

CIVIL RIGHTS

History



1955

EMMETT TILL

In August 1955, a 14-year-old Black boy allegedly flirted with a white woman in a grocery store in Money, Mississippi. Till's death was a spark that helped mobilize the civil rights movement. Three months after his body was pulled from the Tallahatchie River, the Montgomery bus boycott began.

1960

MEMPHIS SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

The year 1960 was a banner year for the Memphis NAACP branch. The organization challenged the city's segregated school system in *Northcross v. Board of Education of the Memphis City Schools*.



1965

SELMA AND VOTER RIGHTS

From the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) to the Selma to Montgomery marches (1965) the civil rights movement gained ground through activism, protests, and cultural influence. The three marches at Selma were a pivotal turning point in the civil rights movement. Because of the powerful impact of the marches in Selma, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was presented to Congress on March 17, 1965.



1966

MLK COMES TO MEMPHIS

On 7 January 1966, Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) announced plans for the Chicago Freedom Movement, a campaign that marked the expansion of their civil rights activities from the South to northern cities. In July, Chicago civil rights groups invited King to lead a demonstration against de facto segregation in education, housing, and employment.



1968

SANITATION STRIKE

After two Black Memphis garbage collectors were killed by poorly maintained equipment, 1,300 Black department of public works employee went on strike to protest a long pattern of neglect and abuse. It was to these strikers, the night before his assassination, that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "We've got to give ourselves to this struggle until the end. Nothing would be more tragic than to stop at this point in Memphis. We've got to see it through."

