asian immigrants had low-paying limited English language skills, and little education. Like other minorities, faced discrimination because they were not white.



Chinese Americans have traditionally been the largest Asian group in the United States. As this graph shows, that was still the case in 2000. Since the 1960s, however, immigrants from other parts of Asia have been arriving in increasing numbers. As a result, Asian Indians, Vietnamese, and others are making up a growing share of the Asian American population.

Although Asian Americans live throughout the United States, many are concentrated in traditional ethnic neighborhoods. New York City's Chinatown, pictured here, is the largest Chinese enclave in the Western Hemisphere. In recent years, it has also become home to other Asian groups, including Burmese, Filipinos, and Vietnamese.

College Students Unite to Be Heard Asian American students began to call for equal rights in the 1960s. On some college campuses, student activists organized a political movement. Their stated aim was to end racial oppression "through the power of a consolidated yellow people." Yellow Power became their slogan.

In 1968 and 1969, Asian American students at San Francisco State University and the University of California at Berkeley helped organize student strikes. They wanted more minority participation in university affairs. They also called for academic programs that focused on ethnic and racial issues. At the time, minority perspectives played little role in university education.

Their efforts succeeded. In 1969, San Francisco State started the country's first school of ethnic studies. Between 1968 and 1973, many other colleges and universities also set up Asian American studies programs.

These new programs had a great impact on students. Helen Zia, a Chinese American, recalled, "In college, I learned that I was an Asian American. I learned that I didn't have to call myself Oriental like a rug. It was like a light bulb going off." What Zia and many others learned about their heritage gave them a new understanding of their identity and rights in American society.

Fighting for Internment Reparations One key battle for Asian American rights focused on Japanese American internment during World War II. Executive Order 9066 had forced many into internment camps, and the Supreme Court's 1944 ruling in *Korematsu v. United States* had upheld the order. Thirty years later, many people began to demand reparations for this historic injustice.

In the 1970s, a younger generation of Japanese Americans inspired by the Black Power movement spoke out against the discrimination their families had suffered. In 1978, a group in Seattle held the first Day of Remembrance. They shared family stories and discussed the hardships of internment. One organizer described the event as a "way to reclaim our past and make it our own." The Day of Remembrance is now observed in other cities, too.

Meanwhile, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), which was formed in 1929 to defend the rights of Japanese Americans, sought legal remedy. In 1978, it began to pursue compensation for the suffering in the internment camps. In 1988, Congress finally apologized for the internment. It also authorized payment of $20,000 to each survivor. Although the sum was relatively small compared to individual losses, this official response helped to make up for a historic wrong.

In 1978, Japanese Americans began seeking reparations for their internment during World War II. Three key activists in this effort were Fred Korematsu, Minoru Yasui, and Gordon Hirabayashi (shown here, left to right). Each had fought the internment policy in the courts during the 1940s. In 1988, the government apologized and offered $20,000 to each survivor.

47.6 More Groups Seek Civil Rights

In 1962, the University of California at Berkeley reluctantly admitted Ed Roberts as a student. Roberts had a severe **disability,** an impairment that limited his daily activities. Polio had left him paralyzed, and he needed a respirator to breathe. California's vocational rehabilitation agency had told Roberts that he would be too disabled to work. But Roberts surprised everyone. He fulfilled his degree requirements and graduated from UC Berkeley.

As a disability-rights activist, Roberts changed the way many Americans viewed people with disabilities. He helped disabled people gain the right to participate in life at the university. His achievements encouraged other disability activists around the country.

In the 1970s, disability-rights activists began to demand equal rights and opportunity. Protesters blocked doorways and demonstrated at the Capitol building. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act brought major reforms.

Many disabled Americans were inspired by the African American civil rights movement. So, too, were other groups, including gay Americans and older Americans. Starting in the 1960s, these groups made their own claims for equal rights.

Disabled Americans Demand Equal Access to Opportunities Disabilities can be both physical and mental. Physical disabilities include blindness, deafness, and impaired movement. Mental disabilities include illnesses like bipolar disorder. According to the 2000 census, nearly 20 percent of Americans over the age of five have some type of disability. But this large population has often been subject to discrimination.

The first groups of disabled Americans to fight for their rights were deaf and blind people. Decades before the civil rights movement, they set up organizations to provide education and other services to those who needed them. They also asserted that blind and deaf people had a right to use their own languages: braille and American Sign Language.

In the early 1970s, after graduating from UC Berkeley, Ed Roberts started a program to make it easier for physically disabled students to attend the university. He and fellow activists pressed the school to improve **accessibility** on campus, making it easier for the physically disabled to enter university facilities. Ramps and curb cuts, for example, made the campus more accessible to people in wheelchairs.

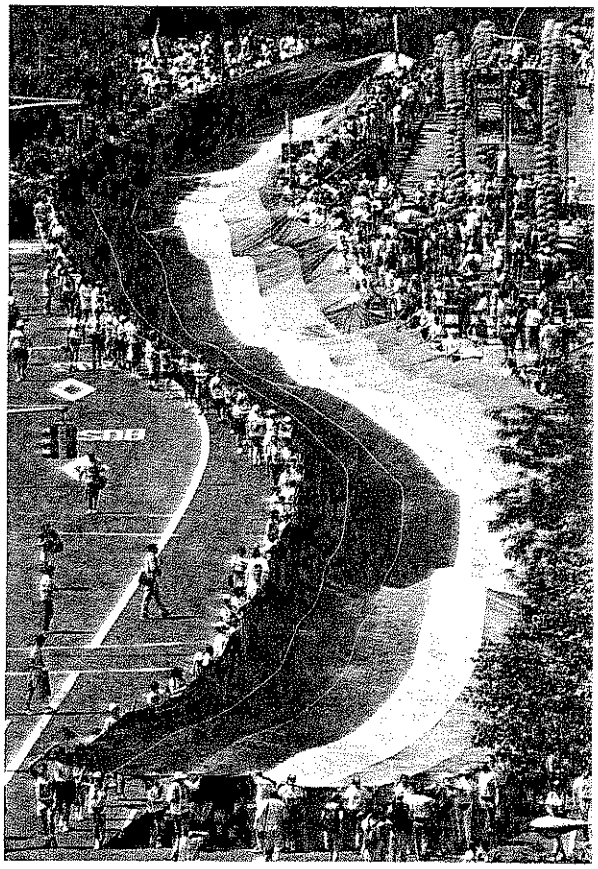
In 1973, Congress passed the Rehabilitation Act, which some supporters compared to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This law stated,

> No otherwise qualified individual with a disability . . . shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
>
> —Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The law granted disabled people the same access to federally funded programs as other Americans. It took four years, however, for government officials to decide how to enforce the law. They finally did so in 1977 after protesters, many in wheelchairs, took over the offices of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Washington, D.C.

Equal access applied to children, too. In 1975, Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This law set a new standard for educating disabled children. It said that these students must be in "the least restrictive environment possible." Wherever possible, students with disabilities were to be **mainstreamed,** or included in classrooms with nondisabled students.

The most important civil rights victory for disabled Americans came years later. In 1990, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA called for better public access for people with disabilities. Changes included braille signs on elevators and accessible public transportation. The ADA has also improved education for disabled children. Equal access to employment remains a problem, however. About 30 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed.



Every year, activists hold gay pride marches to mark the anniversary of the Stonewall riots of 1969. Stonewall is considered the start of the gay rights movement. The rainbow flag is a symbol of gay and lesbian community pride.

Gay Americans Stand Up for Their Rights Gay men and lesbians also began to demand equal rights in the 1960s. At the time, the police often harassed gay men and lesbians in public places. An employee could be fired for being gay or even for being perceived as gay. Many gays and lesbians felt they had to hide their sexual orientation to avoid discrimination.

A gay rights movement had begun to emerge in the late 1950s and early 1960s. By the late 1960s, gay rights activists in Philadelphia were holding an annual Fourth of July protest. Neatly dressed gays and lesbians gathered at Independence Hall, where the Constitution was signed. They pointed out to visitors that gay Americans did not enjoy many of the rights that most Americans took for granted.

It was not until the Stonewall riots, however, that the gay pride movement became highly visible. On June 27, 1969, New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in the neighborhood of Greenwich Village. New York outlawed homosexuality at the time, and police raids were common. That night, however, the customers at the Stonewall fought back. Riots broke out and lasted for hours. The Stonewall riots marked the beginning of the gay rights movement. Since then, the anniversary of Stonewall has prompted annual gay pride events in cities around the world.

After Stonewall, more Americans began to join the gay rights movement. In March 1973, a group of parents with gay sons and daughters began meeting in New York. By 1980, the group—now known as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, or PFLAG—had members around the country.

Another key event in the history of gay rights occurred in 1977, when Harvey Milk was elected to the board of supervisors in San Francisco. Milk was the first openly gay candidate to win office in a major American city. Eleven months later, however, Milk was assassinated by a former colleague.

Older Americans Promote Productive Aging Older Americans also joined the civil rights struggle. In 1972, Maggie Kuhn and some fellow retirees in Philadelphia formed the Gray Panthers. This group spoke out against unfair treatment of older Americans. The Gray Panthers called this treatment **ageism,** or discrimination against people on the basis of age.

Other groups had formed earlier to advocate for older Americans. The largest was the American Association of Retired Persons, founded by Ethel Percy Andrus in 1958. Andrus formed AARP to help retirees get health insurance. At the time, many older Americans had no health coverage, either because it was too expensive or because private insurance companies would not insure them. They were considered too much of a risk because of their age and potential health problems.

AARP lobbied for government health insurance. In 1965, Congress responded by establishing Medicare. This program provided hospital insurance for people ages 65 and over. It also helped pay prescription drug costs and other medical expenses for seniors.

Older workers also complained about discrimination in the workplace. To remedy this problem, Congress passed the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. This law made it illegal for employers to use age as a factor in hiring or promotion. In 1978, the Gray Panthers helped persuade Congress to push back the required retirement age from 65 to 70. Seniors could now work longer and continue to enjoy the benefits of employment.

The Gray Panthers fought age-based discrimination. Most of the Panthers, like cofounder Maggie Kuhn (above), were older Americans, but they believed that many young people suffered from discrimination, too.

Summary

The civil rights movement inspired many Americans to stand up for their rights. During the 1960s and 1970s, various groups sought equal treatment under the law and in society.

Women The National Organization for Women (NOW) and other feminist groups worked for women's rights. They wanted reforms to ensure greater equality and opportunity for women.

Latinos Various groups of Latinos struggled for their rights and identity in American society. The United Farm Workers (UFW) organized migrant farmworkers and helped increase their wages and benefits. The 1968 Bilingual Education Act required public schools to provide bilingual instruction.

American Indians The American Indian Movement (AIM) protested unfair treatment of American Indians. By the mid-1970s, some tribes had won payment for lost lands.

Asian Americans Asian American students asked for university programs in ethnic studies. The Japanese Americans Citizens League (JACL) sought compensation for internment during World War II.

Other groups Disabled Americans fought for equal access and won passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. After the Stonewall riots, gay Americans gained greater visibility in their fight for equal rights. Older Americans countered ageism by working through such groups as the Gray Panthers.