

 **Civil Rights Strategy Unit**

**Media List**

**Debatable Issue: The Civil Rights movement ultimately proved that Martin Luther King’s strategy of non-violence was more effective than a radical ‘any means necessary’ strategy would have been.**

**Background Information/Both Sides**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4PqLKWuwyU>

[Video, 8:50, also downloaded and saved] Martin Luther King and Malcolm X “debate” (through

documentary-like juxtaposed clips) non-violent vs. violent protest, in the context of the Civil Rights

movement.

<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-movement>

[Video portion, 3:50] An overview of the Civil Rights Movement by the History Channel, a summary

edited by Columbia University history professor Eric Foner.

**Affirmative/Non-Violence Was Effective**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74XJJ3Tq5ew>

[Video, 8:10] Martin Luther King explains his conviction that non-violent civil disobedience is the

more effective way to fight oppression.

<http://www.voanews.com/media/video/1737556.html>

[Video, 3:50] Voice of America mini-documentary quotes leaders from the Civil Rights Movement

saying that non-violence was key to the success of the movement. If the movement used violence it

would have lost its moral authority and its persuasiveness, and it would not have survived.

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/februaryone/civilrights.html>

PBS reports on the leading organizations of the Civil Rights Movement inspired by civil

disobedience – e.g., the Southern Christian Leadership Conference – and recounts some of the most

effective acts of non-violence of the movement, including the Selma-to-Montgomery March of

1965.

<https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/movements-and-campaigns/movements-and-campaigns-summaries?sobi2Task=sobi2Details&catid=4&sobi2Id=22>

The International Center on Nonviolent Conflict emphasizes the crucial role of non-violence in all

of the major successes of the Civil Rights Movement.

<http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/the-black-panthers-militarist-error/>

The militarism of the Black Panthers undermined the group’s effectiveness. The Black Panther’s

militancy led to its destruction, and would have had the same effect had that strategy been extended

to the Civil Rights Movement as a whole.

<http://www.crmvet.org/info/nv2.htm>

Civil Rights veteran activist Bruce Hartford explains that there were two types of non-violence in

the Civil Rights Movement: philosophical and tactical. He said that those like himself who

supported non-violence tactically did so only because non-violence would be more effective, they

believed.

<http://www.angelfire.com/ok/ush2civilrights/webnonviolence.html>

A site that collects summaries of many of the highlights of the non-violent Civil Rights Movement.

**Negative/Radical ‘By Any Means Necessary’ Would Have Been More Effective**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TO6Co8v2XjY&feature=youtu.be>

[Video, 3:45] Malcolm X’s speech in New York City at the founding of the Organization of African-American Unity on June 28, 1964, stating that African-Americans were kidnapped and brought to America. They have no essential belonging here and should have no loyalty to this place.

<http://www.salon.com/2014/06/14/guns_made_civil_rights_possible_breaking_down_the_myth_of_nonviolent_change/>

Charles Cobb, professor of Africana studies at Brown University, argues that guns and armed self-

defense were crucial to the effectiveness of African-Americans in the United States gaining their civil

rights in the 1960s, even while their leaders were declaring their support for non-violence.

<http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/62/the-civil-rights-movement-in-mississippi-on-violence-and-nonviolence>

Professor of history at the University of Southern Mississippi argues that civil rights protestors who

were committed to non-violence nevertheless used force and the threat of force to protect

themselves and their property. So actually there was no pure representatives of Gandhian non-

violence in the Civil Rights Movement.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=3ngx0nM2IZoC&pg=PA168&lpg=PA168&dq=non-violence+was+effective+in+the+civil+rights+movement&source=bl&ots=X2DnxD3uuh&sig=ibFdFT7Fk3ssQCGEbwDJtqvWipE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CEwQ6AEwCDgUahUKEwi3q-Cr58DIAhWInYAKHWjFA9g#v=onepage&q=non-violence%20was%20effective%20in%20the%20civil%20rights%20movement&f=false>

William Sales, professor of African-American studies at Seton Hall University, states that Malcolm X

had an important influence over the Civil Rights Movement, and complicated its leadership’s

position on non-violence.

<http://law.jrank.org/pages/4776/Black-Power-Movement.html>

The Black Power movement was the only authentically African-American social movement of the

era and led to black unity and self-respect.

<http://www.shmoop.com/civil-rights-black-power/>

The Shmoop editorial team takes the position that the Civil Rights Movement didn’t have much of

an impact on the lives of average African-Americans until cities started to burn in riots, when the

plight of African-Americans, and their actual suffering, was made more graphically compelling to the

American masses.

<https://web.stanford.edu/~ccarson/articles/black_scholar.htm>

Clayborne Carson in *The Black Scholar* argues that that black mass militancy was the crucial ingredient

to the racial equality movements of the 1960s, and is important today.

<http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/lesson_105_notes.htm>

The Social Studies Help Center, an education services organization, lays out some of the gains but

also many of the failures of the Civil Rights Movement.

<http://www.angelfire.com/ok/ush2civilrights/action.html>

A few of the more prominent quotations of the radical and militant faction of the black protest

movement.