



## **Materials related to the American Civil Rights Movement in the collections of the Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University**

### **What was the American Civil Rights Movement?**

The American Civil Rights Movement was a series of nonviolent protests conducted in the 1950s and 1960s in support of political and social equality for African Americans in the United States. The movement especially targeted the end of racial segregation and Jim Crow laws. In general, scholars agree that African-American resistance to their marginalized status dates back much further and continued after the 1960s. However, it was with the Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* and up until the assassination of movement leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 that the United States experienced a mass-scale nonviolent protest movement in support of African-American equality. Other marginalized groups in the country, including Chicanos (Mexican Americans), American Indians, women and the LGBTQ community, were spurred by the African-American movement to launch their own major campaigns for equality. 1960s student activism was also rooted in the Civil Rights Movement.

### **What was music of the civil rights movement?**

Scholars have included the gospel, spiritual and folk music utilized by protestors, as well as popular artists representing a variety of genres (for example: jazz, blues, folk, rock n' roll) who supported the movement and struggled for equality in the music industry, in their studies of civil rights music. See the primary source list below for some examples.

### **What original materials do you have on civil rights music?**

The Center for Popular Music has a significant amount of civil rights-related materials, especially in the forms of sheet music, sound recordings and song books. The Center also houses some related performance and photographic materials.

## How do I search for these primary source materials?

### Online Searching

Most of these primary source materials may be searched online through the Center's website. Sound recordings may be searched in the Center's Reading Room through the in-house database. To search for these materials online, visit the CPM's website at <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/default.aspx>. This catalog will search for materials in the following collection categories: [Manuscript Collections](#), [Rare Books and Scores](#); [Sheet Music](#); [Song BroadSides](#); [Posters, Playbills, and Programs](#); [Trade Catalogs](#); [Photographs](#); and [Periodicals: Secondary Collection](#). For an overview of each of the major collections, see the detailed menu to the left of the screen under "Search Our Collections."

You should search for individual titles, artists or songs in Quick Search or Advanced Search. If you do not have any specific names in mind, you should first examine secondary source materials. There are no keywords that will specifically yield civil rights music. Searching for terms like "African-American composers," "African-American musicians" or by genres like "gospel," "folk" or "rock n' roll" will yield long lists of items that may not directly correlate to the movement. The combined keywords "civil rights" have not been used in the cataloging process, so will not yield any significant results.

Click on the Advanced Search link <http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/advanced-search.aspx> to take you to a more detailed search screen. You may limit your search to a particular field or type of material.

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the website [popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/default.aspx](http://popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/default.aspx). The page features the Middle Tennessee State University logo and navigation menus. A search bar is prominently displayed with the text "Center for Popular Music: Quick Search". To the left of the search bar is a vertical menu titled "Search Our Collections" with various options like "Sheet Music", "BroadSides", "Rare Books & Scores", etc. To the right of the search bar is a "Search Tips" section. An orange arrow points to the "Advanced Search" link in the top navigation bar, and another orange arrow points to the "Search Our Collections" menu.

Search - Center for Popular Music - Mozilla Firefox

Search - Center for Popular Music

popmusic.mtsu.edu/collections/default.aspx

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the center for Popular Music

Center for Popular Music: Quick Search

Any word or phrase:  Go

Enter search terms above to begin searching our collections.

About Our Collections

The Center for Popular Music makes available a wide variety of music and related materials for research and study. From original 18th-century tune books to digital files, the CPM's special collections contain all popular formats of music dissemination. Collections of music include Sheet Music, Song BroadSides, Rare Books and Scores, and Sound Recordings. The CPM also collects related materials that further enable the study of popular music, such as Photographs, Trade Catalogs, Posters, Playbills, and Programs, Periodicals, Vertical Files, and Manuscripts.

Search Tips

Within search boxes:

- Search terms are automatically joined by AND (e.g. popular music finds popular AND music)
- Use / for OR (e.g. popular / music)
- Use | for NOT (e.g. popular | music)
- Use "" to search for a phrase (e.g. "popular music")
- Use \* for truncation (e.g. music\* finds music, musical, musician, etc.)

Special characters:

- Use >, <, =, <= for greater or less than (e.g. >= 1999 finds dates from 1999 onwards)
- Use : to search a range (e.g. 1999-2003, example:sample)
- Use the proximity operators w (within) and p (preceding) to find words near each other (e.g. arts p3 culture finds records with 'arts' up to 3 words before)

At the Center (in-house searching only):

To search for [Sound Recordings](#), please visit the Center and use our in-house database or email Lucinda Cockrell [Lucinda.Cockrell@mtsu.edu](mailto:Lucinda.Cockrell@mtsu.edu) or Martin Fisher [Martin.Fisher@mtsu.edu](mailto:Martin.Fisher@mtsu.edu).

Some photographic and manuscript materials will also require staff assistance to locate. Please contact Lucinda Cockrell with questions.

### **What secondary source materials do you have?**

To search for Secondary Source Materials available in the Center's Reading Room— go to MTSU's Walker Library catalog <http://library.mtsu.edu/> and use search terms like "Civil Rights Music," "Protest Songs" or "African American Music." You may also search for individual artists or genres. Materials include histories, song books and video. If you are only interested in materials held at the CPM, click on "Library Catalog" at the bottom of the Search box, then select "Center for Popular Music (Mass Comm.)" under the "Location" menu.

## **CPM Civil Rights Music Bibliography**

**\*If using a PC, hit Ctrl and left click on call or item numbers to be taken to catalog entry.\***

### **Books**

Dunson, Josh. *Freedom in the Air; Song Movements of the Sixties*. New York, NY:

International Publishers, [1965]. [ML3551.D85](#).

Ellison, Mary. *Lyrical Protest: Black Music's Struggle Against Discrimination*. New York, NY:

Praeger, 1989. [ML3556 .E44 1989](#)

Monson, Ingrid T. (Ingrid Tolia). *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call out to Jazz and Africa*.

New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007. [ML3508.M65 2007](#).

Sanger, Kerran L. *"When the spirit says sing!": the Role of Freedom Songs in the Civil Rights Movement*. New York, NY: Garland, 1995. [ML3556 .S26 1995](#)

Seeger, Pete and Bob Reiser. *Everybody Says Freedom: A History of the Civil Rights Movement in Songs and Pictures*. New York, NY: Norton, 1989. [ML3550 .S43 1989](#)

Ward, Brian. *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998. [ML3479 .W37 1998](#)

## Song Books

Carawan, Guy and Candie, eds. *Sing for Freedom: the Story of the Civil Rights Movement through its Songs*. Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out Corp., 1990. [M1977.C47 S56 1990](#).

Glazer, Tom, ed. *Songs of Peace, Freedom, and Protest*. New York, D. McKay Co. [1970]. [M1977 .P75 G5 1970](#)

Reagon, Bernice Johnson. *Compositions, One*. Washington, D.C.: Songtalk, 1986. [M1670.R4276](#)

## Video

Brown, Jim. *We Shall Overcome*. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 1988. [VID WE SHALL OVERCOME](#).

## Primary Sources

### Sheet Music

Cooke, Sam. "Chain Gang." Kags Music Corp, 1960. [001425-UCLAS](#).

Forrest, Hamilton, arr. Marian Anderson, prf. "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." New York: Mills Music, 1951. [003176-UCLAS](#).

### Rare Books

African American heritage hymnal: 575 hymns, spirituals, and gospel songs. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2001. [SP-020145](#).

Jackson, Mahalia. Frye's echoes of the Baptist Music Convention number four / Sixty-four pages of familiar hymns. Chicago: Theodore R. Frye Publishers, [1949]. [SP-001332](#)

### Performance Documents

Eighth Annual Monterey Jazz Festival [Monterey, CA], [September 1965]. [000248-PERFORM](#).

Newport Jazz Festival 1964 Program. [000254-PERFORM](#).

### Sound Recordings

45 RPM:

"Long Walk to DC" – The Staple Singers, Stax, STA-0007

"Until We're Free" – Elaine Brown, Black Forum 61856

### 33 1/3 RPM:

"I Shall Not Be Moved" – RDE-006914 RCA Camden UCRS-3652-8S Struttin' Down Royal Street

"We Shall Overcome" – RDE-007632b; RDE-007632c; RDE-008349; RDE-006373; RCD-12a; RCD-9135

### Manuscript Collections:

Doug Seroff collection of Negro harmony singing, [89-031](#)

Doug Seroff African American Gospel Quartet collection, [10-026](#)

## **Useful Online Databases/Encyclopedias**

(Accessible to MTSU students through the Walker Library website)

Encyclopedia of Popular Music, 4th Edition: <http://www.encpopmusic4.com/>

Music Online: African American Music Reference: <http://aamr.alexanderstreet.com/Search>

## **Other Repositories:**

The Civil Rights History Project: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/civilrights/index.html>

Created through an act of Congress, this database allows you to search for civil rights audiovisual collections throughout the United States. A total of 1527 collections are listed.

### In Tennessee:

Fisk University: <http://www.fisk.edu/Academics/Library/SpecialCollections.aspx>

Located in Nashville, of particular interest at Fisk is the Black Oral History Program, a collection of interviews conducted in the 1970s with both civil rights activists and African American musicians. Depending on the scope of your project, you may also be interested in the Black American Music, Fisk Jubilee Singers, Langston Hughes, or other music-related collections at Fisk.

The Highlander Research and Education Center: <http://www.highlandercenter.org/archives/>

Highlander, currently located outside of Knoxville, has had a long history of participation in American social movements, including the civil rights movement. Not only did the school's programs help to train activists in nonviolent techniques, they also facilitated the recording of

movement music.

The Highlander School's archival materials are divided between a few different repositories. The Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville holds microfilm and sound recordings related to the organization. See <http://www.tennessee.gov/tsla/history/manuscripts/index.htm> for more information.

Nashville Public Library: <http://www.library.nashville.org/civilrights/home.html>

The Nashville Public Library houses a collection of civil rights source materials primarily related to the movement's manifestations in Nashville, including books and magazines, oral histories, photographs, video and audio productions, and microforms. Their Civil Rights Oral History finding aid lists interviews with Guy and Candie Caraway, a Freedom Singer (Matthew Jones) and the director of the Fisk Jubilee Singers during the movement (Dr. Matthew Kennedy), but other interviewees and some of their other materials may mention movement music as well.