

## **Art and Black Identity in the Civil Rights Movement**

*Lawrence A. Bosc*

### **Rationale**

“How does it feel to be problem? I answer seldom a word.”<sup>i</sup>

“... Why did God make me a stranger in mine own house.”<sup>ii</sup>

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring oneself by the tape of a world that looks on in contempt and pity.”<sup>iii</sup>

"The basic tenet of black consciousness is that the black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity." <sup>iv</sup>

Although W.E.B. DuBois and Stephen Biko were writing almost 75 years apart, their words expressed many similar ideas. Both were seeking to address the challenges that confronted blacks in their respective countries in the face of governments that were remarkably similar in the ways they oppressed persons of color. One of the key means of this oppression was imposing on blacks a specific vision of their identity as second-class citizens inferior in all things. It was up to them to forge a new identity that provided an alternative to the white narrative.

This curriculum unit is to be taught in my International Baccalaureate 20<sup>th</sup> Century History class which is taken by students in their senior year. In that class, teachers have five topics that they can cover. In years past I have focused on the following three areas: “Causes, practices and effects of war”, “Origins and development of authoritarian and single-party states” and “The Cold War.” This year I will add to that list a fourth topic which IB titles “Democratic states: challenges and responses.” It is in this last topic that I will focus on the Civil Rights Movement in the US from 1954-1972. The discussion on South Africa will be taught under the topic of single-party states.

The IB program encourages both interdisciplinary and international studies. Using the visual and literary arts to explore these topics I hope to draw in students who might consider a straight historical study less interesting. The use of the South Africa experience will broaden student understanding of the civil rights movement and its impact on the world outside the US as well as expose them to the vibrant music of the township. It also fits into the IB goal to “develop internationally minded-people.”<sup>v</sup>[v]

At the heart of the International Baccalaureate program is the learner profile. This is the “mission statement in action” of the program.<sup>vi</sup> The profile lists 10 ideals that it wants its students to emulate. This unit I am preparing will address most of these ideals and encourage them to be “inquirers”, “open-minded”, “caring”, and “principled.”

This unit will help me recruit students to go on the civil rights trip that I take in March, 2013. I have been taking this trip to key sites in Georgia and Alabama for the past 13 years and traditionally have a difficult time getting enough students to make the trip affordable. I think this unit will whet their appetite for more and encourage many to go on the trip. Also, since civil rights pioneer John Lewis spoke at our school early in the year, I believe this unit will really have a more meaningful impact. Finally, given the racial make-up of many of my classes, I hope that this unit will give some of them more ownership of the history.

### **Guiding Questions**

The following questions will be the focus of the unit.

- 1) Why was there a need for African-Americans to develop a black identity?
- 2) What were the different kinds of identities put forward by black artists?
- 3) How was the identity of African-Americans affected by the milieu in which they lived?
- 4) What are the things that make up the development of one’s identity?
- 5) Why is having an identity important?
- 6) How would you identify yourself?

### **Organization of the Unit**

Each day’s lesson will begin with a brief discussion of the historical context of the period. This will be followed by a look at the designated works of art.

Day 1 – Precursors to the Movement: 1900-1939

#### *Historical Context*

1895

- Booker Washington delivers “Atlanta Compromise” speech where he lays out a philosophy of accommodation and the importance of vocational education for blacks to an approving white audience. This speech would spark a serious debate in the black community about the road African-Americans should take regarding the acquisition of full equality.
- Ida B. Wells publishes *A Red Record*. Besides its statistical analysis of numerous cases of the lynching of blacks across the South from 1892-95, it was a plea for anti-lynching legislation at the federal level to stop this lawlessness.

1896

--The Supreme Court decision in the landmark Plessy v. Ferguson case puts judicial stamp of approval on the developing system of legalized segregation throughout the nation. Students should be exposed to the arguments of the majority (particularly the “separate but equal” doctrine and the lone dissenting opinion.

1905

--Following the publication of his *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903, W.E.B Du Bois helps found the Niagara Movement. This was an organization that was created to give direction and impetus to the movement for full civil rights for blacks.

1909

--Founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People by Du Bois and several other black and white activists.

1911

--Founding of National Urban League, created to advocate for the tens of thousands of African-Americans who migrated to northern cities from the South.

1914

--Marcus Garvey founds Universal Negro Improvement Association. Garvey’s Black Nationalist ideology demands political and economic independence and encourages African Americans to go back to Africa.

1915

--Premier of D.W.Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation*. Newly rejuvenated KKK meets at Stone Mountain, Ga. under the leadership of William Simmons.

1917

--“Race riot” in East St. Louis ends in deaths of 40 blacks and 8 whites – this kind of racial violence is repeated in many cities during the “Red Summer” of 1919 with deaths reaching over 100.

1919

--Release of Oscar Michaux’s first film “The Homesteader”

1926

--Langston Hughes publishes *Weary Blues*

1930

--W.D. Fard founds the Nation of Islam – this religious movement preaches Black Nationalism and separatism

1931

--Nine blacks arrested in Scottsboro, Alabama on charge of raping 2 white girls – after 3 trials and serious miscarriages of justice, all but 2 of the 9 were found guilty

1932

--US government begins Tuskegee syphilis study of 400 African-Americans

1939

--Billie Holiday performs “Strange Fruit”-a song written by a white teacher from New York named Abel Meeropol.

--Hattie McDaniel is first African-American to win an Academy Award

--Marian Anderson performs before 75,000 persons in front of Lincoln Memorial because she is not allowed to sing in the Daughters of the American Revolution Hall

*Class Activities*

“We wear the mask that grin and lies,  
It hides our checks and shades our eyes,-  
This debt we pay to human guile;  
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,  
And mouth with myriad subtlies.”<sup>vii</sup>

There could be no better way to begin a study of the difficulty faced by blacks in forging an identity than with the poetry of Paul Lawrence Dunbar. His professional life was the perfect illustration of DuBois’ “double-consciousness.” He was praised by white critics for his dialect poems and ignored by them when he wrote poetry like that above. The goal of this part of the unit will be to explore the struggle of African-Americans to make a positive identity for themselves in the face of the vicious stereotypes that were common in American film, literature, paintings and mass media. It will also look at the key events that provided the impetus for the movement.

Prior to the first day students will read Chapter 1 from W.E.B. Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk* and the short essay entitled “Race Love” from the *A.M.E. Review*. These sources can be found on the National Humanities Center website in the toolbox section of the seminar entitled “The Making of African American Identity, 1865-1919”.<sup>viii</sup> Their charge is to 1) discuss the argument for racial pride and 2) identify at least 3 quotes that succinctly state what Du Bois said about the biggest problems faced by blacks in America. “Race Love” is a great place to start the unit, as it directly addresses the first guiding question of why there was a need for a black identity. We will begin the period with a brief discussion of who Du Bois is, emphasizing his important role in the development of the Niagara Movement and in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as well as his remarkable achievements as the first African-American to get a PhD from Harvard University. Another part of the discussion might be taken up by looking at the quote attributed to him that he was proud of his mixed ethnic heritage and thankful that there was no Anglo-Saxon blood. After that, we will discuss what Du Bois said about the difficulty of being black in America focusing on the quotes they chose as key to explaining the challenges faced by African-Americans. Next, we will look at 4 poems by Dunbar: “Sympathy”, “We Wear the Mask”, “The Poet”, and “A Spiritual.” The focus of this brief discussion is not only to look at what Dunbar said in the works but look at the challenges posed for the black artist in America. We will follow that by looking at Langston Hughes’ poem “I, Too.” Besides briefly putting the poem in the context of the Harlem Renaissance we will discuss how Hughes was both referencing the famous poem by Walt Whitman (“I, Too Sing America”) and making a statement of his own about the role of blacks in the building of America and its future greatness. Part of their concluding assignment will be

to take the ideas expressed in this poem and write their own poem that expresses their own version of the place they find themselves in today.

The song we will look at will be James Weldon Johnson's "Lift Every Voice and Sing." After discussing the meaning of this work we will briefly discuss why this is considered the "Negro National Anthem."

The next artistic area we will look at is film. From the silent era to its heyday in the 1930's, the film industry was instrumental in promoting the negative stereotypes about blacks that abounded in other media. We will look at excerpts from 2 films in particular: D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* and *Gone with the Wind*. From the first film we will look at the scene where Griffith is purporting to be showing a "historical facsimile" of a session of the South Carolina House of Representatives. In the 2 minute scene, there are plenty of pernicious stereotypes shown. From one of Hollywood's most cherished films, *Gone with the Wind*, one can show any scene where "Mammy" is featured. A brief discussion should be accompanied by information about Hattie McDaniel, the first African-American to win an Oscar.

*Homework* – Students will read Frank Yerby's short story "The Homecoming."

Day 2 – More Precursors, 1940-1954

### *Historical Context*

1940

--Benjamin O. Davis becomes first African-American general in US army

1941

--Partly as a response to a threatened "March on Washington" to be organized by Asa Philip Randolph (leader of Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters), President Roosevelt issues Executive Order that forbids racial discrimination in hiring for defense industries.

1940-41

--Jacob Lawrence paints 60 piece "The Migration of the Negro" establishing his credential as the preeminent black artist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

1942

--Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), an interracial civil rights group, is formed – carry out sit-ins in Chicago restaurants

1943

--Shakespeare's *Othello* starring Paul Robeson begins its record breaking run on Broadway

1945

--*Ebony* magazine is founded – Its goal is to portray the lives and achievements of African-Americans.

1946

--Roger Malcolm, Dorothy Malcolm, Mae Murray Dorsey, and George Dorsey are lynched in what has been called the last mass lynching in American history at Moore's Ford Bridge outside of Monroe, Ga. This event prompted President Harry Truman to consider civil rights legislation including federal anti-lynching statutes. This would, by 1948 split the Democratic and lead to the formation of the independent Dixiecrat Party.

1947

--Jackie Robinson is first African-American to play in Major League Baseball

1948

--President Truman orders the military desegregated

1950

--Ralph Bunche is first African-American to win Nobel Peace Prize

--Gwendolyn Brooks is the first African-American to win the Pulitzer Prize for her book of poetry entitled *Annie Allen*

--Juanita Hall is first African-American to win a Tony Award

1953

--Ralph Ellison publishes *Invisible Man* for which he is given the National Book Award.

1954

--Supreme Court rules in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Ks.* that segregated schools are unconstitutional thus overturning the "separate but equal" doctrine enunciated in *Plessy v. Ferguson*

### *Class Activities*

"I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids-and I might even be said to possess a mind."<sup>ix</sup>

The quote above includes the opening lines from Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and they are a good starting point for our discussion on how World War II changed attitudes in the black community and helped push the civil rights movement. Students should be given a brief synopsis of the book (appendix 1) that will be followed by a discussion of the meaning of the quote. Prior to our look at Frank Yerby's short story *The Homecoming*, the students will be given information on the African-American participation in WW II (appendix 2). We will compare this to their participation in WW I in terms of numbers and actual participation in the fighting of the war and the length of American involvement in both wars. In small groups first, students will discuss the following prompts. 1) Describe the central character's hometown focusing particularly on the location of the Confederate Monument. 2) What does the presence of the monument say about attitudes about the Civil War in the South? Pay particular attention to the inscription on the monument. 3) What was the expectation of the white men at the monument and the white women in the store about Willie's behavior? 4) What "rules" did Willie violate? There should be a brief discussion of other social rules forced upon

blacks by the Jim Crow system. 5) What was the relationship between Willie and Colonel Bob? 6) Why does Willie say he is moving to the North? What is the Colonel's response to this? 7) Does the Colonel's attitude toward blacks change near the end of the story? 8) How is Willie "saved"? 9) What does this say about the future of race relations in the South? Following this discussion volunteers should be requested for a reenactment of the scene at the Confederate monument and in the store. These reenactments should reinforce the discussion that preceded them and could also include a discussion of the "n" word and "boy."

Near the end of the period we will look at 2 persons who provided another image in opposition to the pernicious stereotypes of the day: Oscar Michaux and Paul Robeson. Michaux was the greatest producer of race films-movies produced, directed and made for blacks-from the silent era through the 1940's. His films portrayed African-Americans not as two-dimensional cardboard characters but as human beings, with many of the same problems and life goals as whites. Paul Robeson was one of the most remarkable and multi-talented men of his age. A football All-American, he was the class valedictorian at Rutgers and went on to star in films (several by Michaux) and on stage-his starring role in *Othello* was the longest running Shakespeare play in Broadway history. Although his achievements and popularity presented a clear counter to the negative stereotypes then prevalent, he still faced the same difficulties many black artists faced. He was most well known to white audiences for his booming voice when singing "Ol' Man River" rather than his prowess on stage and screen. There is an excellent discussion of the career of Oscar Michaux in the documentary *Midnight Ramble*. There are plenty of short videos on You Tube featuring Paul Robeson. It would be an interesting contrast to look at him singing "Ol' Man River" and an interview he gave about his role in Shakespeare's *Othello*. We would end this study with a brief look at the discouraging end to both men's career.

*Homework* – Students will read James Baldwin's "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation" from his book *The Fire Next Time*.

Day 3 – The Early Years of the Movement, 1955-62

### *Historical Context*

1955

- Fourteen year old Emmett Till lynched in Money, Mississippi. The subsequent acquittal of the accused murderers by an all-white jury enraged the black community. Also, the decision by his mother to have an open casket funeral, showing the horrible nature of his death, gave added impetus to the Civil Rights Movement.
- Rosa Parks refusal to obey a request from a Montgomery, Alabama bus driver sparks bus boycott.

1956

--After a successful 9 month boycott the Supreme Court rules that Montgomery's bus segregation rules are unconstitutional.

1957

--Under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is formed adding another organization working for equal rights for African-Americans, if necessary, through non-violent civil disobedience.

--At Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, 9 black students who wish to attend their neighborhood school, are eventually allowed to go to the school with a National Guard escort, much to the dismay of Governor Orville Faubus.

1958

--Successful ballet dancer Alvin Ailey founds the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater

1959

--Lorraine Hansbury's *Raisin in the Sun* premieres on Broadway. It wins the Pulitzer Prize for literature 2 years later.

--Motown Records is founded by Barry Gordy, the first record company owned and operated by African-Americans.

1960

--Four college students (Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair, David Richmond, and Joseph McNeil) sit-in at a Woolworth store in downtown Greensboro, NC. This action sparks numerous sit-ins around the upper South, including the most successful one in Nashville, Tennessee (led by Diane Nash and John Lewis).

--April – Formation of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Raleigh, NC under the tutelage of NAACP member Ella Baker. As the name implies this was an organization that was founded on principles of non-violent civil disobedience to achieve the end of segregation in the South. They worked diligently in local communities primarily on voter registration.

1961

--CORE organizes Freedom Rides into the South. The Supreme Court had declared segregation on interstate buses unconstitutional in 1946 (*Irene Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*).

1962

--James Meredith's attempt to become the first African-American enrolled at the University of Mississippi is blocked by Governor Ross Barnett. Federal Marshals needed to escort him to campus after Governor Barnett's request is overturned by federal court. In turn, they need to be rescued by more marshals as students and locals surround the dormitory.

### *Class Activities*

“(after the murder,  
after the burial)

Emmett's mother is a pretty-faced thing;



the tint of pulled taffy.  
She sits in a red room,  
drinking black coffee.  
She kisses her killed boy.  
And she is sorry.  
Chaos in windy grays  
through a red prairie..”<sup>x</sup>

The above poem by Gwendolyn Brooks focuses on a seminal event in the civil rights movement. The lynching of Emmett Till, the subsequent acquittal of the accused murderers by an all white jury and the open casket funeral in Chicago were extremely important in pushing to the forefront the movement. One could say that this lynching, one of thousands over the past 80 years, was the catalyst for the more consistently confrontational approach taken by the movement beginning in 1955.

Most of this day we will be looking at 3 songs about lynching. First, we will look at the song “Strange Fruit”, first sung by legendary singer Billie Holiday in 1939 and written by a white New York teacher Abel Meeropol. Any discussion of lynching has to be handled carefully and teachers must consider the maturity level of their students. However, the horrific nature of these crimes would become a major factor in pushing African-Americans to, as Public Enemy would say, “fight the power.” YouTube has Billie Holiday singing the song and so that would be a good place to start. After watching this and handing out the lyrics, we will discuss the importance this song played in the numerous protest songs that became an important part of the civil rights movement. This should be accompanied by students seeing the lynchings in the book that accompanies the *Without Sanctuary* exhibit. We will look next at Bob Dylan’s “The Death of Emmett Till.” Again, students should see Dylan playing the song (it is on YouTube) and look at the lyrics. Although the song was written 7 years after the event, it certainly brought this brutal event to a wider audience. The lyrics of this song and the music should be compared to the next song by rap artist Vigalantee. Besides drawing obvious differences to style, lyrics and audience, what things do the songs have in common? Why did Vigalantee feel that this event needed to be remembered? Students could also express their opinion on the controversial inclusion of shotgun sounds in the song. Of course, we need to connect these horrific events with the development of African-American identity so students should be directed to the third guiding question at the beginning of the unit. How was the identity of African-Americans affected by the milieu in which they lived?

We will conclude the day with a discussion of the essay by James Baldwin-“My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation” assigned for homework.

*Homework* – Students will read an excerpt from a famous speech by Malcolm X entitled “The Ballot or the Bullet.”

#### Day 4 - Movement Successes and Divisions, 1963-65

##### *Historical Context*

1963

April 16 – The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. releases his seminal “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”, a response to a letter written by white pastors challenging the timing of SCLC’s Project “C” (for Confrontation) that used non-violent civil disobedience to end Birmingham’s segregation policies in public accommodations.

May 3 – Birmingham Police Commissioner Eugene “Bull” Connor uses fire hoses and dogs to break up a demonstration of students in Kelly Ingram Park (he had already arrested so many that he had no room in jails). The images captured in the mainstream media were sent all across the country, adding more impetus for major civil rights legislation.

June 11 – President Kennedy, in a nationally televised address, asks for passage of major civil rights legislation. This, the day after Alabama Governor George Wallace issued his famous statement while preventing 2 black students from entering the University of Alabama, “Segregation Now, Segregation Tomorrow, Segregation Forever.”

June 12 – Mississippi NAACP Field Secretary Medger Evers assassinated on the front porch of his house in Jackson by Byron de la Beckwith who was not convicted of the crime until the mid 1990’s.

August 28 – March on Washington draws 200,000 to the mall to press for economic and civil rights for all Americans. Although the most famous speech delivered that day was King’s “I Have a Dream Speech” it might be useful to look at the speech by SNCC leader John Lewis. Later in the unit we will be discussing the work of the event’s chief organizer Bayard Rustin, whose homosexuality forced him to be in the background of a lot of important events.

September 15 – Bombing at 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham kills 4 girls (Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, and Addie Mae Collins). The last accused bomber to be convicted of the murder (there had been 3 earlier guilty verdicts-one in 1977 and 2 in 2000) was Robert Cherry in 2002.

1964

January 23 – Congress and the states pass the 24<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution outlining the poll tax, one of the ways used to keep blacks from voting.

February 24 – Cassius Clay defeats Sonny Liston for Heavyweight Boxing Championship and changes his name to Muhammed Ali. He would become one of the most important spokespersons in the sports world for Black Nationalism.

March – Sidney Poitier is first African-American to win an Academy Award for best actor (for his lead role in *Lilies of the Field*)

Summer – “Freedom Summer” launched by CORE and SNCC primarily as a massive voter registration drive in Mississippi, it also included the development of “Freedom

Schools” where young students were taught black history by the primarily college aged volunteers. The drive was led primarily by Bob Moses. These students went down even after three early voter registration activists, James Cheney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner had been killed on June 21. Their mutilated bodies were not found until August 4 and the only charges filed against the murderers were minor penalties in federal court for violating their civil rights.

Jul 2 – President Lyndon Johnson signs landmark Civil Rights Act into law. The law would prohibit discrimination in public facilities based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs and gender. Passed after a lengthy attempt at filibuster in the Senate.

August 24-27 – Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), one of the outgrowths of Freedom Summer, refused representation at Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. This disappointment would be one of the reasons for the growing split between SNCC and SCLC.

1965

February 21 – Assassination of Malcolm X in Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, NY. Three members of the Nation of Islam, the group that Malcolm X had been an important leader of, were convicted of the assassination. His importance and influence in the black community as an advocate of black nationalism cannot be overestimated and his funeral was attended by virtually every major civil rights leader.

February 25 – Jimmy Lee Jackson, a deacon and recent convert to voting rights activism, dies after suffering multiple gunshot wounds at hands of Alabama state police. He had been protecting his grandfather and mother from getting beaten by the same police who would shoot him. This helped energize the proposed voting rights march that would take place the next month.

March 7 – First attempt of SNCC and SCLC led voting rights March from Selma to Montgomery is beaten back by Alabama State police. This “Bloody Sunday” was followed by another march (“Turnaround Tuesday”) that ended in the marchers crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge and stopping to pray and going back into Selma. Thanks to a ruling by Federal Court Judge Frank Johnson ordering the state of Alabama to protect this constitutional expression of free speech, the third march occurred on March 16 and culminated 5 days later with a major speech by Martin Luther King on the steps of the Alabama state house.

August 10 – Congress passes the Voting Rights Act. Besides eliminating literacy tests, the most pervasive method of eliminating black voting rights, the act allowed for federal monitoring of voting in any state that had shown a persistent pattern of denying voting rights.

August 11-17 – Massive rioting begins in predominantly black Watts section of Los Angeles. The violence was touched off by the arrest and beating of Marquette Frye. This would be the largest mass disturbance in American history, but not the last, as it would continue for another 3 summers in most American cities around the country.

September 24 – President Johnson issues Executive Order 11246 which would be the first attempt to require the federal government to adopt affirmative action programs.

### *Class Activities*

“The name of this tune is Mississippi Goddam  
And I mean every word of it  
Alabama’s got me so upset  
Tennessee made me lose my rest  
And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam”<sup>xi</sup>

So begins Nina Simone’s song expressing the rage of the black community following the murder of NAACP Field Secretary Medger Evers. The murder of blacks, famous and not so famous, young and old, were all too often a part of the black experience in America. However, their role in the civil rights movement in further galvanizing support for the movement outside the South, particularly important policy makers in government, cannot be overestimated. Simone performs the song on YouTube and the class should begin by watching this performance. If time allows, students could also read Myrlie Evers essay about that event in Brian Lanker’s photo essay book *I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America*. Music would become one of the most important ways the urgency of the movement could be expressed by blacks and understood by whites. This is evident in the popularity of the song “Respect” written by Otis Redding in 1965. Although Redding’s lyrics and his performance of the song were different that the singer Aretha Franklin who made the song so popular, it was one of Redding’s biggest early hits. After hearing Redding’s version of the song and comparing it to Franklin’s it would be useful to look at why this song would mean so much to both the civil rights and feminist movements when it became one of the most listened to songs of the late 60’s. For most of the period we will look closely at the influence of Malcolm X in the movement, particularly in his articulation of the outrage of many urban blacks who were not attracted to the philosophy and strategies of Martin Luther King, Jr. We will begin this with a discussion of the speech they were given to read for homework – “The Ballot or the Bullet.”<sup>xii</sup> Then we will look at a poem (“A Poem for Black Hearts”) by Amiri Baraka, the eulogy delivered by Ossie Davis at Malcolm X’s funeral and the beginning of the movie *Malcolm X* directed by Spike Lee.

“Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything, if you’re a man you take it.”<sup>xiii</sup>

This quotes symbolizes one of the most important reasons for Malcolm X’s popularity among African-Americans. He was seen as the most important spokesperson for a more assertive, confrontational philosophy that stressed the need for blacks to take charge of their own destiny. He came from humble roots and, after the death of his father at the hands of KKK sympathizers, he lived with his mother who was often on public assistance. He never graduated from high school and was involved in petty crime until he was arrested and imprisoned for several years. While there he became a convert to Islam and joined the Nation of Islam. In the late 1950’s and early 60’s he became one of that organization’s most popular spokespersons. Splitting from the Nation of Islam in the last year of his life after an eventful pilgrimage to Mecca, he focused his political activity in

the US to continuing his fight for civil rights for blacks even advocating that the US be charged by the United Nations for human rights violations. Too much is made of his disagreements with Martin Luther King and there is a mistaken belief that he advocated violence against whites. His belief in self-defense and black empowerment were the cornerstones of his philosophy and the key to his popularity for urban blacks. For an excellent discussion of his philosophy and his ideological differences and similarities with King consult James Cone's *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or a Nightmare?* The easiest way to get at the key points of his philosophy is to show one of his speeches readily available on YouTube. I will show the 5 minute speech "Malcolm X: The Roots of a Tree."<sup>xiv</sup> In this speech his focus is on the origin of the notion of black inferiority and will be an excellent compliment to the philosophies of negritude and black consciousness developed by Leopold Senghor and Steven Biko respectively, which are discussed at the end of the unit. After that we will look at the explosive opening scene from Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*. While a speech by Malcolm X is playing, there are 2 things happening. The beating of Rodney King is juxtaposed with the burning of an American flag into an X by the end of the scene. Police brutality was a major cause of the Watts riot as well as the acquittal of the police officers of using excessive force in the King case. I'm sure we will get plenty of discussion of both the speech and the artistic decisions by Lee. We will finish the class with Amira Baraka's "A Poem for Black Hearts" and a reading of Ossie Davis' eulogy delivered at the funeral of Malcolm X's funeral (available on YouTube). Both do an excellent job expressing the admiration that all African-Americans had for him. These will be an excellent lead in to the discussion of black power to follow the next day.

*Homework* – Students will read an essay by Lerone Bennett entitled "What's in a Name? Negro v. Afro-American v. Black"

Day 5 - Black Power in philosophy, the streets and public office, 1966-72

### *Historical Context*

1966

May – Stokely Carmichael takes over the leadership of SNCC focusing on the more militant approach of black power. White members of the organization had been expelled in late 1965.

June – James Meredith begins the "March Against Fear", a solitary walk from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. Early in the march he was shot, which transformed his walk into a national event, and thousands joined him, including Stokely Carmichael.

August – Muhammed Ali applies for conscientious objector status when drafted, saying he would not fight in Vietnam. He remarked that "No Vietcong ever called me Nigger."<sup>xv</sup> He would eventually go to jail and his heavyweight championship would be taken away. His action would be an important motivation for Martin Luther King, Jr. to announce his opposition to the war the next year.

September – Nichelle Nichols accepts role of Uhura, the communications officer on the TV series *Star Trek*. Although she considered quitting at the end of the season, Martin Luther King pleaded with her to stay on. She would in the show's last season (1968) take part in the first interracial kiss on TV.

October – Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California form The Black Panther Party. They and other party members would be involved in several confrontations with police over the next 5 years. The party advocated the arming of blacks for self-defense against what they viewed as a racist white society and its chief agents the police and other law enforcement agencies. Like all civil rights organizations, the Black Panther party was monitored and infiltrated by the FBI under the auspices of the COINTELPRO program begun in 1956 and not ending until 1971. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover said that this organization was one of the greatest threats to internal security in America.

November – Edward Brooke becomes the first black senator to be elected (from Massachusetts) since 1881.

1967

June – In *Loving v. Commonwealth of Virginia*, the Supreme Court outlaws state constitutions which prohibit interracial marriage.

June – Thurgood Marshall becomes the first African-American Supreme Court justice.

July 23-27 – Riot in Detroit that lasts 5 days and kills 40 with over 400 injured becoming one of the deadliest and most expensive disturbances in American history. Other riots take place in many American cities with the one in Newark, NJ almost as extensive as Detroit.

November – Carl Stokes and Richard Hatcher are elected mayors of Cleveland and Gary, Indiana. This was followed in the next 6 years by no less than 11 blacks elected mayors of major American cities in both the north and south.

1968

February – Kerner Commission, set up to determine the cause of the riots of the previous 4 years, says that the nation was “moving towards two societies—one black, one white—separate and unequal.” It compared the situation of urban blacks to the “racial apartheid” of South Africa.<sup>xvi</sup>

April 4 – Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. He had been lending his support to the strike of city sanitation workers against the wishes of his aides. His convicted assassin is James Earl Ray although many in the King family do not accept this version of the event. Riots break out in over 150 cities into May in response to the murder.

April 11 – Civil Rights Act of 1968 passed which bans discrimination in purchasing and renting property.

May-June – Poor People's Campaign in Washington, DC intended to be a large (over 3,000 people set up residence in the Mall) lobbying campaign to push the federal government to do more to address issues of poverty and racial and economic justice.

June 6 – Robert Kennedy is assassinated in Los Angeles.

October – Tommie Smith and John Carlos use black power salute as a form of protest during the medal ceremony at the Mexico Olympics. Both of them were suspended from the team and their medals were taken from them.

November – Shirley Chisholm is the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress.

1969

January – Formation of the Congressional Black Caucus – There were 9 members of the group and it did not include Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts who refused to join.

December 9 – Fred Hampton, leader of the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party, is shot in his sleep by Chicago police.

1971

April 20 - In the Supreme Court decision of *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, busing as a tool to implement school desegregation was determined to be constitutional.

December 21 – Jesse Jackson founds People United to Save Humanity (PUSH) whose focus was on providing economic and education assistance to African-Americans in Chicago.

1972

The Equal Employment Opportunity Act is passed. This law was passed to prohibit discrimination based on race or gender in hiring.

### *Class Activities*

“Say it loud, I’m black and I’m proud.”<sup>xvii</sup>

These opening lyrics of a 1968 song by James Brown reached number 10 on the pop chart and number 1 on the R&B chart. This is an indication of the popularity of the song and its message. On this day we will look at the role of music, poetry, fashion, photography and language as an expression of black power. Besides listening to and discussing the message and beat that made this song so popular we will be listening to the following songs: “Keep on Pushing” by Curtis Mayfield, “The Revolution Will Not be Televised” by Gil Scott-Heron and “Fight the Power” by Public Enemy. Although they are different kinds of music they all espouse a philosophy that stresses black pride and the need to fight injustice. In terms of the Black Arts Movement, Sonia Sanchez has been one of its most important spokespersons. In 1973 she wrote the following.

“The move from Negroness to Blackness has been a slow/painful/upward journey of the twentieth century, a journey still not completed. The voice of Blackness in the wilderness of North America awoke the Black man from the sleep of his forgotten identity. He awoke angry and startled at those who had put him to sleep. In the beginning of this Black literature, anger overshadowed self-identity. But when reason lit the darkness of this new world, the energy of anger turned inward toward themes of Black love, respect, and Black nationhood.”<sup>xviii</sup>

After discussing the meaning of the above quote, we will look at the poem “Masks.” This theme of blacks having to wear masks in order to survive in white society has been a reoccurring theme in African-American literature beginning with Paul Lawrence Dunbar’s “We Wear the Mask.” Since one of the options students will have for projects at the end of the unit will be to create a poem or visual symbolizing this mask theme, it would be beneficial to look at this more contemporary poem. Following that, we will look at “Speak the Truth to the People” by Mari Evans. Its focus is a plea for blacks to “free the mind” so that they can “BUILD a strong black nation.”<sup>xxix</sup>

One of the most iconic images of the 1960’s is the photograph of Tommie Smith and John Carlos using a black power salute during their medal ceremony at the 1968 Mexico Olympics. Although there were several examples of protest there and the year was filled with student protests in both the US and Europe, this action was universally condemned in the US. Students will read an interview with Harry Edwards, the organizer of the Olympic Project for Human Rights, in which he identifies the origin of the protest and its significance. It also features a brief statement of purpose by Tommie Smith.<sup>xx</sup>

The wearing of Afros and other African inspired fashions became an important part of the black power movement. Looking at the meaning and history of the Afro and other symbols should be discussed. There is an excellent article on how this emphasis was communicated to a young black girl whose family had just moved to Washington, DC from Pittsburgh and was attending a newly integrated school.<sup>xxi</sup> We will also look at photographs and posters of the Black Panther Party.<sup>xxii</sup> Students interested in how art was used to promote black power ideology should look at the art of Black Panther Minister of Culture Emory Douglas. There is a great article on this accompanied by numerous posters in the Fall 2007 issue of *American Legacy: The Magazine of African-American History and Culture*.

The last topic we will study is focused on the adoption of the word black and Afro-American to replace Negro. This discussion will be supported by the excellent article on this issue assigned for homework and written by historian Lerone Bennett, Jr. in 1967 who, at the time, was senior editor at *Ebony* magazine.<sup>xxiii</sup>

*Homework* – Reading of Alice Walker’s short story “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens.”

Day 6 – The Movement’s Influence on Other Movements – 1960’s and 70’s

### *Historical Context*

#### Women’s Rights Movement

1963 – Publication of *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Freidan. This is one of the most important books in terms of inspiring the women’s rights movement of the late 60’s and early 70’s.



1964 – Title VII of the Civil Rights Act forbids discrimination on the basis of gender.

1966 – The National Organization for Women is founded.

1967 – By Executive Order 11375 President Johnson adds gender to race as a part of the affirmative action program of the federal government. Women would be the greatest beneficiary of this program.

1968 – An organization called the New York Radical Women lead a protest of over 400 women outside the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, NY. Besides crowning a sheep as another beauty queen, they throw so-called “instruments of torture” into a trash can.

1971 – First issue of *Ms.* Magazine is published edited by Gloria Steinheim.

1972

--Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment by Congress. Never passed by the required number of states, it dies out in 1982.

--Passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act which required universities receiving federal funding to provide equal access to all aspects of university life including sports participation.

1973

--Supreme Court outlaws state restrictions on abortions in *Roe v. Wade*.

Latino Rights Movement

1965 – Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta found the United Farm Workers Union. It would become the largest and most powerful farm workers union in the country. Their strike against local grape producers followed by a nationwide boycott of all California grapes led, in 4 ½ years, to the signing of a new contract for migrant workers providing much improved benefits.

1968

--Latino students walk out of high school classrooms in Los Angeles protesting their discrimination in the schools-including policies which prevent them from speaking Spanish in school. Many arrested but the walkout leads to many reforms including dropping the ban on speaking Spanish.

--Mexican Legal Defense Fund established to provide legal assistance to Mexicans seeking protection from discrimination.

1975 – Additional section added to the 1965 Voting Rights Act requiring language assistance at all polling stations. This leads to increased Latino representation at all levels of government.

Native American Rights Movement

1968 – Formation of the American Indian Movement (AIM) under the leadership of Dennis Banks and many others. Like the Black Panther Party, AIM believed in confronting government authorities and their allies on the reservations about issues relating to land grievances and civil rights.

1969 – Indian occupation of Alcatraz island in San Francisco harbor. They claim it should be given to them as an Indian owned educational and cultural center. Occupation lasts for 2 years.

- 1970 – President Nixon officially ends “termination” policy. Begun under the Eisenhower administration, this action had virtually eliminated tribal sovereignty on reservation land.
- 1972 – After a march of over 500 Indian activists across the US in the “Trail of Broken Treaties”, they occupy the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) building in Washington for 2 weeks after which the BIA agrees to consider many of their demands and pay for their way back to the reservations.
- 1973 – AIM activists occupy the town of Wounded Knee and declare its independence from the US. Surrounded by hundreds of federal law enforcement officers the siege last 71 days and ends only when government agrees to investigate their demands.
- Gay Rights Movement**
- 1951 – Founding by Harry Hay of the first national gay rights organization - The Mattachine Society
- 1962 – Illinois becomes the first state to decriminalize homosexual acts between consenting adults
- 1969 – Riot at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village, follows a police raid on the establishment. The disturbances last 3 days and this is generally credited as the transformation of the movement from localized protests to a truly national phenomenon.
- 1973 – Harvey Milk becomes the first openly gay man to run for public office. Although he loses in his bid to win the position of city supervisor, he is appointed 3 years later by the mayor to head the Board of Permit Appeals. He eventually is elected in 1978 to the San Francisco Board of Commissioners only to be assassinated later that year.

### *Class Activities*

“I have not Signed a Treaty With The United States Government  
nor has my father nor his father  
nor any grandmothers”<sup>xxiv</sup>

Chrystos, a Native American rights and lesbian activist and poet, begins her poem with this statement of fact and then rejects all white society by “terminating” them. This is a direct reference to the policy of the US government begun by the Eisenhower administration. It would be a useful place to begin a discussion of Native American resistance that reached a peak in the late 60’s and early 70’s. There is no doubt AIM and the subsequent Indian activism described in the historical context was very much influenced by the same confrontational style in the black power movement. Following that we will look at a brief story of Native American poet Denise Sweet and engage in what I’m sure will be a spirited discussion of using Native American nicknames as sports mascots.<sup>xxv</sup> Following that we will look at Leonard Pellitier’s brief description of the occupation of the BIA in Washington that was referred to in the historical context section of the unit.<sup>xxvi</sup> We read this to try and appreciate the level of anger of Native Americans and their desire to make themselves no longer invisible to white society.

Our segment on the women's rights movement will begin with a discussion of the short story "In Search of Our Mother's Grave" by Alice Walker.<sup>xxvii</sup> The story mixes prose with poetry and is a powerful statement about the remarkable strength and beauty of black women. Following that we will look at an essay by noted feminist Adrienne Rich which appeared at the end of her book *Of Woman Born*.<sup>xxviii</sup> Near the end of the short essay Rich summarizes what she has said previously, "We need to imagine a world in which every woman is the presiding genius of her own body."<sup>xxix</sup>

The story of San Francisco politician Harvey Milk was given increased exposure with the release of the Gus Van Sant directed movie *Milk* starring Sean Penn as the mercurial Milk. The opening few minutes set the stage for the rest of the film as it shows men being roughed up and arrested by police as Milk reads from a letter he wrote in the event he was murdered. We will watch that segment and discuss briefly the significance of Milk's career on the future of the gay rights movement. If time allows I would also like to mention the importance of two gay men, Bayard Rustin and James Baldwin. Besides introducing Martin Luther King, Jr. to the philosophy of Gandhi, Rustin was the chief organizer of the March on Washington. The enormous contributions of James Baldwin to American literature will be listed and I will read excerpts from his novel *If Beale Street Could Talk*. For interested students there is a powerful essay written by Charles Nero titled *Toward a Black Gay Aesthetic* that begins with a statement of the marginalization of gay males by "the intellectual writings of black Americans."<sup>xxx</sup> Finally, we will finish the day with an interview of Cesar Chavez conducted right before his death in 1993. In this interview, he acknowledges the importance of the early years of the civil rights movement on providing him the organizing lessons to help make the UFW an effective union.<sup>xxxi</sup>

*Homework* – Students will read Countee Cullen's poem *Heritage*.

Day 7 – Africa and the Civil Rights Movement-Each one helping the other-1920's-1980's

### *Historical Context*

Rather than give specific dates I will just briefly describe the key events that might give added meaning to this last full day of the unit. The term *negritude* originated in the writings and discussions of Aime Cesaire, Leopold Senghor, and Leon Damas while they were in Paris in the 1930's. This ideology grew out of a similar frustration expressed by Du Bois described in the beginning of the curriculum unit. That is, why must black Africans be defined by Europeans and how can they embrace their own heritage. Ironically, the term evolved out of the French word *negre* which had come to be used like "nigger" in American society. These men were using a word of insult and claiming a part of it to be used in service of a new philosophy which would redefine what it meant to be African.<sup>xxxii</sup> The independence movement of most Sub-Saharan nations (other than Liberia) began with Ghana in 1957. This was followed in 1958 by Guinea and then in 1960 17 nations declared their independence. This "awakening" of Africa had a

profound influence on some of the more strident leaders of the civil rights movement who would make many journeys to these countries in the 1960's.

Of course, one sub-Saharan nation that also declared its independence from its European masters was South Africa in 1931. Unfortunately for the people of color within its borders, the oppression of colonialism continued. Non-violent resistance to this oppression had been formalized when the South African Native National Congress was formed in 1912. This organization would be renamed the African National Congress in the 1920's. After WW II when Afrikaner control became complete in 1948, the organization stepped up its non-violent campaign against the strict racial segregation laws known as apartheid. A key turning point in the struggle against apartheid came in 1961 with the Sharpeville massacre. South African police firing on an unarmed crowd protesting pass laws brought a change in the non-violent approach of the ANC and eventually led to the arrest of one of its key leaders Nelson Mandela in 1963 who would remain in prison until his release in 1989. In the ensuing 26 years two movements would help bring down the apartheid movement. First the black consciousness movement pushed to the forefront by Stephen Biko in the 1970's and the divestment movement organized by private citizens outside South Africa and centered in the US in the 1970's and 80's. This divestment movement was given added impetus by the civil rights movement and was led, in part, by black Americans.

#### *Class Activities*

“What is Africa to me;  
Copper sun or scarlet sea,  
Jungle star or jungle track,  
Strong bronzed men, or regal black”<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Countee Cullen, one of the most important writers of the Harlem Renaissance, begins his poem *Heritage* with this appropriate question. He asks how a black American is connected to the continent where his ancestors were born. After discussing the lengthy poem we will try to answer the question Cullen asks about that connection making sure students see how this question was of fundamental concern for many black intellectuals, explaining why so many of them traveled to Africa in the 1960's with several making it their home (i.e. Stokely Carmichael/Kwame Toure who died in Guinea). On the humorous side we will look at a cartoon by Boondocks creator Aaron McGruder featuring an “Afrocentric critique” of the X-Men comics by the strips main character Huey Freeman.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Next we will look at the poem “Prayer to the Masks” by Leopold Senghor. Continuing one of the most important themes of the unit, this poem expresses the idea of negritude amid the uncertainties of the colonial era and the future possibilities of an independent Africa.<sup>xxxv</sup> We will also look at the painting by Lois Mailou Jones *Les Fetiches*.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Her one year stay in Paris in 1936 and her association with Senghor and other writers influenced greatly what Richard Powell says is a work that “displayed its

*Negritude* with an urgency and definitiveness that was unprecedented among the artists of the Depression.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

“The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.”<sup>xxxviii</sup>

I have had this quotation in my classroom for many years. I learned about Stephen Biko after seeing the movie *Cry Freedom* which came out in 1987. Although I believe it shared a problem with Hollywood’s white savior ideology in its depiction of the civil rights movement (see *Mississippi Burning*), the first hour was a powerful introduction to the philosophy of Biko. Of course, it helped that Denzel Washington’s portrayal of Biko was Academy Award worthy (he did receive his first Oscar nomination for that role).

We will begin with several quotes by Biko from his book *I Write What I Like*. The first one we will discuss after the one above is the following definition of black consciousness.

"Black Consciousness is an attitude of the mind and a way of life, the most positive call to emanate from the black world for a long time. Its essence is the realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression - the blackness of their skin - and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude."<sup>xxxix</sup>

After that we will look at several scenes from the first part of the movie where Biko is trying to explain to his “white liberal friend” what black consciousness is and what whites can and cannot do to facilitate this process.

## Day 8 – Some Final Thoughts and Catch up Day

I’m sure that we will not finish the extensive plans I made on day 7 so I’m confident that we will need another day. I would also like to introduce students to the life and work of Angela Davis as I (and possibly some of them) will have the opportunity to hear her speak after I have taught the unit. So, after talking briefly about Davis, her life and contributions to American political and social theory we will read “What Happened to Your Generation’s Promise of ‘Love and Revolution’ – A Letter to Angela Davis.”<sup>xl</sup> This powerful essay brings into the present century many of the ideas discussed by black activists of the late 60’s and early 70’s. I’m sure it will be a springboard to discuss many of the problems faced by blacks today and to assess the legacy of that tumultuous time we have just finished studying. We will also spend some time discussing the guiding questions that were given at the beginning of the unit.

## Unit Assessment Options

All students will be given an objective test on the material studied in the unit; however they will have several options in terms of subjective assessments. Students of a more creative bent have several options. First, they can write a poem that updates Langston Hughes' poem "*I, Too*." This poem must include their responses to some of the guiding questions and must be performed orally followed by a discussion of its key points. Second, they can choose an important poem published during the civil rights era (1955-1972) and present it to the class by memory. Their performance must be preceded by a discussion of the poet's life and works and followed by their own interpretation of the poem's meaning as well as why they chose it. Students can also paint or create a mask that reflects some of their responses to the guiding questions. They must be able to explain their work to the class. For those students that don't have the creative bent, they can answer the 1995 Advanced Placement United States History document based question. The question asks them to analyze the changes occurring in the movement during the 1960's using both the documents and information not in those documents. It is expected that in their use of outside information that they incorporate art and questions of black identity.

## Resources

For Teachers

Hill, Patricia Liggins, general editor. *Call and Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American Literary Tradition*. Houghton Mifflin Co, New York and Boston, 1998. Print.

This is an invaluable source for teachers. Although quite expensive, this 2000 page book has seemingly an endless number of representatives of African American literature and music, both known and less well-known from pre-slavery Africa to the modern era. Additionally, there is a brief biography of the artist and a list of other sources to go to for more information.

Menkart, Deborah, Murray, Alana, and View, Jenice, eds. *Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching*. McArdle Printing, USA, 2004. Print.

Another great resource, this award winning book (from the National Association for Multicultural Education), has a both primary and secondary sources as well as suggestions for teaching in all grade levels.

Powell, *Black Art: A Cultural History*. Thames and Hudson, Ltd., London, 2002 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Print.

Although my unit did not have a lot of visual art in it this book was very helpful in giving me some background in the black arts movement. This is very evident in Chapter 5 ("Black is a Color").

Stubbs, Aelred C.R. ed. *Steve Biko, I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2002. Print.

This book contains most of the most important essays written by Biko from 1969 to his final incarceration and death in 1976. The most important selection “Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity” is where I drew most of the quotes used in the unit. There is also an excellent preface by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a relatively thorough biography.

#### Key Websites for both teachers and students

The National Humanities Center has an excellent collection of primary and secondary sources on the issue of African American identity. After going to its website at <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/> you can click on “Toolbox Library” and there you will see three sections on this topic with part of volume 3 covering the civil rights movement. For timelines on the history of the movement there are several excellent sources. PBS has a reasonably thorough listing of key events with links to primary sources (although I was not able to get to some of those in the creation of this unit) at <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/timeline.html>. The History Channel’s website also has a helpful timeline with links to video shorts on key issues about the movement. (<http://www.history.com/interactives/black-history-timeline>).

#### Documentaries and Movies

*Midnight Ramble: The Story of the Black Film Industry*. A Northern Lights Productions film from *The American Experience* series. Directed by Bestor Cram and Pearl Bowser, 1994.

Excellent scenes from early movies (particularly *Birth of a Nation*) that promoted negative stereotypes of blacks as well as the story of the greatest black filmmaker of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Cry Freedom*. Directed by Richard Attenborough, 1987.

Despite the fact that almost half of the movie covers Donald Woods escape from South Africa, it has some great scenes of conversations between the “white liberal” and Biko, played expertly by Denzel Washington. This is an excellent introduction to black consciousness.

### **Implementing District Standards**

#### IB Standards and Topics

There are 5 topics that teachers of the IB 20<sup>th</sup> Century History can cover. The one focused on primarily in this unit is “Democratic States: challenges and responses.” Our brief discussion of the anti-apartheid and negritude movement will also be under another topic entitled “Origins and Development of Single-Party States.” Of the 12 IB learner profile goals the ones that I expect will be most focused on are the development of “caring”, “open-minded”, “principled” “inquirers.” IB’s commitment to a multi-

disciplined approach to learning will also be a strong feature of this unit. Finally, the overall goal of developing “internationally minded” students will be enhanced by our study of the influence of the civil rights movement outside the United States.

#### Common Core State Standards

The parts of the Common Core Standards that will be addressed most directly by this unit are listed below.

1. Under the goal of “Standards for Reading” the following will be focused on. “Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.”<sup>xli</sup>
2. Under the goal of “Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies” the following will be focused on. “Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.”<sup>xlii</sup>
3. Under the goal of “Anchor Standards for Writing” the following will be done quite a lot. “Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.”<sup>xliii</sup>
4. Finally, under the goal of “Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies...” we will do the following. “Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.”<sup>xliv</sup>



## Notes

---

- <sup>i</sup> Du Bois, W.E.B., *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Blue Heron, 1953), 4.
- <sup>ii</sup> Du Bois, 4.
- <sup>iii</sup> Du Bois, 5.
- <sup>iv</sup> “Quotes by Stephen Biko,”  
[http://africanhistory.about.com/od/bikosteve/p/qts\\_biko.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/bikosteve/p/qts_biko.htm). Accessed 9/19/2012
- <sup>v</sup> <http://blogs.ibo.org/ibtv/2011/03/04/ib-learner-profile-2011-2/>. Accessed 9/19/2012
- <sup>vi</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>vii</sup> From Dudley Paul Lawrence Dunbar’s “We Wear the Mask” as seen in Patricia Liggins Hill’s *Call and Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American Literary Tradition*, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1998), 615.
- <sup>viii</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903, Ch. 1, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" from <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai2/identity/identity.htm>.
- <sup>ix</sup> Hill, 1278.
- <sup>x</sup> Ibid, 1170.
- <sup>xi</sup> “Mississippi Goddam”,  
[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/n/nina+simone/mississippi+goddam\\_20100636.html](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/n/nina+simone/mississippi+goddam_20100636.html).  
Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xii</sup> Menkart, Deborah, Murray, Alana and View, Jenice, eds.. *Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching*. Teaching for Change, 2004. 142-144, Print.
- <sup>xiii</sup> “Malcolm X Quotes”  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/17435.Malcolm\\_X?page=2](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/17435.Malcolm_X?page=2). Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xiv</sup> “Malcolm X: You Can’t Hate the Roots of a Tree”  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uK0DBk41Z2M&feature=fvwrel>. Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xv</sup> “African-American Involvement in the Vietnam War”  
[http://www.aavw.org/protest/homepage\\_ali.html](http://www.aavw.org/protest/homepage_ali.html). Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xvi</sup> ““Our Nation Is Moving Toward Two Societies, One Black, One White—Separate and Unequal’: Excerpts from the Kerner Report” <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6545/>.  
Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xvii</sup> “James Brown, ‘Say It Loud (I’m Black And I’m Proud), Pt. 1’” Lyrics  
<http://www.lyricsbox.com/james-brown-lyrics-say-it-loud-im-black-and-im-proud-pt-1-5w39354.html>. Accessed 10/27/2012
- <sup>xviii</sup> Hill, p. 1489
- <sup>xix</sup> Ibid, p. 1575.
- <sup>xx</sup> Menkart, 402-405.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Ibid, 462-3.
- <sup>xxii</sup> “Black Panther Party: A Black Power Alternative”  
<http://www.museumca.org/picturethis/timeline/unforgettable-change-1960s/black-panthers/info>. Accessed 11/24/2012

- 
- xxiii “What’s in a Name? Negro v. Afro-American v. Black”  
<http://www.virginia.edu/woodson/courses/aas102%20%28spring%2001%29/articles/names/bennett.htm>.
- xxiv Menkart, 476.
- xxv “Grace Under Fire: Stereotypes and Resistance in Native American Poetry”  
<http://voices.yahoo.com/grace-under-fire-stereotypes-resistance-native-224700.html>
- xxvi Zinn, Howard and Arnove, Anthony, eds. *Voices of a People’s History of the United States*. Seven Stories Press, NY, 2009. 500-501, Print.
- xxvii Hill, 1802-1807.
- xxviii Zinn, 464-466.
- xxix Ibid, 466.
- xxx Hill, 1973, 1973-1987.
- xxxi Menkart, 393-395
- xxxii “Negritude” from the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/negritude/#GenCon>.
- xxxiii Hill, 910.
- xxxiv Powell, Richard J. *Black Art: A Cultural History*. Thames and Hudson Inc. New York, 2003. 232-233, Print.
- xxxv “All Poetry, *Prayer to Masks*” [http://allpoetry.com/poem/8594635-Prayer\\_To\\_Masks-by-Leopold\\_Sedhar\\_Senghor](http://allpoetry.com/poem/8594635-Prayer_To_Masks-by-Leopold_Sedhar_Senghor).
- xxxvi Powell, 79.
- xxxvii Ibid, 80.
- xxxviii “Quotes Stephen (Steve) Bantu Biko”  
[http://africanhistory.about.com/od/bikosteve/p/qts\\_biko.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/bikosteve/p/qts_biko.htm).
- xxxix Ibid.
- xl Menkart, 492-494.
- xli “Common Core State Standards Initiative: Preparing America’s Students for College and Career”, p. 60.
- xlii Ibid, , 61.
- xliii Ibid, 63.
- xliv Ibid, 64.