Fostering Community through Grassroots DH at Mississippi State University

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http://mrg.bz/T2BVSU
Talking Points

• About the Starkville Civil Rights Project
• Stages of Building Collaboration and Community
• Skills needed (and how to foster them)
• Lessons learned

http://mrg.bz/SZmXR9
'A Shaky Truce': Starkville Civil Rights Struggles, 1960–1980

Through oral history interviews and digitized archival documents, this site highlights the civil rights story in Starkville, MS, and the voices of its participants.
The People

Below are the people—many of them Mississippi natives—who witnessed and experienced the struggles for African American equal rights. Hear their stories about overcoming injustice and facing opposition—both internal and overt—head on.

JOYCE ALLEN
Starkville Native, Daughter of 2021 Employees

“When integrated the schools, and boycotted stores so that blacks could have jobs in the banks and retail establishments, that was accomplished, from memory, through the boycotters.”

Bobby B. Hardwell
Natchez High School Alum

“You know, we’re tired, we wanna register, we gotta be registered...but we pay taxes and we ought to be registered.”

Nancy B. Hardwell
Graduate of Starkville High School’s first integrated Class

“When I was growing up the only white children that I knew were the ones whose names were written.”

Rex B. B. Hardwell
Former Director, BHS Senior’s Career Center, Taught the 90’s and Current School Constitution/History

“It think one of the things that sort of dawned on me early on in the process was that my African American classmates were not any happier about it than we were.”

[ oralhistoryonline.org ]
The Struggle

Segregated Education

During the sixteen years between the landmark Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education (1960) decisions, Henderson High School and the all-white Starkville High School were separate but not equal. Read and listen to stories about living a segregated life here.

Getting Organized

Prior to the passage of the Civil and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, there was little-to-no organized resistance to segregation in Starkville. However, some local citizens took it upon themselves to challenge the racially divided society. Read about the leadership and development that it took to bring a community together.

The MSU Story

Fighting Segregation

800 students enrolled in Starkville

800 students enrolled in Starkville

The state

Starkville students marched through the downtown business district and marched to the courthouse in support of the de-segregation plan submitted to the U.S. district court.

There were no incidents of violence, but some students carried signs which proclaimed “Together we stand. Together we win. Henderson.”

U.S. District Judge John Smith had sentenced the Starkville school district to file a plan by Dec. 1 to eliminate a dual school system.

The plan submitted by the school board would gradually phase out the Henderson school complex and move all the students to predominantly white schools. The end of the dual school system finally came.

@hillaryAHR @NickoalEichmann
May 17, 1894

**Brown v. Board of Education**

The U.S. Supreme Court rules unanimously that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" and thus unconstitutional. This landmark decision overrules the long-standing "separate but equal" doctrine of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, and paves the way for the desegregation of public schools and other public facilities.

[starkvillecivilrights.msstate.edu](http://starkvillecivilrights.msstate.edu)
Resources

In addition to sharing the untold stories of the Starkville Civil Rights Movement for our community, this project hopes to serve as a tool for educators, a springboard for archival research for scholars, and as resource for those interested in learning more about this local and national story.

Teachers

From lesson plans with presentation slides, to worksheets and discussion questions, educators can use these to engage their students in the narratives of the Civil Rights Movement in Starkville, MS.

Explore Tools

Researchers

This project began in the archives at Mississippi State University Libraries, but there is much more to explore and add to the discussion of Civil Rights in Mississippi. Use these resources to get started.

Learn More

Bibliographies

Want to know more about racial equality in the United States, as well as the Civil Rights Movement? From both scholarly and fictional books, to digital primary sources, this project will continue to add relevant reads to these bibliographies.

Read More
Our Team

• 2 Research Librarians
• 1 History Professor (on sabbatical)
• 4 Doctoral students (dissertating)
• 3 Masters students (graduated)
• 1 Honors Undergrad (volunteer)

http://mrg.bz/rKcNI
Grassroots + DH

A grassroots theme underlies both the project’s *research* and in our *execution* of it.

http://mrg.bz/D1JR2v
Stages

• Public history course / Research Question
• Grant funding / Develop goals and timeline
• Curate content and build the site
• Community Forum
• A “living website”

http://mrg.bz/A1RMMC
1. Public History Course Project (Spring 2014)

From Courthouse to Field House: Starkville Integration Protest, 1965-1970

From Courthouse to Field House: Starkville Integration Protest, 1965-1970

History
Sets the scene for the 1970 Starkville protest and places this event in the larger Civil Rights context.

Map
Provides a spatial representation of the events described by local participants.

Protest
Audio and audio-visual clips of participants and their memories of the protest.

Teaching Modules
Some clear suggestions for implementing this information.

School Integration
A small collection of newspaper articles portraying the integration of Mississippi State University and Starkville High School.

Further Reading
Other links and resources for more information.
2. Grant funding / Develop goals and timeline

• Open-ended project to “benefit both community and the library”
• Gave much-needed structure and resources to the project:
  • Statement of Need
  • Detailed Budget
  • Timeline
3. Curate Content & Build Site

• Worked on various components separately through sub-teams
  • Project management
  • Archival research
  • Oral history interviews + indexing
  • Website design + organization of content
  • Crafting the narrative
4. Community Forum
How is this different?

Scenario C

(librarians)  (researchers)  (team)

Amanda Visconti:
literaturegeek.com/2016/02/28/DHjobtalk
Lessons Learned
1. Sharing Research Can Be Hard
2. Project management is constant
3. Scaffolding tools helps accommodate different skillsets
4. Universal + Local Topic = Powerful
Thank you!

starkvillecivilrights.msstate.edu