

# CIVIL RIGHTS

## In Kansas



## Injustice in Lawrence

Since its creation, the state of Kansas has been known for its commitment to anti-slavery and African American rights to equality. However, this has not always been true in practice. Before and during the Civil War, many people who opposed slavery did so because they wanted to have a state with no Black residents. After the Civil War, Black residents were the victims of racism and lynchings, often being accused of crimes they did not commit so that the violence directed toward them would be justified.

Similarly, the University of Kansas was segregated until the mid-1950s. Students were often kicked out for reasons that did not make sense. They also could not enjoy the same activities and sports as white students.

People in Lawrence were also responsible for racism. Many people thought that forcing change would only further divide people, so they instead believed that rights would only be achieved in time - that is, if they wanted them to be achieved at all.

## Civil Rights on a National Scale

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# PROTESTS, SIT-INS, AND RALLIES



The 1960s were a big decade for Civil Rights, with different forms of protests against the discrimination of African Americans taking place across the country. Famous activists such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and W.E.B. Du Bois spoke out, wrote papers, and planned peaceful public protests so that the government and white citizens would treat African Americans equally and without prejudice.

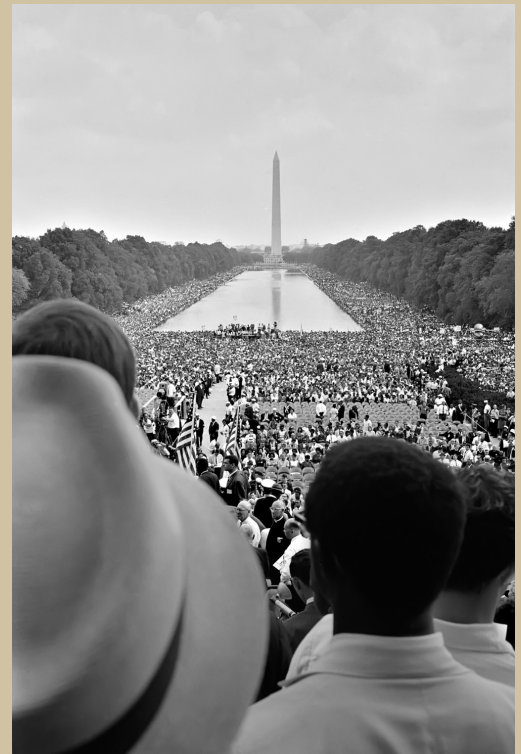
You may have heard of the activist Rosa Parks, who was arrested for not giving up her seat in front of a bus. Another famous act of protest was the Greensboro sit-in. Four college boys sat at a "whites only" lunch counter until the closing of the store. The next day, more students joined. This sit-in sparked a national movement, in which they were successful in helping stop segregation.

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## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

# I HAVE A DREAM

You may have heard of Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "I have a dream" speech. Within the speech, given in Washington D.C. in 1963, King called upon the nation to fix the injustices - bigotry, prejudices, prohibitions - enacted against the Black population. King wanted the African American community to have equal rights, and he wanted his children to be able to grow up in an America that did not judge people based on the color of their skin.



# Important People

In the Kansas Civil Rights Movement

## Charles Scott, Sr.

grew up in Topeka and worked at his father's law firm. He was one of the first lawyers to try to recruit the NAACP to challenge the "separate but equal" doctrine, effectively leading the Brown V. Board Supreme Court case.



## LUCINDA TODD

was a teacher, mother, and activist who served as the secretary for the Topeka NAACP. She was unsatisfied with the conditions of Topeka classrooms and the treatment of her daughter. She participated in opposing the segregation laws that led to the Brown V. Board supreme court case.

## WILT CHAMBERLAIN

was a successful basketball player at the University of Kansas and in the NBA. During his time in Lawrence, he made public appearances visiting segregated spaces and was not turned away.

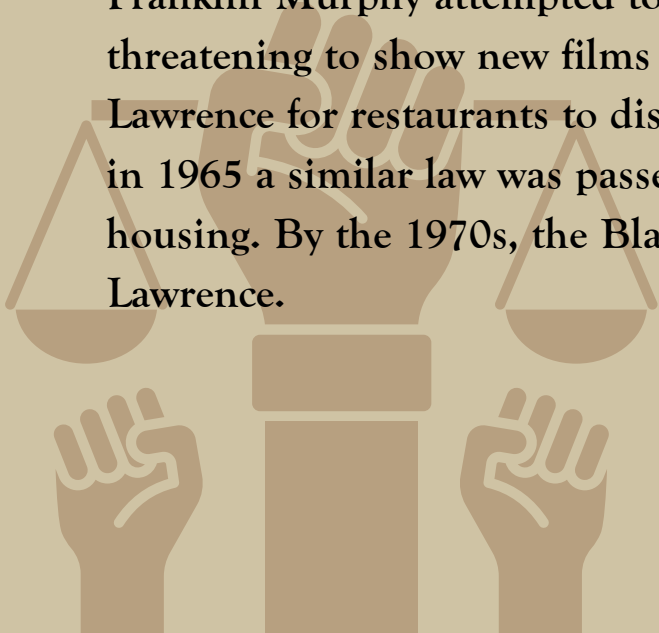


# Civil Rights

## in Lawrence

During the Civil Rights Movement, Lawrence was filled with protests. Many people believed that people of all races should be equal, and they demonstrated this publicly through peaceful protests and publications. In the year 1965, 110 students were arrested for orchestrating a sit-in inside of Chancellor Wescoe's office. The sit-in was protesting the discrimination of Black students on campus. The protesters argued that fraternities and sororities on campus would not allow non-Black students to join. Students also wanted the school newspaper to stop publishing ads for people who discriminated against Black residents. It was the second largest demonstration in the country.

Other important acts of protests are notable from the 1950s and 60s in Lawrence. Several sit-ins occurred to desegregate cafes and restaurants around the Lawrence area. In the middle of the 1950s, Chancellor Franklin Murphy attempted to desegregate the movie theaters by threatening to show new films on campus. By 1959, it was illegal in Lawrence for restaurants to discriminate against African Americans, and in 1965 a similar law was passed banning discrimination in public housing. By the 1970s, the Black Power Movement had reached Lawrence.



Watkins Museum of History

# Brown V. Board of Education

Topeka, Kansas

## Separate but Equal

Prior to 1954, many students attended schools that were segregated, meaning white students went to one school, while Black students went to another. Many white people believed in the phrase "separate but equal," which suggested that, while attending different schools, Black and white children received the same quality of education with the same resources. However, schools attended by Black students were often of lower quality than those attended by white students. Across the nation, angry parents and lawyers challenged segregated schools in court. The case went to Supreme Court, along with others, in the year 1952. After much deliberation and with the help of lawyer Thurgood Marshall, Brown V. Board overturned the "Separate but Equal" ruling in 1954, therefore allowing black students to attend formally all-white schools.



To learn more about the Brown V. Board court case, visit the Brown V. Board of Education National Historic Park in Topeka, Kansas!

1515 SE Monroe St, Topeka, KS 66612

# Civil Rights Quiz for Online Users

Send the words Watkins-Civil Rights and your answers to [cpreut@watkinsmuseum.org](mailto:cpreut@watkinsmuseum.org)

Students missing only one answer or less will receive a prize and be entered into the raffle.

1. Who gave the famous "I Have a Dream" Speech?

- a. Thurgood Marshall
- b. Martin Luther King Jr.
- c. Abraham Lincoln
- d. Lucinda Todd

2. Which Kansas activist worked at his father's law firm and helped recruit lawyers for Brown v. Board?

- a. Charles Scott, Sr.
- b. Thurgood Marshall
- c. Chancellor Wescoe
- d. Martin Luther King Jr.

3. In what year were 110 students arrested for orchestrating a sit-in inside Chancellor Wescoe's office?

- a. 1965
- b. 1832
- c. 1968
- d. 2003

4. What is the name of the lawyer who famously helped win Brown v. Board?

- a. Lucinda Todd
- b. George Washington
- c. Thurgood Marshall
- d. Napoleon Bonaparte

5. Which method of protesting do you prefer?

- a. March
- b. Sit-in
- c. Walk-out
- d. Write a letter
- e. Strike

# How Do You Protest?

Don't be afraid to fight for what you believe in! Here are some ways:

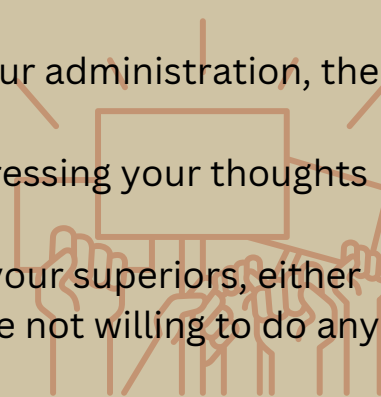
**March-** Make a sign and take to the streets! Marches are organized both locally and nationally with the hopes that seeing large amounts of people opposing mistreatment will change the minds of those in power.

**Sit-in-** Common during the Civil Rights movement, sit-ins usually involve staying in a location where you, or others, are not allowed to be.

**Walk-out-** Walking out from either school or work can show your administration, the government, and your peers that you support a cause.

**Write a letter-** Write a letter to your State Representative expressing your thoughts about something that they have the power to change.

**Strike-** If you are unhappy with how you are being treated by your superiors, either at school or work, organize a strike! Let them know that you are not willing to do any work until your conditions are changed.



## To Complete this packet:

In order to complete this summer packet, please write a letter addressed to a Kansas Representative asking for something that you would like to see implemented. What do you believe in? What are you willing to fight for? Please bring this letter with you to the museum.

