

Teaching American History Project
Civil Rights Methodology
Martin Luther King, Jr. – Stokely Carmichael
By: Bobby Skarvelas

Grade: 9-12

Length of Period: 1-2

Inquiry: Students will investigate the meaning of methodology and civil disobedience. Even though African Americans were granted several liberties through the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, they would not be realized until the late 1960s. There were numerous debates as to what type of protest Blacks should use to fight inequality. MLK prescribed to a strict doctrine of Non- Violence, while other thought that the use of force may be an eventual necessity. Through the lesson students will examine two forms of civil disobedience. They will be answering: What form of civil disobedience was most effective and Why? Some guiding questions that will assist the students are: why was there a need for change in methodologies? What historical events led to the rise of more militant forms of civil disobedience?

Objectives:

Students will know and be able to:

- Identify the key terms methodology & civil disobedience
- Analyze primary source documents
- Interpret historical meaning from film

Materials:

- Martin Luther King Jr. “I Have a Dream” speech
- Stokely Carmichael “ Black Power” speech
- Analysis sheet
- Movie: Great Debaters
- Movie Analysis sheet

Activities:

- **Initiation-** Use the movie Great Debaters to set the social atmosphere of the Jim Crow South. There are several applicable scenes. I use a lynch mob scene towards the middle of the movie. Then play the last debate dealing with Civil Disobedience. Have the students complete the analysis sheet on the movie and discuss as a class.
- Brief Lecture- Discussing MLK and Stokely Carmichael’s role in the Civil Rights movement. * students need prior knowledge in order to reach the higher levels of understanding Big Idea that there is a desire to move from a non-violent movement to Black Power Movement

- Distribute both speeches. You can play them online or recordings or have the students read them on their own. After they have read the speeches have them answer the analysis sheet. (Reading them aloud allows for more of a discussion to take place because questions can arise between lines and segments of the speech)
- Have a class discussion answering the questions and weaving in the film's discussion of civil disobedience. Use Questions on sheets as a guide for discussion.
- Closure- What form of protest would they think is most effective in the present time? Why?

Assessment:

- Informal assessment takes place in the form of student interaction and participation within the class.
- Class discussion.
- Check and monitor progress.
- Formal assessment takes place through the completion of both analysis sheets..

CT State Standards:

- formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources
- use primary source documents to analyze multiple perspectives
- identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I Have a Dream"

delivered 28 August 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial, [Washington](#) D.C.



<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=1732754907698549493>

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

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." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

Stokely Carmichael

Black Power



The advocates of Black Power reject the old slogans and meaningless rhetoric of previous years in the civil rights struggle. The language of yesterday is indeed irrelevant: progress, non-violence, integration, fear of "white backlash," coalition. . . . One of the tragedies of the struggle against racism is that up to this point there has been no national organization which could speak to the growing militancy of young black people in the urban ghettos and the black-belt South. There has been only a "civil rights" movement, whose tone of voice was adapted to an audience of middle-class whites. It served as a sort of buffer zone between that audience and angry young blacks. It claimed to speak for the needs of a community, but it did not speak in the tone of that community. None of its so-called leaders could go into a rioting community and be listened to. In a sense, the blame must be shared-along with the mass media-by those leaders for what happened in Watts, Harlem, Chicago, Cleveland, and other places. Each time the black people in those cities saw Dr. Martin Luther King get slapped they became angry. When they saw little black girls bombed to death in a church and civil rights workers ambushed and murdered, they were angrier; and when nothing happened, they were steaming mad. We had nothing to offer that they could see, except to go out and be beaten again. We helped to build their frustration. We had only the old language of love and suffering. And in most places-that is, from the liberals and middle class-we got back the old language of patience and progress. . . .

There are many who still sincerely believe in that approach. From our viewpoint, rampaging white mobs and white night-riders must be made to understand that their days of free head-whipping are over. Black people should and must fight back. Nothing more quickly repels someone bent on destroying you than the unequivocal message: "O.K., fool, make your move, and run the same risk I run-of dying."

Analysis: Changing Methodology

What is Martin Luther King Jr.'s feeling about the goals of the Civil Rights Movement?

What is Carmichael's attitude with the direction of the Civil Rights Movement?

Why might Carmichael wish for a change in the "traditional" methodology of King's Civil Rights Movement?

What do you think may have prompted the growing influence of the Black Power Movement? (Think about historic happenings)

The Great Debaters
Mr. Skarvelas

Name:

Preface: The movie is a loosely based on Wiley College in a segregated Texas during the 30s. Wiley College was an all-Negro college and had some of the best African American professors in the world at the time. The college was very intellectual having a small 300 person admission. The college created a forum for African Americans to become educated. Wiley College became nationally known for its historic debate program. Their program began integrated debates and eventually beat the national champion USC team inspiring many young & old African Americans to the prospects of true Black equality.

Debate: Civil- having to do with citizens; not having to do with military, navy, or connected to the church, Disobedience – refusal to obey

What is the issue that is being debated?

Arguments:

Affirmative:

Negative:

How does civil disobedience relate to the Civil Rights movement?

**Why is it wrong or what could happen if people do not obey fundamental laws?
(Referenced in debate)**

What might justify disobeying fundamental law? (Referenced in debate)

Can you think of anytime when you would be moved to disobey a law for a meaningful purpose? (When Why)

Big Ideas: Negro Colleges & Education in general gave Blacks a forum to gain orator skills, especially during the time when debate became a glorified intellectual activity at many colleges across the country.

The Civil Rights movement had changes of opinion dealing with the methodology used to achieve the goals of equality. There was a move from a more Non- violent disobedience to an addition of a more militant type movement.