

# **The Legal Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Selected Resources**

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**D'Angelo Law Library**  
**"Let Justice Roll Down Like Water":**  
**The University of Chicago Martin Luther King, Jr. 2007 Commemoration**  
**January 8-15, 2007**  
<http://mlk.uchicago.edu/>

Whatever career you may choose for yourself - doctor, lawyer, teacher - let me propose an avocation to be pursued along with it. Become a dedicated fighter for civil rights. Make it a central part of your life. . . . You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.

*The Wisdom of Martin Luther King, Jr.* 230 (Alex Ayres ed., New York: Meridian, 1993).

The civil rights movement of the 1960s was one such period of public punctuation, and its principal actors were, in that sense, constitution- makers. The meaning of the civil rights movement has yet to be settled. But it is hardly adventurous to say that the period has had a significant and continuing influence on our understanding of the American political order, and that debates over its meaning and significance will help determine the meaning of that political order in the future. I have suggested that an insistence on the deviation between ideal and reality, or freedom from desperate conditions, opposition to caste, and caution about the judiciary were defining features of the civil rights movement. It should not be too much to suggest that those commitments ought to play a large role in similar movements in the future.

Cass Sunstein, . "What the Civil Rights Movement Was and Wasn't (with Notes on Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X)," 1995 *University of Illinois Law Review* 191, 209.

The tensions within the civil rights movement in the 1960s, between the lawyers and the activists, were significant. Martin Luther King was telling Jack Greenberg that he was going to march against injunctions. And Jack Greenberg of the Legal Defense Fund said, "No. You can't do that, or you shouldn't do that." And he said, "Well, it's not your role to tell me what I shouldn't do. It's your role to get me out of jail."

Theodore M. Shaw, "Dividing History: Brown as a Catalyst for Civil Rights in America," 34 *Stetson Law Review* 473, 481-82 (2005).

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in *Why We Can't Wait* 77 (New York: New American Library, 1964).  
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<http://www.bl.uk/pdf/americancivilrights.pdf>

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***King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968*** (also specific subdivisions such as *-Influence, -- Political and social views, --Views on law*, etc.)

***African American civil rights workers.***

***African-Americans—Civil rights.***

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***Afro-Americans—Civil rights.***

***Birmingham (Ala.)—Race relations.***

***Civil rights movements—Alabama—Birmingham—History--20th century.***

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***Selma (Ala.)—Race relations.***

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## ***Primary Source Documents***

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(see "**Let Justice Roll Down Like Water**" **The University of Chicago Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Commemoration** (January 8-January 15, 2007), at <http://mlk.uchicago.edu/> and the page of related books, websites, and videos at <http://mlk.uchicago.edu/resources.html>), the **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Committee** at <http://www.king-raleigh.org/>, and the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service** page at <http://www.mlkday.org>)

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Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts: Subject: Martin Luther King, Jr. (FBI files)

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(see also FBI security investigation of Stanley Levison, an advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr. at <<http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/levison.htm>>)

Investigation of Recent Allegations Regarding the Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, June 2000)

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[http://www.courtstv.com/archive/trials/mlk-civil/120899\\_verdict\\_ctv.html](http://www.courtstv.com/archive/trials/mlk-civil/120899_verdict_ctv.html)

## ***Websites***

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

<http://www.bcri.org/index.html>

Black Studies (City College of New York; includes civil rights links)

<http://origin.admin.ccny.cuny.edu/library/blacks.html>

"Brown@50: Fulfilling the Promise," (Howard University School of Law, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 347 U.S. 483. 495 (May 17, 1954))

<http://www.brownat50.org/>

(includes links to civil rights resources at

<http://www.brownat50.org/brownResources/OutsideLinksPage.htm>)

Chronology of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/mlk/chronology.html>

"Citizen King" (PBS' American Experience two-hour documentary film)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/mlk/>

Civil Rights Division (U.S. Department of Justice)

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/>

Civil Rights Documentation Project (University of Southern Mississippi)

<http://www.usm.edu/crdp/index.html>

(includes oral history transcripts and audio clips)

Civil Rights Documentation Project (The Dirksen Congressional Center)

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Civil Rights in Mississippi Digital Archive

<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/>

<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/resources.htm>

Civil Rights (Cornell University)

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Civil Rights Movement Veterans

<http://www.crmvet.org/>

The Civil Rights Project (Harvard University)

<http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/>

Civil Rights Resources

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/society/crlinks.htm>

Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)

<http://www.core-online.org/>

Internet Resources: "The Civil Rights Movement" (C&RL News, September 2004)

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The King Center for Nonviolent Social Change

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/>

Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

<http://www.lawyerscomm.org/>

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

<http://www.civilrights.org/>

Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project (Stanford)

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/>

(includes links to selected full texts of the multi-volume series, *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, at <http://www.stanford.edu/group/publications/papers/index.htm>;

also biographical information, texts of documents, speeches, and audio clips, a "King Encyclopedia", an interactive timeline, chronologies of major events, classroom resources, etc.)

Multicultural/Civil Rights Links

[http://www.willamette.edu/org/mlsa/web\\_links.htm](http://www.willamette.edu/org/mlsa/web_links.htm)

NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.

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National Association for the Advanced of Colored People (NAACP)

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The Papers of Justice Tom C. Clark: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Cases of the U.S. Supreme Court"

<http://utopia.utexas.edu/explore/clark/>

"Racial Justice" (American Civil Liberties Union)

<http://www.aclu.org/RacialEquality/RacialEqualityMain.cfm>

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

<http://sclcnational.org/>

Southern Poverty Law Center (Civil Rights Memorial Online)

<http://www.splcenter.org/crm/crmc.jsp>

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

<http://www.usccr.gov>

We Shall Overcome: Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/>