Bearing the Cross Study Guide

Bearing the Cross by David Garrow

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Plot Summary

Bearing the Cross is a Pulitzer Prize winning book about Martin Luther King Jr. and his participation in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s . The author, David J. Garrow, is a well-respected educator and historian who does not just report on the facts of history, but has interviewed hundreds of King's friends and enemies in order to bring the readers a complete picture of the man, his struggle, and his legacy. *Bearing the Cross* is a recounting of history that is well worth a second look by every American.

Rosa Parks was a tired tailor's assistant on her way home from work when she unwittingly became a pawn of history. Mrs. Parks was asked to give her bus seat up so that a white passenger would not be forced to ride the bus seated across from her. Mrs. Parks refused. This refusal sparked a bus boycott that would not only force the integration of Montgomery's buses, but would create a legend in American history.

Martin Luther King, Jr. had only a few months before accepted his first role, serving as pastor of the Dexter Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. A man called King, and asked to use his church for a meeting about a possible bus boycott. King hesitated to become involved. However, in a short amount of time, King would be made president of a new organization created for the sole purpose of running the bus boycott. King was not the only leader involved in the boycott, but it was King's name that made the newspapers, and it was King who people remembered when the boycott ended successfully.

Inspired by the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, King decided there needed to be a new organization, one with a membership of black Christian leaders, which could pick another area of segregation to attack and change like they had in Montgomery. An invitation to southern leaders went out and the succeeding conference culminated in the creation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization designed to promote integration throughout the south. Shortly after the SCLC's creation, a group of college students began a protest of their own at lunch counters throughout the south. An organization sprang from this group of college protestors, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which would welcome King and the SCLC as advisors in their future works. The SNCC was eager for change, and immediately jumped at the suggestion of testing the interstate travel laws that said that all bus terminals should offer integrated waiting rooms and lunch counters to interstate travelers.

The ensuing bus rides, called the Freedom Rides, were without incident until they reached the south. Outside Anniston, Alabama, one of the buses was attacked by a mob and firebombed while its sister bus was boarded by an angry mob and its passengers beaten. The Freedom Riders refused to give up and continued their journey. The Attorney General was forced to intervene on behalf of the riders, but a mob still attacked the passengers and severely beat many of them. However, the rides continued. New riders continued to join the fight, picking up the journey each time

another team was beaten or scared off by mobs of angry whites. The rides continued until it became clear that change would not be achieved through this method.

Not long after the last of the Freedom Rides ended, the SNCC and the SCLC turned their attention to voter registration. During this period, several SNCC representatives found themselves in Albany, Georgia, where local activists had been trying for years to achieve change in segregation and the blatantly unfair treatment of blacks. The SNCC representatives began organizing students in protests to test many different facets of segregation in this small town. The protests grew larger and larger until an organization was formed of multiple civil rights organization leaders to govern them. Before long, King was asked to come join the demonstrations that had already resulted in the arrests of hundreds. Despite the fact that some leaders resented his presence, King arrived in Albany with the hope of bringing national attention to the struggles in that small town. King was arrested during a protest march, garnering the desired affect, and creating a situation in which the Kennedy Administration was forced to send a mediator to encourage a settlement between white city leaders and the black leaders.

Due to the fact that the Albany settlement did not include all the desired demands and did not affectively change segregation in the city, it was looked upon as a failure. King and his fellow leaders took a long hard look at their actions in Albany, picked out the mistakes, and took what they had learned into future demonstrations. A short time later, King and his fellow leaders turned their attentions on Birmingham. King carefully orchestrated a group of protests that were designed to force the city into segregating their businesses and public buildings and allow equal opportunity employment for blacks. King began small by boycotting downtown stores and staging sit-ins at local lunch counters. Later, peace marches began in the streets of Birmingham, pushing the local Public Safety Commissioner into showing his hand by bringing out attack dogs and using fire hoses on the protestors. The pictures that filled the papers after these marches horrified the country, and Birmingham was soon forced into negotiations. Despite minor mistakes made during this time, King considered Birmingham a success.

Flying on the excitement of a win in Birmingham, King decided it was time to pressure the President into creating a federal mandate that would end segregation throughout the nation. King could not get a meeting with the President, so he began to plan a march on Washington that was designed to scare the President into taking a stand on civil rights. However, during the planning of the march, the President came out publicly in favor of civil rights. King turned the momentum of the march from the President to Congress, which at that time was considering a Civil Rights Bill that was not expected to pass. The March on Washington was an overwhelming success, and King made the speech of a lifetime.

After Washington, however, the enthusiasm of the movement began to wane due to a lack of obvious hotspots. Diane Bevel, an activist married to SCLC member James Bevel, suggested massive demonstrations across Alabama under one program that would be called the Alabama Program. The Alabama Program organized protests in places such as Birmingham, and supported voter registration drives. During this time, King was also informed of tensions developing in the Florida town of St. Augustine. St.

Augustine was about to celebrate its quadri-centennial, and local black activists were outraged that the town had asked for federal money to support this celebration when it openly supported segregation. The black activists asked the SCLC to come in and support protest marches in their town. King agreed.

Protest marches began in St. Augustine, but were marred by violence from the local Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Negotiations were unsuccessful due to pressure from the KKK on local businessmen, but when the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted, it gave the businessmen the support they needed to integrate their businesses. Shortly after this success, King returned to Atlanta where he learned he had won the Nobel Peace Prize. This was a great honor for King, and a boost for the movement.

Upon returning to the States after accepting his award, King was informed about tensions in Selma, Alabama. Most cities in Alabama had conformed to the new statues under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, except for Selma. King went to Selma to lend his support to the cause shortly after a march that ended in terrible violence by the local police. King led two more marches that ended in a successful negotiation with town officials. However, the success was marred by the killing of a movement activist by members of the KKK. This murder had great influence on Congress as they debated a voting rights bill, which would pass in the months following the Selma incident.

At this point, King felt that the attentions of the SCLC and the movement should turn to the north. King visited many different northern cities, finally setting his sights on Chicago. Chicago had dealt with terrible segregation within their schools for many years, and was at a point where demonstrations seemed to be the only option left for the black activists. King sent members of the SCLC to investigate the situation and to come up with a plan. James Bevel, a member of the SCLC, convinced King that the focus of the SCLC's attention should not be on school segregation, but instead on the poor living conditions of Chicago blacks. King agreed. However, before a plan could be cemented, James Meredith, the first black man to register at the University of Mississippi, was shot while on a walk across Mississippi to encourage blacks to vote in an upcoming primary.

King and other activists decided to finish Meredith's walk for him. However, tensions between leaders marred the marches. One angry leader made a speech that included the phrase "black power", a phrase that quickly caught on. King was concerned about this phrase because of its implications of black separation, and was afraid it would fuel hate and violence. However, King refused to make a stand against the phrase. Back in Chicago, the unfocused fight against the slums became more focused as the leaders began marches against local real estate firms that openly discriminated against blacks. However, the white reacted with violence, causing the city to be anxious to enter into negotiations in order to end the protests completely. These negotiations were nearly destroyed by an injunction initiated by the Chicago mayor, but an agreement eventually was reached.

King then turned his attention to what he called the second phase of the civil rights movement, economic injustices. King wanted the government to take responsibility for

the poor conditions in which many Americans lived. This fight included King making a stand against the war in Vietnam for many reasons, including the fact that the Johnson Administration was taking money from social programs to fund the war. King's stand on the war and his shift in the focus of the movement brought him criticism from other civil rights leaders, the government, and his own SCLC associates, but he refused to back down. King began planning a march on Washington that he hoped would end in legislative changes for the poor. While planning this march, King went to Memphis where protests were underway after a strike of black sanitation workers had led to tensions between the black community and the city officials. King participated in one march that ended in violence, and was in town to lead another when he was shot outside his hotel room.

Chapter 1, The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956

Chapter 1, The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956 Summary and Analysis

Bearing the Cross is a Pulitzer Prize winning book about Martin Luther King Jr. and his participation in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s . The author, David J. Garrow, is a well-respected educator and historian who does not just report on the facts of history, but has interviewed hundreds of King's friends and enemies in order to bring the readers a complete picture of the man, his struggle, and his legacy. *Bearing the Cross* is a recounting of history that is well worth a second look by every American.

Rosa Parks, a tailor's assistant at the Montgomery Fair department store, was asked to vacate her seat on a city bus in order to make room for a white passenger. Parks refused because she disagreed with the policy that forced blacks to stand so that white passengers did not have to sit beside or parallel to a black passenger. The bus driver called the police from a phone booth and insisted on pressing charges against Parks for violating the local segregation laws. Parks was arrested and booked in the city jail. Word of Parks' arrest spread quickly through the black community. Several black leaders had been waiting for an arrest such as this since the arrest of Claudia Colvin had brought the unfairness of bus segregation into the spotlight. Colvin, a pregnant teenager, was not the type of defendant who could spearhead such a public and drawn out case. However, Parks would prove to be the perfect defendant in a case designed to fight these segregation laws.

Several black leaders, including E.D. Nixon and Mrs. Jo Ann Robinson, gathered that night after Mrs. Parks agreed to fight her case in the courts. Nixon and Robinson wanted to call a boycott of the bus lines the following Monday, the day Parks would go to court on her arrest. Robinson wrote and distributed a pamphlet that outlined Parks' arrest and the proposed boycott, while Nixon called local pastors and black leaders to organize a meeting to discuss the boycott. Ralph D. Abernathy was among the first of Nixon's calls. Abernathy suggested that Nixon call Martin Luther King, Jr., the young pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in order to hold the meeting there. Nixon did as suggested, asking for King's support. King was reluctant at first as he and his wife had a newborn at home and King was spread thin already with his pastor's duties and his lecture schedule. However, with a small amount of urging on Abernathy's part, King agreed to support the black leaders.

The first meeting proved to be somewhat disastrous due to the ego of some of the leaders involved. One preacher monopolized much of the meeting with a speech that did little to further the boycott discussion. The only decision reached was an agreement to call a mass meeting Monday night following Mrs. Parks' trial. Several articles appeared in the local papers that weekend, both alerting the blacks who had not gotten

the pamphlets of the boycott set for Monday as well as the mass meeting. On Monday, Parks' trial was speedy, ending in a guilty verdict and a ten-dollar fine, a fact that did not surprise anyone.

Another meeting took place among the black leadership that afternoon in a local church. The meeting began by forming a new organization, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), to organize the boycott and oversee the legal maneuvering. Officers were chosen with the surprise appointment of Martin Luther King Jr. as the organizational president. This gave King less than an hour to write a speech to present to the black community that evening. A feeling of inadequacy overwhelmed King as he rushed to prepare this speech, but this emotion was not heard in his words that night as he encouraged the community to fight inequality with love and compassion.

A meeting was arranged that Thursday between MIA leaders and city commissioners as well as representatives of the bus company. At this meeting, the MIA leaders presented demands they had presented earlier in the week in a letter. The MIA leaders asked that the buses be loaded from front to back for whites and back to front for blacks, creating a situation in which no black passenger would have to stand over an empty seat. The leaders also requested that drivers not be openly cruel to black passengers. Finally, the leaders wanted the bus company to hire black drivers, especially for routes that were predominately black. Despite a lengthy discussion, however, nothing was settled at this first meeting. A second meeting took place that same afternoon between smaller groups of leaders. However, this meeting too failed to result in any progress.

A second mass meeting took place that Thursday. By Monday, the boycott was still in force, causing the MIA to implement a carpool system in order to provide transportation to those blacks left stranded by the boycott. This was also in response to the city's enforcement of a minimum fare for all city taxis. By Friday, the boycott had already lasted longer than many had believed it would. The black community was receiving support in the local papers through editorials by local white women, but the white leaders were still resistant to the MIA's demands. Another meeting between MIA leaders and city commissioners was called Saturday. King began the meeting by presenting a compromise. King suggested that instead of hiring black drivers immediately, perhaps it would be acceptable if the bus company would simply accept applications from interested blacks. The company and the white leaders quickly disagreed with this idea. The mayor then suggested forming a special committee to discuss these issues, with two blacks and eight whites. The MIA leaders argued for eight blacks and the mayor agreed.

The first meeting of the new committee took place Monday morning. Several white members had been changed and King immediately disagreed with the change, calling these new members people with preconceived ideas. King was condemned for his criticism, and felt as though he had blundered until Abernathy came to his defense. The meeting went on to cover a discussion on the possibility of unreserved seating on single-race buses, but the MIA was not interested in this plan, as it would continue to leave segregation relatively unchanged on buses of mixed race. This meeting also ended without resolving a single issue and no other meetings were scheduled.

Martin Luther King Jr. was the son and grandson of Atlanta preachers, both pastors at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. King's father was a forceful man who had no qualms with spanking his son, even to the point of bringing ridicule on the child. King's mother was soft spoken and pushed to the foreground in her husband's presence. The most important person in King's life as a child was his grandmother, a kind woman whose death led King to jump out a second floor window of the family's home in a fit of depression. However, King was uninjured, and his parents used the opportunity to teach their son about spiritual immortality.

King attended an experimental school for the first few years of high school. When this school closed, King returned to public school. Due to the advancement of the education he gained at the experimental school, King was able to graduate several years early. King immediately enrolled in Morehouse College, where he quickly made new friends and began to explore some of the forbidden behaviors of his childhood, such as smoking and dancing. Although King originally resisted the idea of following his father's footsteps into the church, a bible course showed King a different side of religion that brought him back to the desire to become a pastor. However, instead of joining his father as an assistant pastor immediately after graduating from Morehouse, King chose to go to Crozer Theological Seminary to continue his studies.

King excelled at Crozer, despite several incidences in the first year that introduced him to the perils of racial discrimination. King was refused service at two restaurants in the Chester, Pennsylvania area where the school was located. One of these incidences included the owner of the restaurant pulling a gun on King and his guests. Another incident involving a gun took place when a white student at the school pulled a gun on King while accusing him of pulling a prank that embarrassed the white student. In addition, King had a love affair with a young German girl during his time at Crozer. Many of King's friends advised him against an affair with a white woman, but King was in love and committed to the relationship. However, under much pressure from his friends, King finally ended the relationship, but one good friend believed he never recovered from the heartbreak.

While attending Crozer, King was introduced to the writings of both Marx and Niebuhr. These writings introduced King to the complexity of human motives as well as the reality of sin on every man. Armed with these ideas, King thought the only way to fight segregation was to arm all black people and have them rise up against their white suppressors. However, King was also introduced to the writings of Mohandas Gandhi during this period; ideas that he at first scoffed at, but would later come to embrace.

Due to his success in his studies at Crozer, King was encouraged to continue to pursue doctoral studies. King applied to several schools, and eventually decided on Boston University's School of Theology. During his years in Boston, King had an active social life. It was during this time that King was introduced to Coretta Scott, a student at the New England Conservatory of Music. King and Coretta saw each other quite often over the next few months. Their relationship deepened the following fall. King's parents came to Boston late in 1952 in order to put an end to the relationship. King's father wanted him to marry an Atlanta girl. However, King announced his intention to marry Coretta.

King and Coretta were married the following June at the home of Coretta's parents in Alabama.

When King finished his course work in Boston, several of his professors encouraged him to teach at the university level. However, King had already made up his mind to pursue a pastoral position in the South. King was offered churches in many parts of the country, and traveled frequently to give sermons at these churches as a sort of interview. One of the churches that King was considering was Dexter Avenue Baptist in Montgomery, Alabama. Despite protests from both his father and Coretta, King accepted the Dexter position. King immediately implemented many of his father's programs at Dexter, making it clear to his new congregation who was in control and what issues he felt were important.

King threw himself into his church, often spending hours a week writing his sermons. King also became active in the community, joining the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as well as the Alabama Council on Human Relations. Months before the bus boycott would begin, King was offered the presidency of the local NAACP chapter, but was forced to turn it down due to church and family responsibilities. During this time, King's wife gave birth to the couple's first child, Yolanda Denise. Less than a month later, Rosa Parks would be arrested for violating the bus segregation laws.

In the aftermath of the disastrous meetings with the white leaders, rumors began to spread regarding King. It was suggested that King was the biggest obstacle in the negotiations and that he most likely had his hand in the MIA's till. King heard these rumors and immediately offered his resignation to black leaders. However, his resignation was not accepted. At the same time, the bus company was beginning to suffer the effects of the boycott. Without more than seventy percent of their passengers, the company was not achieving the financial goals they had before the boycott. Due to this situation, the bus company began to stop the routes that had the fewest riders and were raising their fares.

The boycott moved into the New Year. New developments began to complicate the situation almost immediately. A local lawyer wrote to the newspapers suggesting the boycott was illegal under state laws. The police commissioner then announced that he was joining the White Citizens Council, an ardently segregationist group. In response to these developments, King asked for another meeting with the mayor. King stressed at this meeting that he did not want an end to segregation at this point, but simply a form of the separate but equal policy set forth more than fifty years before by the Supreme Court. However, the city continued to resist even this compromise.

Several leaders within the boycott began to suffer harassment from local whites, harassment that included threatening phone calls and vandalism. King found himself in the middle of a press frenzy as reporters quickly began to focus their attention on him as the leader of the boycott. City leaders became desperate to end the boycott. At the end of January, city leaders announced that a compromise had been reached. King was not aware of a compromise. Through some investigation, King quickly learned that the

city officials had indeed reached a compromise, but the compromise was reached with three preachers not involved with MIA or the boycott. The MIA leaders immediately sent out word to the black community about the trick the white city leaders had attempted to pull on them, which prevented the end of the boycott. As a result, the city leaders became more determined than before to best the MIA.

The city leaders ended all negotiations between themselves and the MIA. The police also began pulling over cars that were obviously part of the carpool organized by the MIA and would break up groups of blacks waiting to be picked up by the cars in the carpool. King himself was arrested for speeding while driving a group of carpoolers through the city. It was the first arrest for King, and proved to be an unpleasant experience. King had never wanted to be the focal point of the boycott, and felt uncomfortable with his role in the situation. King experienced a crisis of faith as a result; this crisis would lead to a spiritual epiphany that would make King's true destiny in life clear, and give him the strength to continue fighting for Civil Rights.

The MIA began to struggle with the financial costs of running the carpools, thanks in large part to the numerous fines and traffic tickets the police were handing out on a daily basis. The MIA decided to apply for a franchise license to run a jitney transportation system so they could take fares from their riders. The bus company accused the MIA of attempting to undermine them, since they were in negotiations with the city at that same time over their own franchise. King denied these accusations, and the MIA took out an ad in the local paper stressing the MIA's moderate stand and the city's continuing resistance to compromise. Privately, however, the MIA had begun discussions regarding the possibility of filing a federal court case attacking segregation directly.

On January 30, 1956, the King house was bombed. King was on the pulpit during a mass meeting at the time. King rushed home to find his wife and child unharmed. A crowd quickly gathered outside the King home as the mayor and the police commissioner began a survey of the damage. The crowd quickly became hostile toward these city officials. King was forced to make an impromptu speech on his front porch, calling for peace. The crowd quietly dispersed. King took his family to the home of some church members. King was awakened in the middle of the night by the arrival of his and Coretta's father. The news of the bombing so terrified the patriarchs that they demanded the King family leave Montgomery immediately. King refused, and Coretta remained at her husband's side.

Two days later, Fred Gray filed a federal court case that would challenge bus segregation head-on. This signaled the end of the MIA's attempted compromise of separate but equal. It was also decided that the boycott would continue while the MIA waited for the results of the court case. A businessman's group attempted to mediate the boycott by entering into negotiations with MIA leaders. However, like the city leaders, the businessmen refused to compromise on the reserved seats for whites, thus ending the negotiations without a suitable resolution.

In mid-February, while King was in Chicago on a speaking engagement, a grand jury began handing down indictments against the MIA leaders for breaking the state laws

against unlawful boycotts. Word of the indictments reached the King home in Atlanta, causing Daddy King to become more forceful in attempting to encourage his son to end his involvement in the MIA and civil rights. King once again refused to listen to his father, returning instead to Montgomery in order to turn himself in to the authorities. The mass indictments brought more attention to the boycott than anything thus far, including the bombings. With the press came curious onlookers, including Bayard Rustin, a long time advocate of non-violent protests.

Rustin had lengthy discussions with MIA leaders, sharing his philosophy of non-violence, and giving advice on the boycott. Many of the MIA leaders were wary of Rustin, and were afraid outside influence could cause a disruption in the leadership. However, King embraced Rustin's philosophies and was grateful for his support. Made increasingly concerned by King's reaction to Rustin, one of the MIA leaders made a few phone calls and learned that Rustin had been sent to Montgomery by a New York organization, a situation that threatened the MIA leaders. Rustin was advised to get out of town. However, Rustin remained an advisor to King, not only regarding the boycott and King's upcoming trial for breaking the state boycott laws, but also regarding the future of the civil rights movement when the boycott ended.

King was the first of the MIA leaders to face trial on the state boycott laws. It was expected that King would be found guilty, so rather than put on a defense, the lawyers used the courtroom as a forum to discuss the prejudices blacks faced on the buses on a daily basis. King was convicted and given a five hundred dollar fine plus court costs. King's lawyers immediately announced their intention to appeal. A month later, on April 23, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation on municipal buses in Columbia, South Carolina, was unconstitutional. The Montgomery bus company immediately announced that their drivers would no longer enforce segregation laws on their buses. However, the mayor of Montgomery said that the city would continue to enforce the segregation laws and that any bus driver failing to do so would be arrested. The bus company refused to back down, forcing city officials to file suit in state courts to get a restraining order that would compel the company to enforce the state laws. The court would rule against segregation, but the boycott would remain in place while the city appealed.

The summer passed quietly. The carpool had become self sufficient, facing a small insurance problem that was quickly dealt with. Infighting began within the MIA, with one pastor openly accusing King and other MIA leaders of stealing MIA funds. However, King quickly put an end to this dispute with a speech of forgiveness and a retraction offered by the accuser. In August, another bombing damaged the home of Robert Graetz, a white pastor at a black church in Montgomery. In October, the city filed to request an injunction against the MIA's carpool on the grounds that it interfered with the bus company's franchise. During the trial in mid-November, King received word that the Supreme Court had ruled that bus segregation in Montgomery was unconstitutional. The MIA was jubilant, despite the fact the city won their injunction against the carpool. However, it would be several weeks before the Supreme Court decision would reach Montgomery.

On December 17, the city of Montgomery lost their final appeal. The Supreme Court's decision was delivered to the city by federal marshals on December 20, officially ending segregation on city buses more than a year after the boycott began. The next morning, Martin Luther King Jr. was among the first black passengers to ride on the newly desegregated city buses.

Rosa Parks' arrest in December of 1955 began a bus boycott that would not only change the segregation laws in Montgomery, Alabama, but would also put Martin Luther King Jr. on a life path that he had neither expected nor desired. Martin Luther King Jr. was a highly educated pastor who wished only to make a name for himself as a Baptist preacher, like his father and grandfather before him. Despite deep feelings regarding the racial inequalities within the country at the time, King had never set out to be a leader of change. King only wanted to run his church and raise a family. Rosa Parks' arrest would change all of that.

King's wife had just given birth to the couple's first child and King was busy with speaking engagements and his church duties. King had recently turned down the presidency of the local chapter of the NAACP due to professional and personal commitments shortly before Mrs. Parks' arrest. When local black leaders decided to organize a bus boycott in response to Mrs. Parks' arrest, it surprised even King's closest friends when he agreed to become president of the newly formed MIA. King was young and enthusiastic, a proponent of nonviolence, the perfect leader. King also knew the time had come for some sort of change to take place within the segregation laws of his newly adopted state. However, even King could not have imagined the boycott would last as long as it did.

King soon became the focus of the local press as well as vicious rumors spread by white members of the community unhappy with the boycott. The final straw for King came when he was arrested for speeding while driving his car in the MIA's carpool. King faced a crisis of faith that night, unsure he was strong enough to continue as leader of such an important fight. During this crisis, King had an epiphany that would convince him that his destiny was to procure change for all blacks, an epiphany that would remain with him the rest of his life. King finally realized it was his destiny to lead the civil rights fight and he refused to back down, even in the face of bodily harm.

This chapter presents the beginning of a great man's fight to secure freedom for all men, no matter what race. It not only touches on the theme of civil rights, but it begins to define a personality that would remain strong enough to secure change even in the face of terrible obstacles. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was not only about segregation on buses and one woman's refusal to give up her seat, but it was about the beginning of a long struggle that would end in all blacks being able to enjoy the same freedoms as their white neighbors. This boycott was the beginning, and the struggle that it presents to the reader is only the beginning of a lifetime of struggle that will be showcased throughout the rest of the book.

Chapter 2, The Birth of the SCLC, 1957-1959

Chapter 2, The Birth of the SCLC, 1957-1959 Summary and Analysis

A few days after the buses were desegregated, the King house was shot upon. King and his family were unharmed. Over the next few weeks, several buses were also fired on, wounding one black passenger. These events caused the police commissioner to hire extra police officers in order to have police patrols follow the city buses on their routes.

During this time, King remained in touch with Rustin. Rustin continued to push King to organize a meeting that would include black leaders throughout the south in order to continue the good works of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King arranged for the meeting to take place in Atlanta in mid-January. The night before the meeting was to take place, several homes and churches in Montgomery were bombed, forcing Abernathy to flee back to Montgomery in order to access the damage. King attended the meetings as planned. The meetings focused on ways to integrate buses throughout the south and to look at other forms of segregation, especially school segregation. King intended for this organization to be a permanent one that would continue to fight for equal rights.

Tensions had begun to build within the MIA organizations with many of the leaders resentful toward King because of the fame his association with the boycott had created. This, coupled with the added stress of multiple speaking engagements, left King exhausted. At the end of January, on the anniversary of King's epiphany, a bundle of dynamite was found smoldering on King's front porch. King used this situation to reaffirm his commitment to nonviolence in a sermon at his church that morning.

A second meeting of southern leaders took place in New Orleans that February. At this meeting, officers were chosen for the new organization that would have King as president. The group also elected to call itself the Southern Leadership Conference. At this meeting, King announced his intentions to organize a pilgrimage to Washington should the President of the United States continue to refuse to speak out in support of desegregation in the south. Shortly afterward, King's picture would appear on the front page of *Time* magazine, and he would be offered the opportunity to travel to Ghana for their independence ceremonies. King and Coretta met Nixon, the vice-President at these ceremonies, where Nixon extended an invitation for King to visit him in Washington sometime.

Upon his return, King went to New York to discuss the Washington Pilgrimage with Roy Wilkins, the NAACP chairman. Wilkins was unhappy with King's Southern Leadership Conference; his concern was with its impact on southern chapters of the NAACP. Wilkins was also concerned with King's push for mass protests and civil disobedience.

However, Wilkins participated in the planning and execution of the Washington Pilgrimage despite his reservations, seeing it as an opportunity to give voice to many issues within the fight for civil rights. Despite a lower than anticipated turnout, the pilgrimage proved to be a success, with King coming out of the experience with more fame than he had achieved before. However, the pilgrimage did little to convince Eisenhower to meet with black leaders.

King did manage to secure a meeting with Nixon. On June 13th, King arrived at the capitol with Abernathy. King and Abernathy described to Nixon the racial violence blacks in the south had been subjected to. Nixon defended the Eisenhower administration's stand on civil rights by discussing a civil rights bill that was due to pass the House soon and was expected to pass the Senate, as well. Nixon then ended the meeting by hinting that he might be able to arrange a meeting between King and Eisenhower in the near future. King and Abernathy held a press conference the next morning, revealing that no promises had been made, but that Nixon appeared to be sympathetic to the civil rights cause.

In August, King attended another meeting of the Southern Leadership Conference. At this meeting, King announced that the name of the organization would be changed to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. King also announced his desire to begin a voter registration drive called Crusade for Citizenship that would have a large budget and be based out of Atlanta. Roy Wilkins was angry when he heard about King's latest exploits. Wilkins believed that all black organizations should center around and support the NAACP. Wilkins thought the SCLC was not only leaving the NAACP out of their plans, but was infringing on NAACP territory.

The first federal Civil Rights Act passed the Congress in September. However, there was little celebration among black leaders. The act established a civil rights commission and allowed the Justice Department to file voting rights suits against discriminatory southern registrars. Despite this step forward, the act appeared to be useless in the hands of an administration that appeared unwilling to become involved in civil rights. During this same period, a crisis was taking place in Arkansas as the governor fought the integration of Little Rock's Central High School. This situation seemed to cry out for Presidential involvement, but this involvement was slow in coming.

In early November, there was a fourth meeting of the SCLC. King continued to push the Crusade for Citizenship by announcing twenty rallies that would take place simultaneously in different southern cities the following January. In response to these actions, Wilkins announced the NAACP would have a meeting of their own in Atlanta to discuss their own voter registration campaign. The local press picked up on the tensions between Wilkins and King, writing extensively about it in the newspapers. These tensions were especially difficult in their timing for King because he was suffering from overwork and burnout at the time and these tensions simply increased his stress.

That December, King spoke at an institute for voter rights sponsored by the MIA. Tensions had been running high within this organization, as well. Nixon, who was treasurer, disliked the attention King had gotten since the boycott, and felt that King was

responsible for misappropriation of some of MIA's money. Nixon finally resigned among these controversies, leaving his rival, Rufus Lewis, as his replacement. However, this situation was overshadowed by the trouble King was having finding an executive director to run the Crusade for Citizenship. King hired Bayard Rustin to coordinate the rallies, but rumors of his homosexuality and communist connections forced King to replace him with Ella Baker, an executive secretary of In Friendship.

The rallies proved to be a disaster for the SCLC, receiving little advance publicity through the press and resulting in few increases in black voter registration. However, with Ella Baker's help, King hired the Reverend John L. Tilley as executive director. This action would finally push the organization in a positive direction, leaving King free to work on an autobiographical book about the boycott. King was having a difficult time writing this book, and depended deeply on the help of his friend, Stanley Levison, who acted as both agent and critic.

During the fifth meeting of the SCLC the following year, the members sent a telegram to Eisenhower to express dismay over public statements the President had recently made regarding the enforcement of civil rights laws. In response, a presidential assistant, Rocco Siciliano, contacted King and invited him to a meeting with Eisenhower. Along with King, Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, and Lester B. Granger would attend the meeting set for late June. The four men prepared a statement, deciding in what order they would speak, and what subject each would cover. The black leaders presented nine points to the President, with King expanding upon the three most important: that Eisenhower call for obedience to the law, call a White House conference, and offer federal aid to help communities adjust to integration. Eisenhower listened politely, but told the black leaders honestly that, although he intended to consider their points, he did not think anything would come of a conference.

In late August, the relatively calm summer was shattered by an attack on Abernathy. A husband of one of Abernathy's church members assaulted Abernathy in his office, accusing him of having perverted sex with his wife. When King attempted to attend the opening day of the trial against Abernathy's assailant, he was arrested for attempting to enter the courtroom after being told not to by a local police officer. The arrest proved to especially brutal and public. Dismayed by what King considered fictitious charges, King fought the charges. Upon his conviction, King chose to serve his fourteen days in jail rather than pay a fine in order to protest the charges. However, King's time in jail proved embarrassing for the city, so the police commissioner paid King's fine himself. King protested to the judge, but discovered there was nothing he could do to fight the payment of his fine.

The following September, King was in New York to promote the release of his book. While attending a book signing in a department store, King was stabbed by a white woman who later proved to be suffering from mental illness. King was stabbed close to his heart and might have died if the weapon had shifted or been removed before the surgeons could operate. King would recover, but it would take three months of convalescence. In February of 1959, following his recovery, King and his wife traveled to India in order to visit some of the sites made infamous by Gandhi. The visit widened

King's view of the struggle that lay ahead with civil rights, and increased his knowledge and admiration of Gandhi as a man.

The SCLC was continue to suffer and was not meeting King's deadline for increasing voter registration. The decision was made to fire Tilley and make Baker the interim director. King hoped that this change would push the organization in the right direction once again. In April, King participated in the second Youth March for Integrated Schools in Washington. There was a large turnout for this march, making it more successful than the prior march. However, this march also brought Stanley Levison, one of King's advisers, to the attention of the FBI. The FBI had previously been aware of Levison's connections to the communist party, and his participation in the march raised the FBI's curiosity.

Unhappy with the SCLC's lack of success, Ella Baker attempted to make changes within the organization. One of these changes was to create a program called the Future Program to reach out more readily to the public. During this same period, King began considering a move from Montgomery. King felt that he was too busy to fulfill his obligations at Dexter, and that his time would be better spent in Atlanta where the headquarters of Crusade for Citizenship was based. King announced his attention to resign to the congregation of Dexter in December. King also resigned as president of MIA, leaving Abernathy to take his place. In February, King returned home to Atlanta.

This chapter covers the formation of the SCLC, King's civil rights organization that was formed in order to promote voter registration among blacks and to integrate southern communities. However, King was so preoccupied with his speaking engagements and his obligations to Dexter and the MIA that the organization suffered in its early years. Not only this, but tensions between King and Roy Wilkins, the NAACP chairman, increased the difficulties the SCLC faced. However, the organization did succeed in small ways through these early years, helping to get many blacks registered to vote, people who might not have made the attempt on their own.

During these years, King also faced many personal struggles. King was arrested attempting to enter a courtroom where one of his good friends was attending the trial of his assailant. This arrest was so unfair in King's view that he decided to serve a fourteen-day jail term in order to protest. However, this protest was crushed by the police commissioner's decision to pay King's fine. King was horrified by this turn of events, but he could do little about it. However, the reader should remember King's decision to serve the term because this decision will serve as an example to other civil rights protestors later in the book.

King also suffered several attempts on his life during this period. First, a shotgun was fired at his house, then a dynamite bundle was found on his doorstep, and finally he was stabbed during a book signing. These events are significant because they not only show King's depth of commitment to the cause of civil rights, but they also show the reader the daily danger King lived with that would eventually lead to his assassination several years later.

King's life was full of stress and struggle during this period, while his actions within the civil rights movement seemed stymied by tensions between himself and members of both the MIA and the NAACP. However, King did successfully attend a meeting with first the vice-President, and later a meeting with the President himself. These meetings proved only to be moderately successful, but they established King's position as a well-respected leader and also suggested the possibility of King exploring a more successful relationship with a later President.

Chapter 3, SNCC, the Kennedys, and the Freedom Rides, 1960-1961

Chapter 3, SNCC, the Kennedys, and the Freedom Rides, 1960-1961 Summary and Analysis

On February 1, 1960, four college students in Greensboro, North Carolina staged a sit-in at a local lunch counter. Word of their actions spread, and the next day more students joined the protest. Within a few days, the protests spread throughout the major cities of North Carolina and into South Carolina. At the time, King was getting his family settled in Atlanta where he was set to become assistant pastor at Ebenezer Baptist, his father's church. As soon as he felt comfortable leaving his family, King traveled to Durham with Abernathy to meet with some of the sit-in leaders. King made speeches to groups of the protestors, stressing to them that they must not forget that their struggle was about justice, not black versus white. King also suggested that if the students were arrested, they should serve their time rather than pay a fine that would continue to support segregation.

When King returned to Atlanta a few days later, he was served a warrant from the state of Alabama accusing him of perjury for lying on a state tax return. The accusation came from taxes King had filed that did not list monies that state officials suspected King stole from the MIA and the SCLC. King was arrested and released on bond. King waived extradition and appeared voluntarily in an Alabama court at the end of February. Shortly afterward, King's New York friends created the Committee to Defend Martin Luther King. At the end of March, the committee placed a full-page ad in *The New York Times* that made some statements regarding Alabama officials that upset those officials. At first, all the officials asked for was a retraction. However, several of the officials would later file libel suits against the pastors listed in the ad and the newspaper itself.

During this same time, Ella Baker, who was still acting as executive director of the SCLC, felt that it was important for an organization to support the efforts of the students running the lunch counter sit-ins. Baker knew her time with the SCLC was coming to a close as King was courting Wyatt T. Walker to be the next director, but she used her position to organize a meeting between all the sit-in leaders in order to better organize the protests. King appeared at the meeting, which was attended by several hundred students, and encouraged the students to align themselves with the SCLC. The students elected to create their own organization, to be called Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, and headquarter it in Atlanta with King as an adviser.

On May 4th, King was pulled over, and it was discovered he did not have a Georgia driver's license. A few weeks later, King's tax trial began. Testimony proved that King had not lied on his tax return as accused, and he was found not guilty. King was shocked by this turn of events, but relieved to have the charges resolved. Shortly afterward, Wyatt Walker agreed to take over as executive director of the SCLC. It was

fortuitous timing as tensions between the SCLC and the NAACP were once again increasing. King, who had attempted to downplay the conflict up to this point, publicly acknowledged the NAACP's hostility toward his SCLC and accused them of attempting to sabotage their "humble efforts" (p. 138).

In June, King announced he would be involved in the planning and execution of protests outside both the Republican and Democratic Conventions later that year in order to protest the lack of civil rights involvement of the government. Shortly afterward, a black New York Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, launched a personal attack on King, suggesting that King had ulterior motives for his involvement in civil rights. King sent a telegram to Powell to protest this attack before leaving on a South American vacation. However, a few days into his vacation, King learned that Powell intended to suggest to the press that King and Rustin were homosexual lovers if King did not cancel the convention protests. In response, Rustin resigned as King's personal assistant in New York. The convention protests took place as scheduled.

All through the summer and early fall, the SNCC in Atlanta had attempted to negotiate with local businesses to allow blacks to be served at their lunch counters. The negotiations failed. The SNCC planned a sit-in at the lunch counters in several businesses, including one of the largest department stores in the city, Rich's. The students asked King to join their protest. At first King was reluctant. However, King eventually agreed. King and many of the students were arrested during the sit-in. King immediately told reporters that he intended to serve any time to which he was sentenced rather than pay a fine. However, King was unaware that he was on probation for a conviction dating back to his ticket for driving without a Georgia license. While the mayor of Atlanta worked behind the scenes to have the charges dropped against the protestors, officials in a nearby county arranged to put King on trial for violating his probation. A few days after the students were released, King was sentence to four months in jail. King's lawyer was already in the process of appealing the original conviction, but the judge refused to hear arguments to release King on bond pending the outcome of the appeal until the following week.

Coretta called Harris Wofford, a member of Kennedy's campaign staff who had participated in the release of the protestors. Coretta asked if he could do anything to help King since Coretta was afraid he would be killed in a state prison. Upon learning that King had unexpectedly been transferred already, Wofford approached Sergent Shriver, a Kennedy in-law also working on the campaign, and asked if John Kennedy could give Coretta a call. King had met with Kennedy on several occasions and had not been satisfied with his knowledge of civil rights, though he was impressed with Kennedy's attempts to become better educated on the issue. Kennedy made the call and told Coretta to call him if she needed anything. Robert Kennedy, upon learning of his brother's involvement in King's case, became angry that his brother would become involved in such a volatile situation during the campaign. However, Robert was also outraged at the injustice of the case and made a phone call to the judge on King's case, suggesting that King had a right to bond while his case was on appeal. King was released on bond the following Thursday.

Daddy King, in light of Kennedy's involvement in his son's release, publicly announced his decision to support Kennedy in the election. Although King remained silent and did not vote in that election, the Kennedy campaign made full use of Daddy King's support by publishing a pamphlet outlining Kennedy's part in the King case and Daddy King's comments. Kennedy received a large majority of the black vote in the south and won the election by a narrow margin.

Early the following year, the SCLC decided to team up with the Highlander Folk School to train students to teach citizenship schools in order to help blacks prepare for the tests required to register to vote. The SCLC saw this as a positive step in expanding their Crusade for Citizenship program. During this same time, negotiations between students and Atlanta businessmen had once again broken down. Protests began again. King spoke at several rallies, encouraging the students. In March, the students were offered a compromise in which public lunch counters, bathrooms, and other store facilities would be desegregated the following September when the schools were integrated. The student leaders were pressured into accepting the deal. At a meeting after the deal was accepted, the students let it be known they were unhappy with the situation. However, after Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke to the crowd and chastised them for not supporting the negotiators, one of whom was Daddy King, the crowd settled down. The deal was saved and desegregation took place one month after integration of the local schools that fall.

On May 4, a small, integrated group of students began a bus trip from Washington to New Orleans in order to test laws that stated that interstate travelers were to be allowed access to white waiting rooms and restaurants at bus stations. The ride was known as the Freedom Ride. The first few stops of the Freedom Ride were uneventful. When the riders reached Atlanta, King and Walker meet with them, warning them that the rest of the ride most likely would not be as peaceful. It turned out they were correct. Outside of Anniston Alabama, one bus was firebombed by a group of angry locals. The other was invaded by a mob that beat the passengers. The next day, when the riders attempted to continue their journey, they found that no bus driver was willing to drive for them. The riders chose to fly to New Orleans in order to conclude their trip.

Two of the riders, however, vowed to continue what they had begun. A new group of riders traveled from Memphis to Birmingham to continue the ride and were promptly arrested. The police commissioner himself drove the riders to the county line. The riders returned to Birmingham, determined to continue the ride. Again, no driver could be found to drive the bus. Robert Kennedy intervened and the ride continued the next day under police escort. However, when the bus arrived in Montgomery and the local police were supposed to pick up the escort, they were nowhere to be found. A mob awaited the riders, and many of them were badly beaten. Robert Kennedy was infuriated. Kennedy ordered federal marshals into Montgomery and got a federal injunction against the Ku Klux Klan to keep them from harassing the riders.

After the disaster in Montgomery, King arrived in order to speak at a mass meeting. During the meeting at a downtown church, a large white mob assembled outside. A group of federal marshals arrived to protect the church and its occupants, but there

were few of them. King worried the mob might set the church on fire. The National Guard arrived early in the morning, , eventually making it possible for those gathered at the meeting to return to their homes. Afterward, Robert Kennedy and his representatives told the Freedom Riders that they should not attempt to continue their journey. However, the students were determined to finish what they had started. The students asked King to go with them, but King refused, sighting his probation conditions. However, the students saw this as a weak excuse and were disillusioned by King's refusal.

The next day, two buses left Montgomery under heavy police escort. When they arrived in Jackson, the riders were arrested when they attempted to use the white facilities. Kennedy called for a halt in the rides and spoke with King about ending the rides and freeing the arrested riders. King told Kennedy that the police escort had made the ride to Jackson useless and that he should not release the riders from jail because they had sworn to remain in jail to attempt to right a wrong. King later met with several of the organizations involved in the Freedom Rides. The decision was made to continue the rides until something was done to make the rides unnecessary. In response, Robert Kennedy announced that he had asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to ban segregation in all such facilities, such as bus terminals. King saw this as a win, and soon lost interest in the Freedom Rides.

Over the summer, King began to promote the idea of the Kennedy Administration issuing a Second Emancipation Proclamation. The Kennedy Administration saw this proclamation as purely ceremony and did not see how it would do any good. However, the Kennedy Administration thought that a massive voter registration program for black voters would be more effective and would be something the Administration could support easier than protests and sit-ins. Members of the SNCC were reluctant to endorse this plan, however, because they felt it was the Administration's way of preventing them from participating in protests and sit-ins.

In August, representatives of four major civil rights organizations, the NAACP, the SCLC, CORE, and the National Urban League, met in New York to create the Voter Education Project, or VEP. VEP's main intention was to divide up voter registration responsibilities and funds to local representatives and affiliates of civil rights organizations in the south. Wyatt Walker, director of SCLC, hoped that VEP could help expand the SCLC's current voter registration program and their joint citizenship training program with Highlander Folk School.

Later that month, a public controversy engulfed King. King, who had been a vice-president of the National Baptist Convention, was publicly accused by the president of attempting to usurp him in the latest election and, by having done so, caused the death of a friend. King was removed as vice-president. Although the allegations were false, King refused to sue the man for libel as friends urged him to do. It seemed King's fame was beginning to win him many enemies. Shortly after this episode, King's SCLC began to experience tension with the SNCC. The SNCC felt the Freedom Rides and the lunch counter sit-ins had been orchestrated and performed by their members, and yet King was getting much of the credit in the press despite the fact that he had not participated

in many of the events. Not only this, but in mid-September, the SCLC pledged more than three thousand dollars to support the SNCCs expanded Mississippi voter registration program, yet failed to come forward with the entire sum.

In September, the SCLC held a convention in Nashville. Among the many things on their agenda was the desire to turn the organization from a group of affiliate groups into one that would accept individuals for membership. The leaders of the SCLC hoped that this change would greatly expand their organization. The SCLC also presented a plan to its members to train a large group of people in non-violence in order to use as a sort of army. Each of the volunteers would be trained how to react under pressure or violence and would have to be willing to go to jail up to six months at a time.

In October, King finally was granted a meeting with President Kennedy that he had been attempting to arrange since Kennedy took office. King again promoted his idea of the Second Emancipation Proclamation, and complained that Kennedy had not taken the civil rights stance he had promised in his campaign. Kennedy blamed Congress for the lack of action on civil rights issues. In November, the ICC order took effect, integrating all facilities used by interstate travelers.

1960 began with a bang for the civil rights movement. Having had trouble finding a way to further the civil rights cause after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, King's search was taken out of his hands when a group of college students began a lunch counter sit-in that would spread through many states before its end, and would be the catalyst to the formation of another civil rights organization, the Students Non-violent Coordinating Committee. This new organization was designed with the help of King and his SCLC, and was intended to be run with close supervision from the SCLC. However, the SNCC found King an unwilling participant in many of their planned protests. King was arrested during a lunch counter sit-in in Atlanta, and faced the possibility of four months in state jail due to a previous conviction on a traffic violation. This situation so frightened King that he refused to participate in later protests, most notably being the Freedom Rides. Soon, tensions between these two organizations would cause trouble for the SCLC and King, both personally and publicly.

The SNCC was an important organization that is introduced at this point in the book because of the important work in the field of civil rights they participated in. The SNCC was created out of the students who began the lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina that ignited the civil rights movement in the early sixties. The SNCC went on to continue these protests throughout the South, most notably in King's hometown of Atlanta, Georgia, where they eventually succeeded in integrating the public facilities of most of the downtown businesses. Later, the SNCC played a big hand in the Freedom Rides that were designed to test the integration of facilities used by interstate travelers. There, rides became dangerous, igniting mobs in many southern cities, but continued despite beatings and arrests, until the ICC agreed to integrate all of these facilities. Again, the SNCC was successful in their endeavors. At the end of the chapter, the SNCC was about to expand a program to register blacks to vote in Mississippi, warning the reader of a new direction in their work and suggesting a successful end.

King suffered greatly for his fame in the early sixties. First King found himself put on trial for perjury, having been accused of lying on a state tax return. However, King did not lie and this was proven in court. Later, King was placed on probation for a traffic violation without his knowledge and almost spent four months in state prison until Robert Kennedy, brother of the Democratic nominee for President, intervened. However, these brushes with the law were minor events in contrast to the more personal attacks King suffered during this time. King was accused of having a homosexual affair with his closest adviser, Bayard Rustin. The president of the National Baptist Convention also publicly humiliated King after a disastrous election led to the untimely death of a member. King was also accused of taking credit for the actions of the SNCC when in truth he refused to participate in many of the protests they had planned and executed. Also during this time, King's tensions with the NAACP continued to plague him in the press until he finally found himself forced to address the NAACP's accusation in a public forum.

King felt every one of these tensions deeply and suffered under the pressure. Throughout this chapter, the reader can see how deeply these things affected King. These examples are important to the book at this point because they expand upon the personality of a man many believe they knew, and by reading this book, quickly learn they did not. King was a man who carried the burden of a hero, who was forced to live up to a standard his humanity failed to allow him to achieve. This chapter reveals this struggle and brings the hero down to a level the reader can understand and appreciate even while learning the facts that made King a hero in the first place.

Chapter 4, Albany and Lessons for the Future, 1961-1962

Chapter 4, Albany and Lessons for the Future, 1961-1962 Summary and Analysis

Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon, SNCC volunteers who had been active with the voter registration efforts in Mississippi, moved their base of operations to Albany, Georgia in the summer of 1961. Albany was the sight of one of the first federal voter's rights suits under the 1957 Civil Rights Act. It was also a hotbed of activity at the time as the black citizens were embroiled in a fight with the city and county governments for urban renewal. Upon arriving and meeting some of the more prominent citizens, including the King family, Sherrod and Reagon decided to increase their actions to desegregation of public facilities and transportation. On November 1, Sherrod and Reagon rode a bus from Atlanta to Albany in order to test the new ICC law. However, the sheriff received word of their efforts and was waiting for them when they arrived. Sherrod and Reagon left the terminal and returned a few hours later with a larger group. They entered the white waiting room, but left quietly when asked to by the police, having proven that the ICC law was not being enforced in Albany.

The local activists took the actions of the SNCC as a sign that the time was ripe to fight racial inequality in Albany. A meeting took place between the leaders of the various organizations represented in Albany, and a decision was made to combine all their efforts under a new organization to be called the Albany Movement. All but the representative from the NAACP agreed. Officers were chosen. The NAACP counteracted this new organization by having several volunteer students attempt a sit-in at the bus station's white waiting room. Their arrests were expected and arrangements were made to bail them out quickly. Word spread, and college students heading home for Thanksgiving break decided to do the same under the support of the Albany Movement. These students were arrested as well, although their bail was longer in coming, and they were suspended from school. A mass meeting was held the Saturday before the students' trial, and a marching protest was organized. The protestors marched from the courthouse to the college after the trial and signed a petition to have the students reinstated. Their request was denied.

A rivalry had begun between the SNCC and the NAACP because the NAACP wanted control over all the actions taking place in Albany. However, with the formation of the Albany Movement, this possibility began to seem remote. The NAACP leaders advised their members not to get involved in any protests that were sponsored by the SNCC, including a train ride organized by the SNCC that was intended to test the ICC laws again. The railroad obeyed the ICC orders by allowing the riders to enjoy the journey in traditionally white cars. However, when the riders and their greeters entered the white waiting room of the train station, the sheriff told them to move on or they would be

arrested. The group did leave the waiting room, but were arrested outside for blocking the sidewalks. Those arrested refused bail. Word quickly spread, increasing support for the SNCC. Over two hundred protestors were arrested at the trial for the arrested riders, and each of those refused bail. The next day two more groups of protestors were arrested, bringing the total to over four hundred.

Martin Luther King was contacted and asked to come to Albany. The SNCC did not like the idea of bringing in outside leaders, especially those of such notoriety as King. However, the Albany Movement was low on funds and the press attention a man like King could bring to the movement could only have a positive result. Before King's arrival, the leadership of the Albany Movement entered into negotiations with the city government. The Albany Movement wanted all transportation terminals desegregated and charges dropped against the protestors. The city initially refused. However, after phone calls from some high placed officials, the mayor changed his tune. The city offered to desegregate the transportation terminals within thirty days and to dismiss all but a handful of protestors. However, this compromise was not good enough for the Albany Movement leaders. Negotiations began to break down. Due to an ill-timed telegram from Dr. Anderson, the Albany Movement president had sent the mayor, the city cut off all negotiations.

Later that same afternoon, King, Abernathy, and Anderson led a group of protestors to downtown Albany. They were arrested for refusing to disperse. King and Anderson refused their bond and vowed to stay in jail until a settlement was reached with the city. Wyatt Walker arrived in Albany, and the local papers claimed he was there to take over the protests for the SCLC. Both the leadership of the SNCC and the NAACP as well as the Albany Movement were upset by this proclamation. A leader for the Albany Movement made a statement to the press, claiming that the protests were by and for the local black community of Albany. In the meantime, King and Anderson were taken to Albany for their trial that Monday, but the proceedings were delayed due to a tentative agreement reached between the city officials and the Albany Movement representatives. The agreement stated that the Albany citizens arrested in the protests would be released from jail and that a biracial committee would be formed within thirty days as long as there were no more protests in that thirty day period. Because of the agreement, King and Anderson were bonded out that afternoon.

However, as soon as the agreement was released to the press, the city officials began to change their story. Soon it became obvious that the city did not intend to fulfill their end of the bargain. At the same time, King returned to Atlanta where he and his organization turned their attention to other problems. The SNCC and the NAACP kept in close contact with the Albany leadership, who were now looking upon the settlement between themselves and the city officials as a defeat rather than a victory. The SNCC and the NAACP once again stepped in and began to stage boycotts of Albany's major stores and the library. When a girl was arrested on an Albany bus for not giving up her seat for a white passenger, they decided to expand the boycott to public transportation. Later targets boycotted were lunch counters and businesses that served blacks but refused to hire blacks. At the end of January, the Albany Movement leaders entered once more into negotiations with the city officials.

The mayor was urged by city commissioners to take a "segregation at all costs stance", while local merchants and the bus company urged moderation. At the end of January, the bus company was suffering so completely from the boycotts that they would either have to stop bus services or request the city to subsidize them. However, the city could not afford to help the bus company. The bus company spoke with Albany Movement leaders, but was unable to commit to a promise of desegregation until assured that the city would not enforce the segregation laws. The bus company again went to the city to ask for help, and the mayor responded favorably. However, the city commissioners again refused to budge. Several local merchants threw their support behind the bus company, but still the city commissioners refused to budge.

While things continued to brew in Albany, King began a country-wide speaking tour. During this tour, the Kennedy administration began learning more about King's friend, Stanley Levison, his connections to the communist party, and the fact that Levison had become one of King's closest advisors. The more Robert Kennedy learned about Levison, the more concerned he became over Levison's influence over King. Kennedy advised King to distance himself from Levison, but King felt that the Kennedy Administration was overreacting to rumors.

Throughout February and March, the boycotts persisted in Albany. Local merchants bonded together to attempt to pressure the city commissioners to accept some sort of negotiations, but the commissioners continued to refuse. In mid-March, representatives from the major civil rights organizations met in Connecticut to discuss the Albany situation. King suggested a single fundraising drive, but was quietly ignored. Members of the SNCC walked away from the meeting feeling as though the leaders of the NAACP and the Urban League had been openly hostile toward them. Afterward, King continued his People-to-People tour. In April, King stopped in Washington for a meeting with Robert Kennedy, suggesting the Kennedy Administration had been too placid in the civil rights struggle. After this meeting, King was one again warned to distance himself from Levison, and once again chose to ignore the advice.

In May, there was a board meeting for the SCLC. At this meeting, a salary was suggested for Martin Luther King, Jr., but he refused to accept it. There were also discussions related to the Gandhi Society, King's tax exempt entity designed to handle donations for the SCLC, and regarding the nomination of younger people to the SCLC board in order to provide further support to the SNCC. At the formal kickoff for the Gandhi Society that same month, King announced that a long brief recommending a Second Emancipation Proclamation was being delivered to the White House. King was optimistic about this event, stating that he expected segregation to end in his lifetime.

During this same time, activity was increasing in two southern cities. The first was Birmingham. Students at Miles College, with support of the Alabama Christian Movement, had launched a boycott of downtown stores that March in an attempt to achieve desegregation, better treatment for black employees, and jobs more readily available for blacks. The businessmen involved wanted to work out a settlement; however, like Albany, they could not get the support of the city council. At the same time in Shreveport, Louisiana, a rally was scheduled to take place despite the fact that the

home of the SCLC affiliate had been bombed, an act that ran the man out of town. During the rally, several SCLC members were arrested for loitering.

In June, the judge finally made a ruling in Albany on King and Abernathy regarding the arrests during the Albany protests. King and Abernathy were found guilty and told to serve forty-five days or to pay a fine. Amid criticism that King rarely practiced what he preached, King and Abernathy chose to serve the forty-five day sentence. Little had changed in Albany despite the continued protests in December. King's arrest prompted a rally at a local church and the organization of a march. However, few people showed up for the march, and those who did were promptly arrested. Shortly afterward, King and Abernathy were informed by the police chief that their fine was paid and that they were free to go. Rumor quickly spread over the identity of their anonymous benefactor, who was said to be a well-dressed black man. The truth was that the mayor had arranged for their release in order to prevent any further protests.

King and Abernathy, who had announced they would not leave Albany until a satisfactory compromise was reached with city officials, entered into negotiations with the chief of police and members of the city commissioners. However, the chief of police would often say one thing in private and other things to the press, causing a breakdown in negotiations. Protests began again. In response, the city put up police barricades and arrested large numbers of demonstrators. A U.S. District Court judge ordered protest leaders to refrain from any more marches until a hearing could be heard for a permanent injunction against the leaders. U.S. Marshals attempted to deliver papers to all the leaders. Abernathy and King resisted being served, but finally arrived at the chief of police's offices in order to be served. Black leaders debated all that night what to do about the orders, questioning whether they should break them or not. Finally, a march was organized and led downtown. However, the march was marred by violence.

The city refused to enter into further negotiation with black leaders despite frequent requests. In response, King led a small group to the courthouse for a prayer-in, getting himself arrested less than two weeks after his last release. While in jail, King was invited to be a guest on *Meet the Press*, but arranged instead for Anderson to go. C.B. King arrived at the county jail to see his client and was hit over the head by a walking stick. Kennedy called for negotiations in the situation in Albany, causing an uproar among southern politicians. Local officials were desperate to get King out of their jail and out of town. The Justice Department got involved by filing papers against the city of Albany, accusing them of using local ordinances to negate federal law. At trial, King was found guilty and given a fine of two hundred dollars and sixty days in jail, but it was suspended under the condition that he remain out of trouble. King left town but returned the following week when negotiations once again stalled. However, Anderson announced that same week that all protests would end due to the fact that the entire situation was in litigation in federal courts and a satisfactory result was months away. Anderson did not feel they could afford to have mass numbers of people arrested on a daily basis for that amount of time. This announcement signaled the end of the Albany protests.

King returned to Atlanta and SCLC business even while the finger pointing was beginning in Albany and throughout the civil rights community. Many people blamed

King for failing to achieve change in Albany, while others thought the infighting between the SCLC and the SNCC and NAACP was to blame. In September, King was assaulted while making a speech at an SCLC convention. In October, newspaper stories circulated accusing an SCLC staff member of having connections with the communist party. An announcement was made that the man's position had been tangential and that he had resigned. In reality, the man was in charge of the SCLC's New York office and remained so even after the announcement of his resignation. Also during this time, the SCLC began to experience trouble with the SNCC in regards to their Voter Education Project, and considered terminating their participation in the program.

In January, a bomb exploded at Birmingham's Bethel Baptist Church. Shortly afterward, King met with the President, and spoke with him about this bombing. He suggested that the Administration had failed to take a strong stand dealing with the moral issues of civil rights. Later, King met with civil rights leaders to discuss the lessons learned in Albany and to discuss action they would take in Birmingham. King listened to complaints about his own actions as well as offering some of his own insights. A plan of action began to form, though the overall sentiment was not optimistic as many of King's fellow leaders did not expect a result in Birmingham that would be better than the one they achieved in Albany.

At the beginning of this chapter, the SNCC arrived in Albany with the intention of testing federal segregation laws. Albany was an area where the first federal civil rights court cases were made under the 1957 civil rights law, making it an ideal area in which to highlight the injustices still taking place in the south. Two SNCC leaders began organizing students in order to test the federal laws and bring attention to this small community. However, local blacks had been attempting change for many years and felt as though the SNCC was stepping on their toes. In order to bring all these efforts together under one organization, the local leaders of several civil rights groups, including the SNCC and the NAACP, met with the local activists and created the Albany Movement. However, the NAACP refused to forego their independent local activities in order to work under the umbrella of the Albany Movement, causing friction between the two organizations.

Protests began in earnest with many students and leaders being arrested on a daily basis. Martin Luther King was invited to visit Albany and to throw his support behind the Albany Movement. However, many of the activists who had been with the movement from the beginning resented the invitation to Martin Luther King, feeling as though his arrival would take attention away from the true purpose of the movement and place it on him. When King was arrested, this resentment only grew.

Negotiations began between the black leaders and the city officials. However, the city would make promises in private that they would not fulfill in public, a pattern that would continue throughout the Albany protests. Marches began again, but nothing resulted except for the arrests of many of the protestors. The Albany Movement decided to expand their protests to boycott local businesses and public transportation. The bus company began to suffer so desperately that they were willing to negotiate with the Albany Movement leaders, but could not promise anything as long as the city continued

to insist on enforcing segregation laws. The Albany Movement was making little headway.

King spent much of the year traveling on speech tours and business for the SCLC. King kept in touch with Albany leaders and returned to Albany when he was put on trial for his arrest during the initial protests. King was found guilty and chose to accept a jail term in order to practice what he had been preaching. However, the mayor arranged to have King released in order to reduce the continuing protests and press coverage. This caused King to suffer even more criticism from other leaders, especially those associated with the SNCC. First, King was criticized for participating in the protests at all, and now he was being criticized for not suffering in jail as the other protestors had done.

Over the next few months, King continued to keep in touch with the Albany Movement leaders and to return whenever he had the opportunity. It was important to King to be a part of the movement and to attempt to appease his critics. However, the more King participated and the worse the negotiations became, the more he took the blame. Finally, the Albany Movement became several federal lawsuits that effectively ended the marches and boycotts. About this same time, trouble began to brew in other southern cities, most notably in Birmingham. King turned his attention to Birmingham, taking the time to examine the mistakes made in Albany with the hopes of not repeating them in Birmingham. Now the reader is aware of where King will go next and is left wondering if the results in Birmingham will be better than Albany.

Chapter 5, Birmingham and the March on Washington, 1963

Chapter 5, Birmingham and the March on Washington, 1963 Summary and Analysis

King began planning the Birmingham protests by setting a timeline that would begin after the elections. King and other black leaders were hoping that the Public Safety Commissioner, Connor, who was running for mayor, would be defeated, since Connor had been behind much of the violence during past protests. King also visited many wealthy supporters in order to raise money for possible bail money. It was King's intention to focus the Birmingham protests on three major department stores and their lunch counters, rather than to spread the protests wide as with the Albany Movement. During the planning of these protests, King also found himself having to deal with further disgruntlement between the SNCC and the VEP program, his own safety issues, and the rumors of Communist connections among his friends and SCLC members.

The demonstrations began the day after Connor was defeated in the race for mayor. Twenty protestors were arrested the first day, and dozens more volunteered to join the protests the next day. The press jumped on the small size of the protests, giving the leaders a venue by which to make their demands known. The leaders hoped to achieve desegregation of store facilities, fair hiring practices in these stores, a dismissal of prior protest charges, equal employment opportunities for blacks in city government, a reopening of desegregated city facilities, and the formation of a biracial committee to pursue further desegregation. However, the press seemed uninterested in publishing these demands.

The protests had not gotten off to the start King had hoped for due to two reasons. First, many of the local blacks were reluctant to join the protests in the numbers hoped for, in part because of the controversial leadership of Fred Shuttlesworth. Second, many of the local black leaders felt that the protests should have been postponed in light of Connor's defeat in the elections. The black leaders felt that they should have given the new mayor a chance to initiate some change before they began mass protests. Not only this, but Connor remained in charge of the local police department due to some confusion over leadership that was due to be resolved through the courts within the month. The local leaders felt King should have waited for this resolution before beginning his protests. However, Connor quickly showed his hand to the protestors when he arrived at a protest march with vicious attack dogs, bringing national attention to the thus far quiet protests and resulting in more volunteers coming forward to support the protests.

King announced that it was time he was arrested. King announced a Good Friday march. However, on Wednesday, a federal court judge issued an injunction against King and his fellow leaders to keep them from further marches. King wanted to defy the injunction and march anyway, but learned that the bail money had been depleted and

there was little chance of getting more money before his expected arrest. Despite the overwhelming sentiment of his fellow leaders to obey the injunction in order to protect King from a long stint in jail, King chose to march. King felt he owed it to the blacks of Birmingham to keep his word, and he felt that his arrest would bring more interest of the mass media.

King was placed in isolation within the city jail and was not allowed meetings with his lawyers. Wyatt Walker immediately asked the White House for intervention, but the White House felt at the time that their intervention was not called for. Shortly after, Wyatt Walker encouraged Coretta to call President Kennedy to discuss her husband's situation. Coretta attempted to contact the President and received a call back that Sunday. Shortly afterward, King called Coretta and learned over a tapped phone line of the President's call. Word of the President's phone call spread quickly through the press as well as the announcement that the Birmingham protests would shift from desegregating lunch counters to voter registration in order to bring in federal support. The following week, after bail money was secured through fundraising, King voluntarily left jail.

At a trial the following week, King and the other leaders were found guilty of criminal contempt and given five days in jail and a fifty dollar fine that would be held in abeyance until appeals were pursued. At a mass meeting that night, King announced that the protests of the downtown stores had to continue and that they should expand their efforts to integrate local white churches, despite a lack of support of the local white preachers. The crowd at that mass meeting was smaller than expected, and King began to worry that press coverage would begin to wane, something that could be disastrous to their efforts. The leaders turned their attentions to recruiting local youth in order to increase their volunteer pools.

After a mass meeting that Thursday, the students began to flood the streets in waves of protest marches. Connor had set up fire hoses and police personnel between the church where the marches began and downtown to stop the marchers. Wyatt Walker figured out Connor's strategy and sent several groups of young people throughout town to set off false alarms in order to spread out Connor's force. This strategy proved one of the best the SCLC had implemented and resulted in a large amount of national press coverage and a larger turnout to the mass meetings. More protests took place the next day. Connor used police dogs and fire hoses on the protestors, clearing the park where the police encountered the protestors in a matter of minutes. Pictures of the assault reached the White House before they were published in the paper the next day. The White House sent Burke Marshall and a representative of the attorney general's office to begin negotiations between the white businessmen and the black leaders.

That Saturday, Connor refrained from using the dogs and the hoses as more black protestors marched on downtown Birmingham. Soon after, the white merchants contacted a local black businessman and arranged a meeting with the black leadership. The meeting began with the black leaders stating their goals, which included most of the original six demands. The merchants refused to deal with the demands that dealt with the city government and insisted that many of them had already begun to remove their

segregation signs and upgrade their black employees. Negotiations continued throughout the early part of the week among mass demonstrations, but no settlement could be reached because the white merchants continued to resist agreeing to anything that dealt directly with city authority.

A mass march took place on Tuesday with several separate groups of protestors approaching downtown from different directions. This tactic so divided the police that the protestors managed to reach downtown for the first time. This success spurred city officials into speaking with Marshall about a settlement. However, the negotiations failed when it came to the demand that all charges be dropped against the protestors. The city could not just give amnesty to all the protestors and the black leaders could not handle the financial burden of more than two thousand jailed protestors. The leaders all felt that progress had been made, however, and decided to put the protests on hold for one day to see what would develop at the next morning's negotiations. Despite the protest of some of the black leaders, the truce took place throughout the next day and part of Thursday until a settlement was reached. The settlement did not include all six points of the original demand, but covered enough of them that everyone felt satisfied. King held a press conference that evening and declared the settlement a victory for the civil rights movement.

That night, the home of one of the local activists was bombed as well as the hotel where Martin Luther King Jr. was staying. Fortunately, no one was injured in the bombings. However, because it became very clear to most black citizens that the Alabama state troopers who were supposed to be protecting the black citizens had discreetly removed themselves from the sight of the bombings, a riot broke out. Several police officers were injured and their pictures would appear in national newspapers the next day. The Kennedy Administration was concerned about this turn of events, and the President went on television to ask both the whites and blacks to remain calm so as not to destroy the settlement before it could be implemented. King too went on a walking tour to ask for calm among the black citizens of Birmingham. Several attempts were made by the white officials to end the settlement, but King and his fellow leaders were able to squash each attempt. In the aftermath, they spent some time reflecting on the entire ordeal in order to find the weaknesses and strengths of the protests to apply this knowledge to future protests.

King wanted to continue the Birmingham-type protests in other cities in order to force a federal statement that would end all segregation throughout the country. Levison advised King to make an appointment with Kennedy to discuss such a resolution. The conversation was taped by FBI wiretaps and a copy was given to the President, which prompted him to refuse the meeting. King then began to think about a mass march on Washington D.C., hoping such an action would scare Kennedy into making a bigger stand on civil rights. King and other civil rights leaders began to plan a massive march on Washington that would cause disruptions in government business and would shame the Administration into taking a stand on civil rights. The Kennedy Administration was aware of these plans and was angry that they were not receiving credit for the few things they had already done to support the civil rights movement. However, a meeting

between Robert Kennedy and several black activists showed him how much more the administration could do.

During this time, the governor of Alabama blocked the front doors of the University of Alabama to prevent several black students from registering. Kennedy mobilized the Alabama National Guard and then went on television reminding American citizens of their moral obligation to banish segregation. That same night, Medgar Evers was murdered on his own driveway. King attempted to organize a day of mourning with NAACP leader Roy Wilkins, but was rebuked. Wilkins then public denounced King as attempting to use the death of a NAACP leader to his own benefit. Wilkins knew that King's success in Birmingham had caused him and his SCLC to move to the forefront of the movement in most people's minds, and the death of Evers presented an opportunity for the NAACP to shift back into the lead. Wilkins intended to make this happen. However, this scheme upset several black leaders. In order to protect the civil rights movement, a meeting was called between civil rights leaders in order to create the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership that would handle dividing large contributions between organizations.

King was called to a meeting at the White House in order to discuss the March on Washington and the potential damage it could cause to a bill Kennedy had recently presented to Congress regarding civil rights. King and many other black leaders were adamant that the protest must go as planned in order to get their fight out to the public, not just those in the south. After the meeting, Kennedy took King aside and told him he was concerned about Levison and other people within the SCLC who had been linked to communism. Kennedy strongly advised King to distance himself from these people before they could hurt him and his cause. Again, King refused to believe his friends could hurt him. However, upon hearing about the conversation, Levison insisted on initiating a break with all contact between him and King to go through a black lawyer they were both acquainted with.

The weeks leading up to the March on Washington were filled with rumors and setbacks. There were several statements made to the press regarding the purpose of the march, and the press quickly picked up on the fact that civil rights leaders could not agree on what that purpose was. During this time, there were also leaks from the FBI suggesting that the civil rights movement was begin fueled by members of the Communist party, causing the White House to make a statement against this rumor. Finally, several of the Albany leaders were charged in federal court with perjury and attempting to injure a juror. Despite these setbacks, however, plans for the march continued.

The day before the march was due to begin, the White House became upset because of a speech John Lewis was prepared to make that said that he did not support the civil rights bill because it was too little, too late. However, Lewis made the speech as planned. The march had a turnout that far exceeded everyone's expectations and the mood was high when King finally made his speech. King was hit with inspiration while at the podium and made the speech of a lifetime that day. Afterward, King felt renewed in his passion to realize his dream.

This chapter continues with the lessons of the previous chapter and uses those lessons in Birmingham to end the deadly reign of segregation that led to violence on the part of the KKK and the local city officials. King began this protest small in contrast to the widespread protests of Albany, in order to keep the events well organized and easily handled. However, King did not anticipate the lack of support they would receive from local blacks. King attempted to bring in the attention of the national media by getting himself arrested. However, King learned that the bail money was used up the night before he was due to participate in a march that would undoubtedly get him arrested and spent the night attempting to decide what impact his decision to back out of the march would cause. King eventually decided to go ahead with the march and the arrest.

King became a household name during the Birmingham protests; in part because of his arrest, but also because of the success of the actions in Birmingham. Despite several mistakes in underestimating the enthusiasm of the local blacks and some inter-organizational tension, the Birmingham protests eventually led to a successful settlement between the whites and the blacks, resulting in the desegregation of many downtown businesses and employment opportunities for blacks. This was taken as a success not only by King and his SCLC, but also by many Americans. On the enthusiasm of this win, King decided it was time to approach the President and ask for some sort of federal mandate ending segregation throughout the country.

However, due to King's associations with Levison, a known Communist, the President was weary of the idea of joining forces with him and possibly compromising himself. As a result, King and his advisors decided a mass march on Washington would perhaps scare the President into taking a stand against segregation. During the planning of this march, the President went on national television and made a public stand against the immorality of segregation on the same night NAACP activist Medgar Evers was killed. King saw this statement as progress on the part of the President, and turned the focus of the march on Congress who was at the time considering a civil rights bill. Despite tensions between King and the NAACP's Wilkins, the march was highly successful and King made an inspired speech that was perhaps the best of his oration career. King walked away from the March on Washington with a new strength of inspiration to continue the fight for civil rights.

Chapter 6, The Alabama Project, St. Augustine, and the Nobel Peace Prize, 1963-1964

Chapter 6, The Alabama Project, St. Augustine, and the Nobel Peace Prize, 1963-1964 Summary and Analysis

Shortly after the March on Washington, while King and his fellow leaders were looking for a new focus for the civil rights march, tensions again began to heat up in Birmingham. On September 15, a bomb exploded at Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, killing four young girls. After the funerals, Diane Bevel, a long-time SNCC leader, presented a Proposal for Action in Montgomery to develop an army of sorts to begin massive protests. Kennedy became involved by meeting with white leaders from Birmingham at the White House. However, Kennedy was deeply concerned about Bevel's plan due to the SNCC's history of violence. At the SCLC convention there was much discussion over where the organization should concentrate their actions next. King at first suggested Danville, but changed his mind when it became clear that most of his fellow SCLC members thought action should be concentrated in Birmingham. King announced the SCLC would boycott all products that were produced in or benefited Birmingham, and if this did not encourage change, then there would be mass protests bigger than those that had taken place in May.

On October 7, King demanded that Birmingham hire twenty-five black police officers within two weeks and open discussions with black leaders about hiring blacks in other city posts. If Birmingham would not acquiesce, there would be mass demonstrations. Two days later, the mayor announced there would be no new hires in the police department. As the city continued to refuse to bend to King's demands, King attempt to garner support from local black leaders to begin demonstrations. However, many black leaders were reluctant to begin mass demonstrations. At the same time, the Kennedy's had learned that King was still in contact with Levison, and Robert Kennedy reluctantly approved several wiretaps on King's personal phone lines as well as those of Bayard Rustin.

Frustrated with the lack of local enthusiasm in Birmingham, King decided to turn their attention to Danville, Virginia despite his advisors warning him that turning from the Deep South could be a mistake. Danville, Virginia was the site of a protest march that ended in some of the worst police violence seen thus far in the civil rights movement. However, even as King was lobbying to move the SCLC's attention to Danville, tensions were rising in other southern cities, including Selma. Also during this time, Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, causing King to fall into a depression over the tragic climate of violence rising in the country.

Within days of Kennedy's death, newspaper columnists wrote stories that warned new President Johnson that he would have to confront Communist influence in the civil rights movement, quoting from a conversation King had with Democratic National Convention official, Louis Martin. King was horrified by these stories, but failed to follow through on them as he was due to meet with the new President shortly thereafter and he did not want to be distracted by rumors. There was no discussion of Communism during this meeting and King walked away from it impressed by Johnson's apparent commitment to the pending civil rights bill and black voter registration efforts.

Over the following few months, King dealt with tensions within his own organization as well as tensions between the SCLC and the SNCC that appeared to be growing. King also struggled to finish writing a new book about his life and his experiences. The FBI kept close tabs on King during this time, observing meetings between King and Levison regarding the book, as well as a party in which King participated at a Washington hotel. After the party, the FBI's attempts to delve into King's personal life increased.

King's distraction with other matters allowed the SNCC to increase their presence in Alabama, where they intended to initiate Diane Bevel's plan of mass demonstrations. When confronted with a detailed plan that included an emphasis on voter registration, King decided to support the SNCC actions, especially since his own advisors were encouraging action in Birmingham, where department store boycotts were still in effect. As the Alabama Project was getting under way, King was approached by activists in St. Augustine, Florida, requesting him to garner the support of the SCLC. St. Augustine was one of the oldest Spanish settlements in Florida, and city leaders had requested funds from the federal government to aid in celebrating their quadri-centennial. Black activists were outraged by this idea since the city upheld rigid segregation laws. Violence broke out as activists protested this outrage, resulting in several bombings and the death of one white rider. With the SCLC on their side, hundreds of supporters began to arrive in St. Augustine, and many of them were arrested immediately. Despite national press attention these arrests brought the city, St. Augustine officials refused to enter into negotiations with black leaders.

Tensions between the SCLC and the SNCC continued to grow, as well as tensions between James Bevel and Wyatt Walker, culminating in Walker's resignation. More rumors about Communism influencing the high-ranking civil rights leaders also began to circulate once more during this time. However, King was not concerned about the rumors, though he did make a public statement assuring the American people that he was not involved with Communist, ending the coverage of the story and leaving King with the impression that he had delivered a personal blow to Hoover. In the meantime, King continued his rigorous traveling schedule, feeling as though he were more of a fundraiser than an activist any more. King wanted to get involved in direct demonstrations, but he could not decide where to commit the SCLC. Although King spoke often of the Alabama Project to reporters, his interest leaned more toward staging demonstrations in St. Augustine.

In May, King arrived in St. Augustine and made a speech announcing the SCLC's intention to begin demonstrations. Using the lessons learned in Birmingham, King and

fellow SCLC members began to organize protest marches in late May. Police presence continually kept the demonstrators safe. However, the Ku Klux Klan made their presence known at other times by attacking areas where known demonstrators lived. Rumors surfaced that the sheriff himself was a member of the KKK. Because of these KKK attacks, movement lawyers petitioned a federal judge to intervene in order to protect protestor's rights to march at night. After testimony was taken, the judge asked movement leaders to refrain from any more demonstrations until a decision could be reached. King returned from a speaking tour just as this cooling off period had begun. King gave a speech announcing to the demonstrators death threats he had received from the local KKK, and vowed to expand the demonstrations.

When the judge made his ruling, it proved to be in the movement's favor. Demonstrations resumed that evening, when a white mob broke through the police lines and attacked demonstrators, but no one suffered serious injury. King kept his word and decided to increase the demonstrations and to get himself arrested, hoping this would encourage federal intervention. King and several fellow activists went to a motel restaurant and requested service. After engaging the owner in conversation for more than fifteen minutes, King was arrested for refusing to leave a whites-only restaurant. Rather than encourage federal intervention, King's arrest resulted in the convening of a grand jury to help mediate the demonstrations. The movement leaders agreed to stop all demonstrations until the grand jury handed down their decision. However, a group of demonstrators jumped the gun and staged a swim-in at the same motel where King was arrested. This demonstration caused a change in the grand jury's decision, which agreed to a biracial committee, but stipulated that it would only be implemented thirty days after King and all outside civil rights leaders left the area.

King and the black demonstrators were unhappy with the jury's decision. As a result, a number of nighttime marches and wade-ins were staged at the local beach. The white community was also outraged at the continuing demonstrations. King attempted to bring in federal intervention again, but was unsuccessful. However, discussions with the state attorney resulted in an agreement to implement the biracial committee sooner. There was difficulty in the selection of the four-member committee that threatened to destroy the settlement. King and several other leaders were charged with the delinquency of a minor for organizing students to participate in the demonstrations. Then, just as things looked bleak, the governor announced that the committee had been appointed. As a result, King agreed to the suspension of all demonstrations for two weeks. Later, King would learn that there actually was no committee; however, he understood how important it was to go along with the perception that there was in order to calm the situation. As King was throwing his public support behind the non-existent committee, a group of local businessmen met to discuss the new Civil Rights Act of 1964 and whether they should abide by the new statues. It was agreed they would, despite fears of retaliation by the KKK.

King was anxious to get out of St. Augustine and turn his attention to other pressing matters, such as the Alabama Project. King also was concerned about organizational difficulties within the SCLC, tension at home with his wife Coretta who felt he was slighting his family obligations, and focused on the upcoming Presidential elections.

Demonstrations had begun in Alabama to test the compliance of the new statutes related to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and it was found that most Alabama cities were within compliance. However, Selma appeared to be the focus of noncompliance, but a state court injunction prohibited demonstrations there. At the same time, Klansmen in St. Augustine had begun such a rigorous picketing schedule of businesses that had become integrated that many of the businesses decided to return to segregation.

In Atlantic City, as the Democratic Convention was preparing to get underway, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) arrived and began an attempt to become a part of the delegation from Mississippi. When they were refused, the MFDP went before the Credentials Committee where several people testified to the horrific treatment of those attempting to register to vote in Mississippi. Johnson, who was concerned about gains his opponents were making in the south, offered the MFDP a compromise of two votes via delegates he hand picked. The MFDP turned down the compromise. Johnson won the nomination.

King resumed his rigorous travel schedule, announcing to reporters on several occasions that he was optimistic about the progress of civil rights in America. The movement's focus had shifted from southern desegregation to nationwide efforts, however, due to tensions that had begun to develop in northern areas of the country. King suffered from exhaustion toward the end of the year, and just as he was taking some much needed time off, learned he had won the Nobel Peace Prize for 1964.

This chapter begins with King once again searching for a new hot bed of racial tensions in order to continue his civil rights fight, touching on the theme of civil rights. King was constantly looking for new opportunities to stage demonstrations that would lead to some sort of victory in civil rights, to change. King was like an adrenaline junky who lived to participate in the successful desegregation of American cities. However, his speaking tours often left him exhausted and with little time for himself or his family, leading to tensions between him and his wife, Coretta, as mentioned later in the chapter.

King's schedule was so full that he also had trouble keeping up with the tensions that can be a part of any organization. The SCLC was constantly embroiled in tension from the SNCC and the NAACP, whose leaders resented King for his fame and SCLC leader Wyatt Walker for his often abrasive ways. Tensions between Walker and James Bevel of the SNCC became so intense that Walker eventually offered his resignation in response. This act left King rushing to reorganize the Atlanta office in order to fill Walker's absence.

The focus of the SCLC turned from Alabama, where King supported Diane Bevel's plan to execute a mass number of demonstrations throughout the state, to St. Augustine. St. Augustine was a hotbed of civil rights activities after black activists began mass protests against segregation and the local KKK began their own violent acts of retaliation. King arrived in St. Augustine and made a speech encouraging mass demonstrations and promising the support of the SCLC. Within twenty-four hours, the KKK bombed several areas where black activists were known to associate, including a bungalow that was

rented for King's use. A lawsuit filed on behalf of the movement allowed for continued demonstrations, especially those that took place at night and were often the target of the KKK. However, negotiations with the city were nonexistent. King returned to St. Augustine and purposely put himself in a position to get arrested in order to attract federal attention. Rather than bringing federal intervention, however, King's arrest resulted in a grand jury that was assigned to design a settlement. The grand jury did as requested, but the settlement proved to be unsatisfactory for both sides. Eventually, another settlement was reached shortly before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, forcing all local business to integrate. However, the struggle in St. Augustine would not end there due to increasing KKK violence.

During this time, King was anxious to leave St. Augustine in order to return his attention to the Alabama Project. However, tests of segregated facilities in Alabama proved that many of the businesses there had already submitted to the statutes and integrated. However, a hotbed of noncompliance had appeared in Selma, Alabama, but a state issued injunction made protests there impossible. Also during this time, the Presidential campaigns were beginning to get underway. The Republicans gave their nomination to a known segregationist, which prompted King and other members of the MFDP to attempt to garner votes at the Democratic Convention. However, their attempts failed.

Toward the end of the year, King began to suffer from the tensions and exhausted that had been following him for a long time. King's fame, a theme of the book, was double-edged as it left him with many commitments to give speeches, caused tensions between him and other leaders, and took him from his family so often that his wife was beginning to add to his stress by expressing her unhappiness with the situation. King was forced by a doctor to take some time off at the end of the year due to exhaustion. It was during this time that he learned he had won the Noble Peace Prize for 1964. This gives the reader a direction for the following chapter, as does the many mentions of the tensions in Selma.

Chapter 7, Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965

Chapter 7, Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965 Summary and Analysis

Shortly after Johnson won the election in a landside, King arranged a meeting with SCLC staff to discuss the next venue for SCLC demonstrations. Selma was chosen because of its known noncompliance to the Civil Rights Law of 1964 statutes and because the SNCC's commitment was beginning to wane. Shortly afterward, King took a vacation to Bimini that was interrupted when Hoover told reporters that King was a liar and a dishonorable character. King replied to these comments by saying he felt sympathy for the enormous burden Hoover carried and felt that any complaints King had about the FBI were justified by their inaction in the south. Other southern leaders began to hear rumors about King's improper behavior as documented by the FBI, and attended meetings with FBI officials to find out if there was any truth to the rumors.

King attended a meeting with Hoover in an attempt to clear the air, denying he had ever had any known connections to Communism. King aides were unhappy with the results of the meeting, however, because King and Hoover never discussed the true issue and nothing was settled between them. King's aides were afraid that if Hoover released details of King's personal life it would ruin his status as a public figure, Nobel Prize or not. All this weighed heavy on King's mind as he traveled to Oslo to accept his prize. King returned home refreshed and with a reaffirmation of his commitment to nonviolence.

Upon his return, King was presented a report by an SCLC staff member on Selma. A new mayor had recently taken office and given law enforcement over to a man who was as moderate as he. Movement leaders hoped this change would work in their favor. However, local movement leaders were concerned about the level of the SCLC's commitment to Selma since the SNCC who had been running demonstrations in the area under the umbrella of the Alabama Project had backed away from their commitment in Selma. King called a meeting of all relevant movement leaders in order to clear the air on this matter. The meeting failed to resolve tensions with the SNCC, but a game plan was written that centered around Selma and voting rights.

On New Year's Day, a rally was held in Selma that broke the injunction against mass public meetings. King was to be one of the scheduled speakers. King announced the SCLC's intention to register as many black residents as they could in the days allotted by the county and if the local government resisted these efforts, they would appeal to the governor. Immediately, SCLC workers began recruiting as many black residents as they could for the first available date of registration, January 18.

Shortly after King returned home from Selma, his wife received a package that contained a piece of recording from FBI wiretaps and a letter that suggested King should commit suicide. King, who had already convinced himself that he was in for a violent death, was frightened and outraged by the package. This episode increased King's fears of public embarrassment should his habit of spending time with women who were not his wife be exposed. King met with several advisors to discuss what to do about the FBI while the FBI itself increased their surveillance of King.

King returned to Selma in time to lead the potential black voters to the courthouse where they were told to wait outside for the registrars to call them one at a time. However, no one was ever called. Later, King and his aides went to a local hotel to register as its first black guests and King was attacked by an out-of-town Nazi. King was uninjured. That night the SCLC leaders had a meeting at which they expressed their disappointment that the sheriff had been so calm that morning. It was decided that they would lead another group of potential voters to the courthouse again the next morning and if the sheriff behaved equally calm they would turn their attentions to another location. The next day, when the potential voters refused to vacate the sidewalk in front of the courthouse quickly enough, the sheriff lost his temper, manhandled a woman, and then arrested sixty people. The scene was taken as a triumph on the part of movement leaders. The next day more than two hundred were arrested as three waves of potential voters arrived at the courthouse.

The window in which blacks could register to vote closed. However, a group of teachers and students marched to the courthouse anyway to protest the way registration was handled for blacks. They were turned away and the march ended peacefully. When registration opened for blacks again, the marches began anew. The sheriff again showed his temper, at one time using his billyclub to attack an older black woman who had punched him. The picture appeared in national newspapers, spreading word of the violence in Selma in what the movement leaders hoped would encourage the federal government to create a bill to provide for federal registrars until an amendment abolishing the literacy test could be achieved.

On February 1, King led a large group of demonstrators through the streets of Selma, purposely breaking a ban on parades and getting himself and many of his fellow demonstrators arrested. From jail, King gave instructions on how to increase pressure on Selma officials, proving that he intended to remain in Selma rather than move on as members of his own SCLC had expected. Four days later, a judge issued an order that required registrars to stop using the literacy test and to approve at least a hundred applications a day. The orders were not as far reaching as the movement leaders would have liked, but it did cause them to temporarily stop their planned marches. The same day, President Johnson released a statement supporting the SCLC's work in Selma. King urged leaders not to accept the judge's orders on face value, however, and marches resumed the following day.

As King was arranging a meeting with Johnson to discuss a voting rights bill, tensions rose once more in Selma. It was suggested that potential voters sign a book so that they could be received in the order they arrived, but James Bevel rejected the idea and

refused to allow anyone to sign the book. When confronted by the sheriff, Bevel continued to refuse and was beaten before he and his fellow marchers were arrested. A few days later, the sheriff and his men used billyclubs and cattle prods to chase a group of protestors out into the countryside. In the meantime, King met with Johnson and received assurances that Johnson would do all he could to remove the final obstacles to the black vote. With this news, King and the SCLC considered moving their attentions from Selma to other areas of tension in Alabama. This news spurred the local Selma leaders to enter into negotiations with white leaders.

King returned to Selma and led a march to the courthouse where everyone signed the appearance book without arguing. The next day another march took place, led by a SCLC member. It was raining and the SCLC asked the sheriff to allow them to wait inside. The sheriff refused, prompting the SCLC member to argue with the sheriff until he was punched and then arrested. The picture of the violence once again made national headlines, bringing Selma back into the news. King, in the meantime, was suffering exhaustion and left Selma to recover. In his absence, violence erupted in several areas around Marion, Alabama, resulting in the injuries of several reporters and the shooting of a black man by state troopers.

King, partially recovered, left Atlanta for a fundraising trip. King had learned of Malcolm X's death before boarding the plane and spent most of the flight pondering its meaning. King and Malcolm X had only met on a few occasions, but King had not been a fan of Malcolm X's Black Muslim philosophies, although Malcolm X had come to Selma to speak in favor of the protests. King's biggest concern about Malcolm X's murder was the escalating violence that was taking the lives of civil rights advocates. King feared for his own life, and had good reason. King had been warned of an attempt on his life during a recent visit to Marion, Alabama.

As King was receiving word that a senator intended to draft another Civil Rights Bill that would ease voter registration requirements, SCLC leaders were planning a mass march from Selma to Montgomery. However, SCLC leaders were expecting trouble from state authorities. The SNCC, based on tensions between their organization and the SCLC, had decided they would not participate in the march as an organization, but they would allow individual members to participate if they so chose. King was to lead the march, but due to Governor Wallace's statement that state troopers would use whatever force necessary to stop the march, he was advised to remain in Atlanta. The march began later than planned Sunday morning due to persistent rumors of the violence with which the state troopers awaited them. The marchers started from Brown Chapel and proceeded to Edmund Pettus Bridge on the east side of town. Here the state troopers met the marchers. The troopers told the marchers they were engaging in unlawful assembly and they had two minutes to turn around. The marchers stood their ground and were immediately set upon by troopers with billyclubs and teargas.

The march was one of the bloodiest demonstrations of the civil rights movement up to that point. More than eighty people were treated for injuries at local hospitals. News footage of the trooper's attack spread across the country. In a conference call with King, it was decided that the marchers would not give up and would try another march to

Montgomery two days later. In the meantime, movement lawyers sought a federal court order to stop the troopers from interfering again. The federal judge insisted on a hearing two days after the march was scheduled, barring the marchers from demonstrating, but King elected to disobey this order. King was determined to go on with the march unless someone from Washington was sent to open negotiations. No one arrived. As King prepared to march, the Community Relations Service director arrived in Selma to arrange a compromise between King and the state troopers. The director suggested that King and the marchers approach the line of troopers but then turn around and return to Brown Chapel. Both sides agreed to this compromise. However, when King turned the marchers around, the troopers stepped aside, leaving their original path clear.

King was widely criticized for his decision to turn around, especially by SNCC members. However, King's actions played well in court two days later when asked why he had broken the injunction against marching. King had not technically broken the injunction. In Washington, Johnson met with Governor Wallace and advised him to support universal suffrage, allow peaceful assembly, and hold biracial meetings with his citizens. Then Johnson went on television to express his outrage at the violence in Alabama and to publicly support the right of all citizens to vote. A few days later, Johnson made a televised speech before congress in support of Selma. It was the first time in the brief history of the civil rights march the White House had offered such overwhelming support.

In Montgomery, state troopers attacked some SNCC demonstrators in an eerie similarity to Bloody Sunday, as the first march to the bridge in Selma had been nicknamed. When several of the SNCC leaders reacted violently to this attack, King became more concerned than ever about the direction in which the organization was heading. However, King became distracted by Selma once more when the judge finally released his ruling. The judge ruled that the marchers could march to Montgomery, but they had to keep their number under three hundred on the two-lane highway between the two cities. Governor Wallace called the ruling a joke, but King and his advisors scheduled another march for the following Sunday. The march proved successful, ending at the capitol steps in Montgomery in a sort of homecoming for King. However, tragedy once again befell the movement as a volunteer on her way to Montgomery to drive some of the marchers back to Selma was killed by a carload of KKK members. Three men would be charged, but their first trial would end in a mistrial.

Following the success of Selma, King and the SCLC began to explore other avenues to desegregation. One idea was to institute a program called Operation Dialogue in which small groups throughout the south would be convened to dispel misunderstandings regarding the different races. Another was King's idea to boycott all of Alabama until more significant changes could be made. Also during this time, King informed his fellow SCLC members that he had arranged for Abernathy to take over the presidency of the SCLC should he die in the near future. Following this disturbing subject, King then suggested that the SCLC turn its attention to expanding its programs into the north, with an eye on Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago.

The chapter begins with King receiving threats from the FBI. King's wife received a tape that was compiled from wiretaps that caught King in the throes of a sexual encounter with women who were not his wife. Coretta gave King the tape and an accompanying note that told King to kill himself if he did not want these tapes made public. King was deeply concerned about this threat. King arranged to meet with Hoover in order to discuss the situation, but the meeting ended without any real discussion taking place. King's advisors were upset by the situation, concerned that if Hoover released any of these tapes they would ruin King's credibility in the civil rights movement. King agreed, but there was little he felt he could do. This situation would continue to hang over King's head for the rest of his life.

King won the Nobel Prize at the end of the last chapter. In this chapter, King travels to Oslo in order to receive the award. King was the youngest man to ever win the honorable award, and many reporters were shocked to find how humble King's personal living situation was. King was a man who believed he should not live better than the people he was attempting to help. King's fame, a theme of the novel, only increased with the winning of the Nobel Prize, causing him great guilt for some of the privileges it allowed him.

Upon returning to the United States, King began to refocus SCLC's attention on the next major demonstrations. Birmingham continued to be a sight of great tensions, but Selma appeared to be a bigger site of tensions. King elected to become involved in Selma by once again staging small demonstrations such as he did in Birmingham. These demonstrations escalated slowly, garnering more and more national exposure, until Bloody Sunday, when a march to Montgomery from Selma ended in violence initiated by state troopers. Despite a long struggle with exhaustion, King arrived in Selma to lead another march that he ended early in order to keep anyone else from being hurt. This decision led to further tensions between the SCLC and the SNCC, tension that had been growing since the demonstrations in Albany.

Another march from Selma to Montgomery took place a few days later under the protection of National Guard troops, and ended successfully. However, it also ended with the death of a female civil rights worker who had been on her way to Montgomery to bring the marchers home. Selma was a success, ending with President Johnson coming out in support of the movement leaders and pushing legislation through the Congress that would eventually result in the passing of the Voters Rights Act of 1965. This would prove to be significant, not only because of the federal law passage, but because Johnson's public support of Selma was the first time a sitting President had taken such a complete stand in favor of civil rights. For civil rights, another theme of the novel, this was a major victory. At the end of the chapter, King began to turn his attention to the north, a venue he had been entertaining for some time, suggesting a new direction for the next chapter.

Chapter 8, Chicago and the 'War on Slums', 1965-1966

Chapter 8, Chicago and the 'War on Slums', 1965-1966 Summary and Analysis

Racial tensions in Chicago had been going on for many years before Martin Luther King Jr. became interested in the situation. The main source of trouble was the extensive segregation of the schools. Demonstrations had taken place the year before in the form of a boycott of the schools organized by Coordinating Committee of Community Organizations (CCCO). However, the CCCO had failed to follow through with this success. In April, the SNCC became interested in the Chicago situation, and Bevel planned another boycott there, but the CCCO wanted to organize a mass rally or march with King in the lead. However, when the boycott was halted due to a state injunction, the CCCO staged a march that ended in more than two hundred arrests.

In July, King spent a weekend speaking at over twenty venues, leaving him exhausted before a planned march the following Monday. Despite exhaustion and bronchitis, King went on to visit several other northern cities, still looking for a northern venue for a civil rights movement, but found that Chicago was the most acceptable to the requirements of a movement. During an SCLC convention a short time later, these cities were discussed. King expressed his desire to focus attention on Chicago while others suggested Washington would be a better choice. Finally, King left on a Puerto Rican vacation. However, King's vacation was disrupted by news of the riots in Watts outside of Los Angeles. King cut his vacation short and headed for Los Angeles where he spoke to the black residents and several local politicians.

Chicago was finally chosen as the city of focus for the northern expansion of the SCLC. While delegates from the SCLC arrived in the city and prepared to begin the movement, King dealt with various other problems, including weak areas of the recently passed Voting Rights Act. King also found himself forced to abandon a vigorous writing campaign he had launched to achieve peace in Vietnam because he felt that his star was no longer shining bright enough to encompass such a controversial subject. King was also dealing with disgruntlement among his SCLC employees who were unhappy with their pay.

In October, the federal Office of Education stopped funding to Chicago schools because of segregation. This action was a great boost to the movement. However, this funding stoppage was overturned five days later. King returned to Chicago to speak with movement organizers about the future of the movement and felt the visit was successful. However, no set plans were made during his visit. The SCLC turned their attention to the ghettos around Chicago, with the idea of organizing the people living there to join the movement. In the meantime, continuing movements in the south, specifically in Alabama and Georgia, distracted King. When King returned to Chicago in

January, Bevel convinced him that the focus of the Chicago movement should shift from school segregation to the economic disadvantages that the black community was forced to deal with.

King began spending the latter half of his weeks in Chicago while keeping up his hectic travel schedule during the weekends. While in Chicago, King lived in a reformed slum apartment and spent time in the slum neighborhoods. Upon arrival in Chicago for his second week, King was just in time to hear the mayor announce a new plan to clean up the slums. A fundraiser shortly thereafter raised more than a hundred thousand dollars for the movement. Also implemented about this time was a version of the Project Breadbasket, which had been a staple program for the SCLC for four years. The Chicago Project Breadbasket would be run by a ministerial student, Jesse Jackson. A few weeks later, confronted by a family who continued to live in a building with no heat, King and the SCLC decided to seize the building and make necessary repairs to it. This caused an uproar in the press as King could not state a legal precedent that allowed him to act in such a way. A short time later, President Johnson called civil rights leaders to a meeting in order to announce a new civil rights bill that would address racial discrimination on juries, violence against civil rights workers, and ban discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.

While the Chicago Freedom Movement had begun to lose momentum due to a lack of an attainable goal, James Meredith, who was famous for being the first black man to enroll at the University of Mississippi, announced his intention to walk from Memphis to Jackson to encourage black voter turnout in the upcoming primary elections. On the second day of his walk, Meredith was shot by ambush. It was soon decided that leaders of all the major civil rights organizations would resume Meredith's walk and finish it, creating the largest march in the south since Selma.

In this chapter, the reader sees once again the exhaustion that has plagued King for several years. King continued to keep his commitments, however, often traveling great distances in a very short amount of time. It seemed that everything was falling apart around King all at once. The SCLC was beginning to suffer not only from tensions that had plagued the organization almost from its conception, but money troubles that caused even the staff to complain about a lack of pay. On top of this, King was becoming obsessed with Vietnam and a desire for peace. King had begun to focus on the violence of the world when John Kennedy was killed, again when Malcolm X died, and now it seemed his personal fears for his own safety were tied in somehow to the deaths taking place each day in Vietnam.

For a long time, King and the SCLC had wanted to move their civil rights movement into the north where racial discrimination was just as prevalent, if less visible, than in the south. King made a tour of several northern cities, choosing Chicago as a starting place. Chicago had had a long-running struggle with the segregated school system and it seemed that integration of these schools would be a prime place to begin a new movement. However, Bevel felt that the slums in which most black citizens in Chicago lived would be a better place to start. Bevel wanted to organize these people, show them that they deserved better living conditions, and teach them how to stand up for

themselves. However, the plan to fight the slums in Chicago was so vague that the movement began to fall apart before it had even begun.

Finally, the chapter ends with the shooting of a black activist within a short time after the President announced a new civil rights bill that would address the problems of violence against civil rights activists. King and other civil rights leaders decided to go to Mississippi and finish Meredith's march in one of the largest mass demonstrations since the end of Selma. This suggests a direction for the next chapter, as well as suggesting a chance for King to return to the southern part of his movement.

Chapter 9, The Meredith March, 'Black Power', and the Chicago Open-Housing Protests, 1966

Chapter 9, The Meredith March, 'Black Power', and the Chicago Open-Housing Protests, 1966 Summary and Analysis

King and other civil rights leaders traveled to Mississippi to continue Meredith's walk. The group met at the spot where Meredith was shot, had a short prayer, and began to walk. Within minutes, highway patrolmen confronted them and told them to get off the pavement. A struggle ensued when the marchers refused. King took control and urged the marchers off the pavement, and they were allowed to pass freely. That night, the marchers returned to Memphis where a meeting was held to outline the purpose of the Meredith March. Despite arguments over this manifesto, the march continued as planned the next day. Voter registration campaigns were added to the march's venue as activists approached potential voters in each town they marched through. The march was peaceful for the first week. However, the marchers encountered hostility when they reached Greenwood and were told they could not camp on public property. When the marchers attempted to camp at a black elementary school, they were told to move on. When two of the leaders refused, they were arrested. One of the leaders, Stokley Carmichael, gave a speech upon his release, and used the phrase "black power" for the first time in a public forum.

King returned to the march from a speaking engagement the next day and led the march to the county courthouse and then to the next town. That night King heard the term "black power" for the first time and began to wonder if he and the SCLC should withdraw from the march and separate themselves from the term. The next day the march took a detour to Philadelphia, Mississippi, where three COFO workers had been murdered two years prior. King led the group to a memorial service in the city where they were attacked by a group of whites. King decided that even though the march would move on, he and the SCLC should return to Philadelphia in the near future. When the marchers arrived in Canton, they were told to vacate the black school where they had intended to spend the night. The marchers refused to move. The marchers were attacked with teargas and billyclubs until the field was clear. The following day an agreement was reached where the marchers were allowed to sleep in the school's gym.

The Meredith March ended on a Sunday as King and other leaders led the marchers into Jackson. Despite their successful march, many of the participants appeared down hearted, including King. King was deeply disturbed by the rallying cry of "black power", due to its implication of black separation. Not only this, but the SCLC ended up with many of the bills from the march despite the participation of many other organizations

involved in the march. This unfair sharing of the finances once again caused tensions to rise between the SCLC and the SNCC.

King's attentions returned to Chicago, where plans were in the works for a rally at Soldier Field. The rally did not bring out the hoped for number of participants, but many believed that the highlight of the day's activities was King's speech. King addressed the new slogan "black power" by saying that black people should be proud of who they are, but that they should not alienate all white people in the process. Afterward, nearly five thousand participants marched with King to City Hall where he taped a list of the movement's demands on the outside door. The next morning, King and other leaders met with the mayor and discussed the demands. Later that night, on his way to a mass meeting, King learned that police had turned off a hydrant local blacks were using to cool themselves. Six black youths argued and were arrested. King arranged for the release of the young men due to rumblings in the black neighborhoods that appeared to be leading to a riot. However, the release of the youths did not settle the community.

Over the next few nights, violence broke out in the black communities. King approached the leaders of several local gangs and convinced them to discourage their members from violence. The gang leaders eventually agreed, and the violence subsided. King returned to Atlanta for a few days rest where he saw several newspaper stories claiming that the "black power" slogan being used by many in the movement signaled the end of the civil rights movement. When King returned to Chicago, he faced accusations that the Chicago Freedom Movement had no direction and an invitation to go home. Several movement leaders decided to stage a march to the offices of a local real estate office that had openly discriminated against blacks. The marchers were met by whites who threatened violence, so they turned back. However, marchers made the pilgrimage to the real estate office several times over the next few days and were greeted with violence each time.

The marches would continue over the next few weeks. King himself led one of the marches and was hit in the head with a rock. After King returned to the south, the marches continued, expanding into the all-white areas of the city, including several exclusive suburbs. Chicago city officials wanted the protests to stop, and meetings began between the mayor, members of the local real estate board, and movement leaders. The movement leaders were allowed to present their demands, which included nine points regarding fair housing. The mayor immediately agreed to fulfill the demands if the movement leaders would stop the protests. King agreed, although he suggested that protests dealing with other issues might continue. Discussions then began over what the definition of discrimination was and who was responsible for avoiding its practices as well as the benefits of ending the protest marches. Finally, it was decided a subcommittee would be formed to discuss these issues in detail and make a report on the situation within nine days. Everyone agreed to this proposal.

During the subcommittee talks, an injunction was issued against the movement, restricting demonstration activities. King denounced the mayor for initiating the injunction after the first negotiation meeting and promised to break the order should the scheduled meeting in nine days not meet expectations. On Thursday night, the

subcommittee came up with an agreement that contained a satisfactory solution to most of the original nine demands made by the movement leaders. All members accepted the agreement in good faith and presented it to the full committee the next day. The agreement was voted on and was unanimously accepted.

This chapter begins with King and other civil rights leaders continuing a walk that James Meredith began at the end of the last chapter. Meredith, who became known for becoming the first black person to enroll at the University of Mississippi, was shot while walking across Mississippi alone to encourage black voters to vote in the upcoming primaries. King saw this march as an opportunity to return to the roots he knew and understood, the south. The tone of this march begins optimistic despite immediate trouble with the local police. However, this changes as the march continues and other black leaders become angry with the opposition they encounter. King becomes concerned when the phrase "black power" begins to emerge during this walk, seeing it as a declaration at racial separation that could only sabotage all the work King and his fellow leaders had done up to this point.

"Black power" as a slogan for the civil rights movement would continue to bother King over the next few weeks as he heard it with more and more frequency. "Black Power" would change the tone of the movement, a fact that was even noted by the press. King had already noticed the violent tide that had begun to overwhelm the black communities of American and felt that this declaration of racial separation would only make matters worse. The "black power" statement appeared to King to encouraged violence and went against King's basic beliefs in non-violence and the Gandhiian way of civil disobedience, a theme of the novel. Despite this, King declared many times that he felt optimistic about the future despite these changes.

The Chicago Freedom Movement had stalled during the Meredith March due to a lack of direct demonstrations that had taken place in earlier movements. However, this would change when sixth youths would get arrested for protesting the city's decision to turn off a water hydrant they were using to cool themselves. Suddenly, the black community exploded in violence, angry at this turn of events. King stepped in and cooled the anger, but knew that he and the SCLC had to do something to put pressure on the mayor and other city officials. It was decided that marches would begin against local real estate companies that were known to discriminate against blacks. These marches were immediately met with violence on the part of local whites. However, the city was interested in ending the protests and agreed to enter into talks. The talks were not successful at first, and an injunction against the protestors initiated by the mayor threatened to stall them indefinitely. However, an agreement was eventually reached and the matter was resolved.

Chapter 10, Economic Justice and Vietnam, 1966-1967

Chapter 10, Economic Justice and Vietnam, 1966-1967 Summary and Analysis

King was unhappy with the agreement reached in Chicago, but he was not alone. The SNCC also was not pleased and showed their displeasure when King took the stage at a rally in Chicago. King was heckled so badly he interrupted his own speech to allow another man to speak. However, the agreement appeared to be going ahead as planned with a committee being formed to implement the points of the agreement. However, this committee had trouble deciding on a chairman, let alone focusing on the points of the agreement. At the same time, the SNCC's lean toward violence was becoming more pronounced as one of their leaders was arrested on charges of instigating a riot in Atlanta. A short time later, violence broke out in Grenada, Mississippi, where activists were attempting to desegregate local schools. Word also came down about this time that Johnson's civil rights bill had been defeated. All these events served only to further deepen a depression King had been suffering with for some time.

During an SCLC retreat, it was decided that programs would continue in both Chicago and Grenada, adding a voter registration drive to the Chicago programs. During this time, King also became aware that the Johnson Administration was pulling money away from social programs in order to finance the war in Vietnam. King had been against Vietnam for some time, so this news only fueled his dissenting opinions of the war. King expressed his views at a Senate hearing in late 1966, suggesting the focus of the civil rights movement should be a fight for economic justice that would improve humanity and justice for all citizens. King also began to write a book about the same time that detailed this shift in the SCLC's civil rights fight. King traveled to Jamaica to work on this book undisturbed, but was interrupted first by James Bevel who wanted to encourage King to publicly voice his opposition to the Vietnam War, and again when news reports of the fledgling voter registration in Chicago forced action on the part of King and his advisors.

King decided to come out publicly with his views on Vietnam, but worried about how it would affect fundraising efforts for the struggling SCLC. King's advisors were equally concerned when King announced his desire to join an anti-war group's protest. King chose to join the rally despite these concerns. King contended that the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement were highly relevant to one another and that there was little difference between racism and militarism. After making several speeches in which King shared his deeply felt opinions on the war, he was highly criticized, not only by political powers, but also by other leaders within the civil rights movement who felt he was damaging their cause. Despite this criticism, King refused to back down from his

stand against the Vietnam War. At the same time, fellow anti-war activists, such as Dr. Spock, were urging King to run for president.

King's new book came out that summer, shortly after he learned that his conviction for breaking a state injunction by leading the Good Friday march in Birmingham had been upheld by the Supreme Court. King felt this decision was a setback to the civil rights movement and peaceful demonstrations. Criticism of King's book suggested that King wanted structural change in America but had no idea what that was or how to achieve it. These criticisms appeared to pinpoint King's personal confusion, but did little to slow him down. King traveled to Chicago where an open-housing accord had improved things so greatly that he felt summer protests were no longer necessary. Other programs had also been initiated in Chicago, such as boycotts of major businesses and an expansion of Operation Breadbasket. King also announced an adult education program that the SCLC would begin that summer.

Riots broke out in Newark and Detroit that summer. When asked about these riots, King stated that the Congress had set up the conditions for the riots by funneling money for social programs to the war and that the rioters should not be blamed because the way in which they were forced to live. When asked if this meant King advocated violence, he repeated his long-felt belief that violence was not the way to create change. However, King did call for massive civil disobedience to protest the war.

This chapter chronicles King's changing attitudes within the civil rights movement. Over the past few years, perhaps because of his involvement in the Chicago open-housing fight, King had realized that a great deal of the black communities throughout America live in poverty. King had come to believe that it was poverty and the President's apparent lack of concern for this poverty that was causing most of the racial tension in the country. King had always felt guilt about the privileges his fame allowed him. Fame, a theme of the book, allowed King to take European vacations and to live with a certain amount of advantage that left him feeling distant from the community he was attempting to help and as though he were a hypocrite. Upon learning that much of the federal money that at one time was put into social programs was being funneled into the Vietnam War, King felt that this was a reason to not only bring poverty to the surface, but to have a venue in which to express his long felt feelings toward the Vietnam War.

King saw a photo in a magazine of a child killed in Vietnam and felt morally responsible to make a stand against the war. King had felt strongly about the war for a long time, but this opportunity, plus encouragement from James Bevel, gave King the strength and the desire to become more public about his views on the Vietnam War. King made speeches outlining his desire to see peace in Vietnam despite the fact that these views could cause fundraising difficulties for King's already struggling SCLC. King was greatly criticized by the press, fellow civil rights leaders, and his own advisors for making such a strong stand against a controversial subject. King was forced to explain how the Vietnam War and civil rights were related, a relationship King saw clearly despite his critics. King was also placing himself in a position of alienating the President, a position that could cause him difficulty in further actions for civil rights.

The author's thesis in this chapter appears to be an attempt to show King's growing confusion within his own feelings toward the civil rights fight. King wrote a book in which several critics felt King himself did not know what needed to happen next or how to go about it. The author asserts this must have been true, but King did not let it slow him down. King continued his work like he always had, believing his desire for peace in Vietnam was directly related to the civil rights movement because there was little difference between racism and militarism.

Chapter 11, The Poor People's Campaign and Memphis, 1967-1968

Chapter 11, The Poor People's Campaign and Memphis, 1967-1968 Summary and Analysis

All appeals exhausted, King was compelled to serve his five-day sentence in his Birmingham conviction for leading the Good Friday march. King, already exhausted and still experiencing bouts of depression, suffered a virus while imprisoned and was released early in the city's attempt to avoid demonstrations outside the jail. King flew to Cleveland to support a black candidate for mayor and was deeply disappointed that the candidate did not acknowledge his work when he won. King then turned his attention to a second March on Washington, dubbed the Poor People's Campaign, which would include a large march, call-ins to the White House switchboard, and protests at local hospitals on behalf of those in need of medical care.

As the second phase of the civil rights movement, King saw the Poor People's Campaign as an extension of the fight for black equality even though the movement was to include poor people of all races. Many of King's advisors and fellow leaders were unhappy with this turn of events, including staff members of the SCLC. This dissention caused increased tensions within the SCLC, which had already suffered greatly from financial losses and staff infighting. King was optimistic about the campaign and was annoyed by the lack of enthusiasm from his staff members.

In February, King released a list of demands for the Poor People's Campaign that included a full-time employment commitment, a guaranteed income measure, and construction funds for low-income housing. The response both in the press and from other organizations was not as favorable as King would have liked. King was accused of believing the problem of poverty was larger than it really was. In March, despite vocal opposition by several SCLC staff members, the Poor People's Campaign began with recruitment of potential marchers. At the same time, tensions began to develop in Memphis where a strike by black sanitation workers had developed into a boycott of downtown stores. City officials were refusing to negotiate. King made a commitment to throw his support behind Memphis activists.

In early April, despite growing trouble within the plans for the Poor People's Campaign, King flew to Memphis to take part in a march. King, exhausted from several weeks of heavy travel, arrived late, causing irritation for a small group of unruly teens at the rear of the procession. These teens began to loot local stores as the column passed by, causing the local police to attack both the looters and the non-violent marchers. King was taken away in a state of confusion, unsure how a peaceful march could go so wrong so quickly. King was concerned that his association with the violent march would further deter his plans for the Poor People's Campaign. The next morning, King was visited by the leaders of a local gang who swore they did not instigate the looting

despite local rumors and that they tried to stop it from happening, but were outnumbered. King did not completely believe the teens. At a press conference after the meeting, King denied the SCLC's role in the planning of the march or any connection to the violence.

King left Memphis because the situation and the consequential criticism was such a burden that it only intensified his depression. However, King immediately began to make plans to stage another Memphis march and perhaps a fast to show his support for the activists there. Upon King's return to Memphis, he learned that a court order had been issued banning a second march. King and his fellow leaders hired lawyers to attempt to get the order rescinded or modified to allow a tightly controlled march. Thursday morning there was a meeting with the judge to discuss this change in his order. While King waited for news, he and other SCLC members discussed the gang leaders and the possibility of making one of them a field worker for the SCLC. Later, news came in that the judge had agreed to modify his order and the march could go on as planned. In a celebratory mood, King prepared to go to dinner with a local activist, Billy Kyle. As King stood out on the balcony with Kyle, he was shot and killed by a sniper.

In this chapter, King turned his attention from traditional civil rights to his desire to achieve better economic justice for the poor people of America. With King's Poor People's Campaign, King hoped to bring attention to this second phase of the civil rights movement. However, many of King's supporters and colleagues did not agree with his shift in the focus of the movement and were slow in supporting his ideas. Like his protest of the Vietnam War, King persisted, because he was motivated by his deeply held belief he was right.

The Poor People's Campaign started with optimism on King's part, but immediately ran into trouble when recruiting efforts failed to result in the large numbers King hoped for. In the middle of these troubles, King was called to Memphis where tensions had begun to escalate from a strike by black sanitation workers to boycotts of downtown stores. Violence broke out on the behalf of the black protestors during a march that King led. King was horrified by this violence and worried about the affect it would have on the Poor People's Campaign. However, King refused to back down, as his prior behaviors proved. King returned to Memphis to stage another march that he believed would be peaceful and more successful than the first.

A court order was issued against the second march. King and his advisors, as was their usual mode operandi, hired lawyers to have the injunction overturned. On the day of the meeting with the judge, Martin Luther King, Jr. overslept and then spent the day meeting with advisors regarding one of the leaders of the gang accused of instigating the looting during the first march. After word came that the injunction had been adjusted to allow the march, King prepared to go to dinner with a local activist. King was killed while standing on the balcony outside his room. The murder is seen through the eyes of the local activist and Abernathy, adjusting a point of view that had been followed from the beginning of the novel, keeping the focus on King. This change also changed the tone of the novel, preparing the reader for the dramatic end of a legend's life.

Characters

Martin Luther King Jr.

James Bevel

Ralph Abernathy

Roy Wilkins

Stanley Levison

Bayard Rustin

Robert Kennedy

Malcolm X

Medgar Evers

Mahatma Gandhi

Objects/Places

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a massive boycott of the public busing system in Montgomery, Alabama, after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to move from the grey area on board a public bus. The boycott lasted just over a year and resulted in a Supreme Court verdict declaring segregation on Montgomery's buses unconstitutional.

Lunch Counter Sit-ins

In 1960, a small group of Greensboro, North Carolina, college students decided to attempt to purchase a meal in a diner that only served whites. As a result of these students sitting at the counter all day and refusing to move until they were served, a much larger group of students joined them over the next few days, setting off the largest lunch counter sit-ins up to that point in the fight for civil rights. These sit-ins moved the Civil Rights Movement in a new direction, giving it momentum, and resulted in the creation of the SNCC.

Freedom Rides

The Freedom Rides were an experiment by a group of interracial students who were testing a Supreme Court ruling in which it was declared that segregation in bus stations was unconstitutional. The bus stations in the North complied with the rulings. However, there were riots at bus stations in Alabama and Mississippi upon arrival of the Freedom Riders.

Chicago Open-Housing Protests

The Chicago Open-Housing Protests were a group of marches targeting real estate offices known to discriminate against blacks. The protests ended when the city reached an agreement with protest leaders.

MIA

MIA, or Montgomery Improvement Association, was the organization formed to run the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King was elected president unopposed. King would later be accused of misappropriating funds from the MIA and placed on trial for perjury in relation to a failure to report these funds as income.

NAACP

NAACP, or the National Association for the Advancement of Negro People, was an organization founded in 1909 by W.E.B Du Bois. The NAACP was involved in many of the demonstrations surrounding the Civil Rights Movement. During much of Roy Wilkins's reign as leader of the NAACP, there would be tension between the NAACP and King due to King's civil rights actions that did not include the NAACP.

SCLC

The SCLC, or Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was an organization that Martin Luther King Jr. created in order to unite anti-segregationists throughout the Southern United States and become a driving force in the fight for segregation.

MFDP

Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party was an organization that attempted to segregate the Democratic National Committee. However, this attempt failed.

CCCO

CCCO, or the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, was a Civil Rights organization in Chicago that began the boycotts of the segregated school system there and was responsible for bringing the SCLC to Chicago.

SNCC

SNCC, or Students Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was a group created by college students that rose out of the lunch counter sit-ins that began in Greensboro, North Carolina. The SNCC became a driving force in many later Civil Rights demonstrations, including the Freedom Rides and the drive to register blacks to vote.

Highlander Folk School

Highlander Folk School was a workshop of sorts that taught the Social Gospel as well as fundamental education. Blacks and whites were allowed to mingle freely at the school. The school would eventually be used as a place to teach non-violent protest and to prepare blacks to register to vote. Eventually the school would be disbanded by a court order.

Ebenezer Baptist Church

Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, was a church that Martin Luther King Jr.'s grandfather was the pastor of and where Daddy King became pastor. Later, Martin Luther King Jr. would join his father as pastor of Ebenezer.

Dexter Avenue Baptist Church

Dexter Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama was the first church where Martin Luther King Jr. was pastor. Martin Luther King Jr. took over the congregation after Vernon Johns.

Birmingham, Alabama

Birmingham, Alabama was the sight of massive demonstrations that took place in 1963 shortly after the Albany, Georgia fiasco. King went to Birmingham with a clear idea of the mistakes that caused the failure in Albany, and used his knowledge of these mistakes to create a more successful protest in Birmingham. However, the whites continued to resist change and less than a year later violence broke out in Birmingham that required King and the SCLC's attention.

Albany, Georgia

Albany, Georgia is the site of massive arrests of black protestors, including Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ralph Abernathy, during protest marches designed to integrate public buildings.

Themes

Civil Rights

The rights of black people were severely limited in America during the time in which Martin Luther King Jr. was coming out of school and beginning his first job as pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Buses, public buildings, schools, and parks were all segregated, relegating the use of these places for blacks to a certain section or alternate facilities that were often less than acceptable in standards. These separate facilities had been a way of life for many years, especially in the southern states, but the time had finally come when blacks were ready for change. Lawyers in Montgomery had seen the possibility of forcing a challenge to bus segregation by taking a case to court for a long time, but a suitable defendant did not come along until the night Rosa Parks, a tailor's assistant with a local department store and secretary with the NAACP, was arrested.

Upon the arrest of Rosa Parks, the biggest, nonviolent protest thus far in Montgomery, Alabama began in the form of a bus boycott. This protest continued for a little more than a year with blacks walking to work and the stores every day rather than use the buses. The boycott ended with a Supreme Court ruling stating that bus segregation in Montgomery was unconstitutional. This success spurred many other protests across the nation in the next few years, including Lunch Counter Sit-ins, Freedom Rides, and widespread voter registration drives for blacks. King's role in this protest as the president of the MIA led not only to personal notoriety, but also to cement his role in the future of the Civil Rights Movement.

This was a time of unrest in the United States, a time when violence was apt to erupt in unusual locations. The fight would become bloody and murderous, with many in the south resisting change. However, many careers would be made, many advances achieved, and many historical moments experienced. Civil rights is a major theme of this book because without the Civil Rights Movement there would have been no opportunity for change to take place and for Martin Luther King Jr. to have the impact on the world that he did.

Gandhiism and Non-violent Protest

Gandhiism is the study and enacting of the nonviolent civil disobedience that Gandhi practiced as a political and spiritual leader during the Indian Independence Movement. King was a student of Gandhi before and during his time as a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, using many of Gandhi's methods in order to keep his protests from becoming unnecessarily violent. Many people who participated in the Civil Rights Movement and the subsequent protests learned this unique type of nonviolent protest through teachers associated with the Highlander Folk School and the various organizations that sprang up in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement.

Part of this nonviolent study included protestors going to jail and insisting on serving out their sentences rather than paying a fine and therefore acknowledging any truth in the charges brought against them. This often caused jails to become so overcrowded that local law enforcement organizations would have to let people go or make other arrangements for their confinement and care. King himself participated in this type of protest several times. Another part of this study included teaching protestors how to take a beating without fighting back or appearing to cower. This technique caused several protestors to take terrible beatings from angry and confused crowds. Other facets of this nonviolent protest included sit-ins and prayer-ins in which the protestors would simply sit in a place where they wanted to protest and take any abuse offered without response or retaliation.

Although these techniques had many critics, especially those among the Muslim movement who suggested this type of behavior did little to change the attitudes of those prosecuting the protestors, or the change was too slow, the techniques were widely used by King, his organizations, and many other organizations that came to be shortly after the Montgomery Bus Boycott. That makes Gandhiism and Non-violent Protests a theme of this book because it was a huge influence on the way the protests of the late fifties and sixties was carried out and therefore a great impact on American history and the subject of this book.

Fame

Fame is a theme of this book because it is a fact that Martin Luther King had to deal with during his career in civil rights. King became a well-known figure in the south during the Montgomery Bus Boycott due to the fact that he was the president of the MIA and was assumed to be the man in charge. After the boycott, King wrote a book that would help spread his name throughout the country. King's fame would continue to soar throughout the rest of his career, growing with each demonstration in which he would take part. King's fame grew with the creation of the SCLC, with his involvement in the Freedom Rides, and finally with the Albany protests. From Albany and beyond, King's fame became worldwide, growing with the bounds of the civil rights movement, with King becoming the best well-known civil rights leader in the country.

King's fame was not always a positive experience. The more famous King became, the more the other civil rights leaders around him began to resent his fame. When King was invited to join the fight in Albany, many of the local leaders who had been there from the beginning resented the fact that King brought with him the national press. Although the other leaders wanted national attention, they did not feel that they needed King in order to make it happen. Roy Wilkins also resented King's fame. Wilkins had always resented King's fame because he felt that his organization was older and had more prestige and therefore it should be him and his fellow NAACP members who should have the fame. Wilkins would often inject tension into situations in which he was forced to exist in King's shadow, causing the press to often pick up on this tension. These press reports would often cause the appearance of disunity among the civil rights organizations.

King's fame also affected his personal life. King was often assaulted in public and was afraid for his life. King's family also became targets at various times during his career. The King home was bombed many times and King received death threats on his home phone. Despite these events, King often refused to travel with a bodyguard, feeling as though he owed his fellow blacks the appearance of living like they did, with the threat of bodily harm without the extra protection of police or bodyguards. This attitude would one day prove to be a deadly one.

Style

Perspective

David Garrow is a professor who has held several prestigious posts at many different universities, including that of Presidential Distinguished Professor at Emory University School of Law. Garrow is an American historian who has written extensively on many subjects, but most prolifically on Martin Luther King, Jr. Garrow's work is well respected throughout the world and this book won the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1987. As an educator and a historian, Garrow has the knowledge to make him an expert on his subject matter and the Pulitzer Prize gives him a legitimacy that tells the reader that the things read in this book have been well researched and are as truthful as is possible.

David Garrow wrote this book in order to chronicle Martin Luther King Jr.'s actions within the civil rights movement. Garrow appears to have intended to educate his reader about the civil rights movement, but also about the man behind many of the actions associated with the movement. The civil rights movement was a many faceted action that included demonstrations and violence instigated by many different organizations and leaders, some famous, some not. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the most well known leaders of this tumultuous time in American history, and Garrow's clear intention with this book is to show the movement as it really was from King's perspective. Garrow's readers were intended to be any person interested in Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights struggle. These readers are sure to have learned a great deal about both King and the civil rights movement by reading this book, assuring that Garrow achieved his intended desire with the book.

Tone

The tone of this book is generally objective or impartial. Garrow does not attempt to express personal opinions about the history he is reporting upon. Garrow simply reports history as he found it to be in his research. The tone of the book lends more credibility to its legitimacy as a history tome. Many biographies are intended to be a stating of fact, but quite often, the writer will become so close to the subject that they will make suppositions based on their emotions regarding the subject and therefore will change the tone from one of impartial reporting to opinionated narration. However, Garrow refrains from indulging in this type of narration and keeps his tone simple and impartial.

The effect of the tone on the reader is to cause the chapters to be somewhat dull due to the lack of narration and in the reporting of facts that are not necessarily relevant to the actions being described. However, the book is clearly one of legitimate history that leaves the reader feeling as though they have learned something from the text. The book is about educating the reader about Martin Luther King Jr. and his role in the civil rights movement and the book achieves exactly that. Although the tone tends to be a bit

dull, it does not take away from the history that is presented and it does not give an impression of the man that is not accurate to his history.

Structure

The book is divided into eleven chapters. Each chapter is named for and covers a specific amount of time during Martin Luther King's involvement in the civil rights movement. The book begins with the Montgomery Bus Boycott that took place just months after King took his first job as a Baptist preacher. The book continues through significant developments in King's career, such as the creation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the demonstrations at Albany. The division of the chapters keeps a timeline that the reader can follow easily and separates each section of King's life into easy to reference parcels.

The book also includes an index and bibliography. Both the index and bibliography makes it easier for the reader or researcher to use the book to find specific information about King or the civil rights movement. The overall format of the book is typical of a book of its type and makes the book easy for a researcher to find specific information. This is important because the wealth of information in this book makes it the perfect reference tome for any student writing a paper on Martin Luther King Jr. or the civil rights movement. The format is also important for the casual reader as it keeps all information in a simple timeline in order to prevent confusion as the reader works from the beginning to the end of King's civil rights career.

Quotes

"Thursday had been busy and tiring for Mrs. Raymond A. Parks. Her job as a tailor's assistant at the Montgomery Fair department store had left her neck and shoulder particularly sore, and when she left work at 5:30 p.m. that December 1, 1955, she went across the street to a drugstore in search of a heating pad. Mrs. Parks didn't find one, but she purchased a few other articles before recrossing the street to her usual bus stop on Court Square."

Chapter 1, The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956, p. 11

"The next morning, Montgomery City Lines resumed full service on all of its routes. At 5:45 a.m., Abernathy, Nixon, Mrs. Parks, and Smiley gathered at the King home on South Jackson. Ten minutes later, when the first bus of the day pulled up at a nearby corner, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the first passenger to the door. He paid his fare and selected a seat toward the front of the bus. Glenn Smiley, the white Texan, sat down next to him. As news photographers snapped pictures, the bus pulled away from the cub. Black Montgomery, after 382 days of mass effort, had achieved its goal." Chapter 1, The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956, p. 82

"On May 14 the riders encountered what Farmer had hoped for. Just outside Anniston, Alabama, one of the two buses was attacked by a mob. As windows were broken, an incendiary device was tossed into the bus, and a fire broke out. The passengers fled, and police arrived belatedly." Chapter 3, SNCC, the Kennedys, and the Freedom Rides, 1960-1961, p. 156

"Charles Sherrod was twenty-two years old when he became SNCC's first field secretary in the summer of 1961. A native of Petersburg, and a graduate of Virginia Union University, he had joined Robert Moses in July for SNCC's first explorations in southwest Mississippi. In August he made a brief visit to southwest Georgia, a rural region where one of the most repressive counties, Terrell, had been the target of the first federal voting rights suit filed under the 1957 Civil Rights Act. The only city of any size in the area was Albany..."

Chapter 4, Albany and Lessons for the Future, 1961-1962, p. 173

"No matter how dangerous Birmingham was, no matter how vicious Bull Connor was, Martin King knew that his God would stand beside him, would speak to him, and would watch over him, come what may." Chapter 4, Albany and Lessons for the Future, 1961-1962, p. 230

"Dripping with sweat, King stepped back as the audience gave him a thundering ovation. Although he did not know it, the speech had been the rhetorical achievement of a lifetime, the clarion call that conveyed the moral power of the movement's cause to the millions who had watched the live national network coverage."

Chapter 5, Birmingham and the March on Washington, 1963, p. 284

"At thirty-five, King was the youngest person ever to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and newsmen marveled at the 'spartan-like simplicity' of the rented home he and his family lived in, and how the family car was a 1960 Ford with seventy thousand miles on the odometer."

Chapter 7, Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965, p. 357

"Four days after King's ground breaking speech in Petersburg, he flew north for discussions with civil rights leaders in Chicago, where local activists were eager to host the northern protests that SCLC wanted to develop. In so doing, King took the first step down a path that would fundamentally alter the nature of the movement and hasten the expansion of his own critical perspective on American society." Chapter 7, Selma and the Voting Rights Act, 1965, p. 430

"Indicating his desire to find some good on the 'black power' hubbub, he told his listeners that 'we must appreciate our great heritage. We must be proud of our race. We must not be ashamed of being black. We must believe with all of our hearts that black is as beautiful as any other color.'" Chapter 9, The Meredith March, 'Black Power', and the Chicago Open-Housing Protests, 1966, p. 492

"Even when times were bad—and it was hard to remember when events had been more frustrating and debilitating than over the past three months—that voice sustained him. He was profoundly uncertain of what would come next, terribly vulnerable to doubts about where he and the movement were headed, but still he had the strength to go forward."

Chapter 9, The Meredith March, 'Black Power', and the Chicago Open-Housing Protests, 1966, p. 525

"Kyle's turned. He could see King's body prone on the balcony floor, his feet extending to the lower rail. Abernathy could see King from the motel room door. He stepped out, bent over, and saw the gapping wound in King's right jaw."

Chapter 11, The Poor People's Campaign and Memphis, 1967-1968, p. 623

"Kyle's looked down and though he could see the color of King's complexion change right before his eyes. He turned away and sobbed."

Chapter 11, The Poor People's Campaign and Memphis, 1967-1968, p. 624

Topics for Discussion

Why was Rosa Parks' arrest different from that of Claudia Colbert? Why was it significant that Colbert was pregnant? Could Colbert's arrest have had the same impact as Parks' if she had had the same support as Parks? Why or why not? If these two arrests had happened in modern times, would the result have been the same? Why or why not?

Discuss how Martin Luther King Jr. became involved in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Why did King elect to become president of the MIA after having recently turned down the presidency of a local chapter of the NAACP? What was different about the role King would play with the MIA? Do you think King earned the fame he received as the president of the MIA? Why or why not? Was King's role in the Montgomery Bus Boycott any different than that of the other leaders involved?

What is significant about the beginning of the SCLC? Why was this organization formed? What was its purpose? Did it live up to its purpose in the first few years? Why did the SCLC not participate in any protests during the first years of its existence? Why was the NAACP threatened by the SCLC? Were Roy Wilkins's complaints about the SCLC founded or were they simply personal attacks on King himself?

Discuss how Martin Luther King's fame worked against him. Why did so many black leaders resent King's fame? Did King's fame harm his ability to be a civil rights leader? Why did Roy Wilkins in particular resent King? Could things have been different if Wilkins and King worked better together?

What mistakes were made in Albany? How large an impact did the tension between the various civil rights organizations have on the outcome of Albany? Did the SNCC shoulder the burden of the mistakes, or was King more to blame? How did King use the mistakes of Albany to make Birmingham a success?

What was the purpose behind the March on Washington? Why did King want to frighten the President of the United States? Why did the focus change from the President to Congress? Did the March accomplish what it intended? How was it successful? How was it unsuccessful? What was the impact of the March on Washington on the civil rights movement?

How did the assassination of President Kennedy affect the civil rights movement? How did this death affect King personally? Why did King say that he would end up the same way someday? How did the assassination of Malcolm X affect King? Was this the same or different from the effect of JFK's death? Why was it or why was it not different?

Discuss Selma. What was important about Selma? Why did it have a lasting impact on the civil rights movement? Would it have had the same impact if Bloody Sunday had not taken place?