

State of the Art: Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Early histories of the civil rights movement that appeared prior to the 1980s were primarily biographies of Martin Luther King, Jr. Collectively, these works helped to create the familiar “Montgomery to Memphis” narrative framework for understanding the history of the civil rights movement in the United States. This narrative begins with King’s rise to leadership during the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott in Alabama, and ends with his 1968 assassination in Memphis, Tennessee.¹ Since the 1980s, a number of studies examining the civil rights movement at local and state levels have questioned the usefulness and accuracy of the King-centric Montgomery to Memphis narrative as the sole way of understanding the civil rights movement. These studies have made it clear that civil rights struggles already existed in many of the communities where King and the organization of which he was president, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), ran civil rights campaigns in the 1960s. Moreover, those struggles continued long after King and the SCLC had left those communities. Civil rights activism also thrived in many places that King and the SCLC never visited.² As a result of these local

¹ Lawrence D. Reddick, *Crusader Without Violence: A Biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959); Lerone Bennett, Jr., *What Manner of Man: A Biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing, 1964); William Robert Miller, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: His Life, Martyrdom and Meaning for the World* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1968); Lionel Lokos, *House Divided: The Life and Legacy of Martin Luther King* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1968); David L. Lewis, *King: A Critical Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970); Jim Bishop, *The Days of Martin Luther King* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1971). Lokos’s book is a rarity in that it is a published attack on King and his use of nonviolent direct action.

² William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle For Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Robert J. Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985); David R. Colburn, *Racial Change and Community Crisis: St. Augustine, Florida, 1877–1980* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle For Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Charles M. Payne, *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Glenn T. Eskew, *But For Birmingham: The Local and National*

and state studies, historians have increasingly framed the civil rights movement within the context of a much longer, ongoing struggle for black freedom and equality, unfolding throughout the twentieth century at local, state and national levels.³ More recently, a number of books have sought to place the civil rights movement within the larger context of international relations.⁴ As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Montgomery bus boycott next year, the event that launched King's movement leadership, it seems an appropriate point to return to the existing literature on King and to assess what has already been done, as well as to point to the gaps that still need to be filled, in what remains important field of study.

The Martin Luther King Jr., Papers Project under the directorship of Clayborne Carson at Stanford University is currently in the process of assembling an edited collection of King's personal papers which should, when finished, provide the definitive published primary source. To date, four volumes cover the period up to December 1958.⁵ The project has already

Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995); Stephen G. N. Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940–1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); John A. Kirk, *Redefining the Color Line: Black Activism in Little Rock, Arkansas, 1940–1970* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002).

³ See, for example, Robert Cook, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The African American Struggle for Civil Rights in the Twentieth Century* (London: Longman, 1998); Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890–2000* (New York: Penguin, 2001); Steven F. Lawson, *Civil Rights Crossroads: Nation, Community and the Black Freedom Struggle* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2003).

⁴ Michael L. Krenn, ed., *Race and US Foreign Policy During the Cold War* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998); Michael L. Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department, 1945–1969* (Armonuk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944–1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁵ Clayborne Carson, Ralph E. Luker, and Penny A. Russell, eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. I.: Called to Serve, January 1929–June 1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Clayborne Carson, Ralph E. Luker, Penny A. Russell, and Peter Holloran, eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. II.: Rediscovering Precious Values, July 1951–November 1955* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Clayborne Carson, Susan A. Carson, Peter Holloran, Dana L. Powell, and Stewart Burns, eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. III.: Birth of a New Age, December 1955–December 1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Clayborne Carson, Susan A. Carson, Adrienne Clay, Virginia Shadron, and Kieran Taylor, eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. IV.: Symbol of the Movement, January 1957–December 1958* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). The King Papers project website at <http://www.stanford.edu/group/King> is the best starting point for accessing King on the internet and contains a treasury of resources.

had an impact on the debate about King and primary sources, most notably when it broke the news in 1990 that King had “used the words of others without giving them credit” in his college essays and, more seriously, in large chunks of his Boston University PhD thesis. King’s plagiarism, as others quickly labeled it, raised a storm of controversy, examined by contemporaries of King, academic scholars, and experts in plagiarism in a special edition of the *Journal of American History*. Theodore Pappas examines King’s plagiarism from the perspective of the American right, although his somewhat self-righteous glee at exposing King’s shortcomings quickly proves wearing. Eugene D. Genovese has also been highly critical of King’s plagiarism. Michael Eric Dyson offers a more measured, thoughtful and insightful response to the plagiarism controversy, to revelations about King’s sexual promiscuity – the other major scandal to impact upon King’s reputation – and to other King-related controversies.⁶

Scholars have also questioned the validity of other King primary sources. King published three books and two collections of sermons during his lifetime. A transcript of radio talks that King recorded for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1967 was published posthumously. Alongside these, King published numerous essays, articles and speeches.⁷ David J. Garrow and James H. Cone have both raised questions about the usefulness of these sources. Garrow in particular has pointed out that King’s books were heavily ghostwritten. Professional ghostwriter Al Duckett, Garrow claims, wrote most of King’s book *Why We Can’t Wait*, and King’s advisors Stanley D. Levison, Bayard Rustin, Harris Wofford, and others, had a large part in writing his other two books. King scholar Lewis V. Baldwin contends that, although largely ghostwritten, King personally approved the publication of work penned under his name and that such work does accurately reflect

⁶ “Becoming Martin Luther King, Jr.: Plagiarism and Originality: A Round Table,” *Journal of American History* 78 (June 1991), 11–123 (quote from page 13); Theodore Pappas, *Plagiarism and the Culture War: The Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Other Prominent Americans* (Tampa, FL: Hallberg, 1998); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Southern Front: History and Politics in the Cultural Cold War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995); Michael Eric Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

⁷ King’s books: *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958); *Why We Can’t Wait* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964); *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967); King’s sermons: *The Measure of a Man* (Philadelphia: Christian Education Press, 1959); *Strength to Love* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); King’s radio transcript: *The Trumpet of Conscience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). The most comprehensive edited volume of King’s writings, speeches and sermons is James M. Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (San Francisco: Harper SanFrancisco, 1986).

King's views.⁸ Problematically, it is still not precisely clear which of King's writings were ghostwritten or how heavily. Hopefully, the King Papers Project will shed further light on this in due course.

King's sermons have also come under scrutiny. Keith D. Miller points out that King's sermons heavily "borrowed" from the sermons of white liberal preachers. Miller terms this practice "voice-merging" and argues that it is part of a distinct black oral tradition of melding the words of others into new forms without necessarily acknowledging their origin. Richard Lischer claims that Miller may exaggerate the extent of King's "borrowing," and moreover insists that it was the actual performance and the delivery of King's sermons and speeches before an audience, rather than their content, that was more important. Richard H. King provides a critique of Miller's work in which he asserts that Miller oversimplifies the complex interaction between personal experience and received ideas in shaping King's intellectual development. M. L. King, Richard King argues, was far more engaged with the ideas he articulated than Miller gives him credit for. Richard King also makes the important point that while "borrowing" within the context of an oral tradition may be acceptable, plagiarism within a written tradition plainly is not, and that M. L. King understood that point even as he transgressed those rules. As Richard King sees it, the issue is rooted in the ongoing problem of identifying King's "authenticity of voice." That problem centres on the question of what King believed personally and what views King felt obliged to articulate as the leader of a popular social movement. An essay collection edited by Carolyn Calloway-Thomas and John Louis Lucaites and a monograph by Fredrik Sunnemark further explore King's use of rhetoric.⁹

One important primary source comes from FBI surveillance of King. David Garrow has collected and edited the material gathered from FBI

⁸ David J. Garrow, "The Intellectual Development of Martin Luther King, Jr.: Influences and Commentaries," in David J. Garrow, ed., *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Civil Rights Leader, Theologian, Orator, Volume Two* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989), 437–52; James H. Cone, "The Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr.," in David J. Garrow, ed., *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Civil Rights Leader, Theologian, Orator, Volume One* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989), 215–34; Lewis V. Baldwin, *There is a Balm in Gilead: The Cultural Roots of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortram Press, 1991).

⁹ Keith D. Miller *Voice of Deliverance: The Language of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Its Sources* (New York: Free Press, 1992); Richard Lischer, *The Preacher King: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Word that Moved America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Richard H. King, *Civil Rights and the Idea of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) (quote from page 113); Carolyn Calloway-Thomas and John Louis Lucaites, eds., *Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Sermonic Power of Public Discourse* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993); Fredrik Sunnemark, *Ring Out Freedom!: The Voice of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

wiretaps on microfilm, which consist of 17,000 pages on sixteen reels. Part One contains wiretaps of King and part two contains wiretaps of Stanley D. Levison, one of King's most trusted SCLC confidants. Garrow's book, based in part on this material, looks at the FBI's wider campaign of harassment against King, and Kenneth O'Reilly offers a chapter on King in a book about the FBI's campaign against the civil rights and black power movements. The FBI also illicitly placed bugging devices in King's hotel rooms. These might offer further insights into King's most intimate, unguarded private thoughts. However, at the request of several former SCLC board members, the FBI tapes derived from these bugs are sealed by federal court order until 2027. Recent questions raised about the conditions in which the tapes are kept have reflected concerns that they might not survive long enough to be useable at all.¹⁰

A number of autobiographies provide perspectives on King from different angles. Accounts by family members include King's father, sister, wife and son. There is even a memoir by an alleged former lover. Benjamin E. Mays's autobiography provides some recollections about King's Morehouse College days in Atlanta by its then president. Ralph David Abernathy was another of King's most trusted confidants and King's successor as president of the SCLC. Abernathy's autobiography is, however, disappointing in its lack of insight and most notable as a source of revelations about King's sexual promiscuity. A far better SCLC insider account is the autobiography of Andrew Young, who was active in the SCLC from 1961, and later became its executive director. A number of leaders of other major civil rights organizations offer their observations on King in autobiographies: Roy Wilkins for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); James Farmer for the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); and John Lewis for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). James Forman and Cleveland Sellers provide useful insights into King's leadership from a largely critical militant SNCC point of view. For those leaders who do not have autobiographies, such as the National Urban League's Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' A. Philip Randolph, there are biographies in their place.¹¹

¹⁰ David J. Garrow, ed., *The Martin Luther King, Jr. File* (Frederick, MD: University Publishers of America, 1984); David J. Garrow, *The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr.: From 'Solo' to Memphis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981); Kenneth O'Reilly, *Racial Matters: The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960–1972* (New York: Free Press, 1989).

¹¹ Martin Luther King, Sr., with Clayton Riley, *Daddy King: An Autobiography* (Boston, MA: William Morrow, 1980); Christine Farris King, *My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing Up with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003); *My Life With*

A triumvirate of works published in the 1980s still set the standard for King scholarship. Adam Fairclough's study of King and the SCLC gives analytical verve to the events surrounding King's presidency of the organization and his movement leadership. David Garrow, writing on the same subject, offers exhaustive research and a mastery of the sources. Taylor Branch is currently two-thirds of the way through a projected three-volume study that will place King's life within the context of the broader civil rights movement and the history of the times on a truly epic scale. These books apart, one of the best, and one of the earliest and frankest assessments of King's life after his assassination, is David L. Lewis's biography. Works by Stephen B. Oates and Frederick L. Downing fill the gap between Lewis's and later studies. The most recent updates of King biography come from Peter J. Ling and Stewart Burns. The pick of the shorter studies on King are those written by James A. Colaiaco, Adam Fairclough, and John White. John A. Kirk's mid-length book is the first to bridge the longer and shorter works on King, combining the most recent King and movement scholarship.¹²

Martin Luther King, Jr. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969); Dexter Scott King, *Growing Up King: An Intimate Memoir* (New York: Warner Books, 2003); Georgia Davis Powers, *I Shared the Dream: The Pride, Passion and Politics of the First Black Woman Senator from Kentucky* (Far Hills, NJ: New Horizons Press, 1995); Benjamin E. Mays, *Born to Rebel: An Autobiography* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987); Ralph David Abernathy, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989); Andrew Young, *An Easy Burden: The Civil Rights Movement and the Transformation of America* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996); Roy Wilkins, *Standing Fast: The Autobiography of Roy Wilkins* (New York: Viking Press, 1982); James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Arbor House, 1985); John Lewis, *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998); James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (New York: Macmillan, 1972) revised and reprinted (Washington DC: Open Hand Publishing, 1985); Cleveland Sellers, with Robert Terrell, *The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC* (New York: William Morrow, 1973); Nancy J. Weiss, *Whitney M. Young, Jr. and the Struggle For Civil Rights* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Dennis C. Dickerson, *Militant Mediator: Whitney M. Young, Jr.* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998); Jervis Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph: A Biographical Portrait* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973); Paula F. Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph: Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990).

¹² Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987); David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: HarperCollins, 1986); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-63* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Taylor Branch, *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years, 1963-65* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998); David L. Lewis, *King: A Critical Biography*; Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982); Frederick L. Downing, *To See the Promised Land: the Faith Pilgrimage of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press,

Much of the King scholarship has focused on King's involvement in community-based civil rights campaigns. King first came to prominence as president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) during the 1955–6 Montgomery bus boycott. King was only twenty-six at the time the boycott started and he had been in Montgomery for only just over a year as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. When the planned short-term boycott was extended from its original aim of modifying segregation on city buses to its complete abolition, eventually running to 382 days, media coverage increasingly focused upon King and helped to make him a black leader of national standing. The boycott ended in December 1956 after the US Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of Montgomery city buses. Stewart Burns's edited collection of primary sources tells the story of the bus boycott. Burns is also one of the joint editors of volume three of the King Papers, which provides an even more comprehensive documentary history of events. J. Mills Thornton offers an important analysis of the bus boycott from a local perspective, which locates events within the context of white-dominated municipal politics. Catherine Barnes places the bus boycott within the larger context of the desegregation of public transportation in the decades before and after events in Montgomery.¹³

There are a number of useful first-hand accounts of the bus boycott. King's book is one of them, but must be approached carefully bearing in mind the point made earlier in this essay about ghostwriting, and because in any case his book was written with the intention of providing a popular representation of the bus boycott, rather than a searching or even accurate historical analysis. The most useful first-hand account of the bus boycott is Jo Ann Robinson's memoir, which highlights the role played by the Women's Political Council in events. Robinson's book indicates the crucial role played by women and women's organizations in the civil rights

1986); Peter J. Ling, *Martin Luther King, Jr.* (London: Routledge, 2002); Stewart Burns, *To the Mountaintop: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Sacred Mission to Save America, 1955–1968* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2003); James A. Colaiaco, *Martin Luther King, Jr.* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Adam Fairclough, *Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990); John White, *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement* (Durham: British Association of American Studies, 1991); John A. Kirk, *Martin Luther King, Jr.* (London: Pearson Education, 2004).

¹³ Stewart Burns, ed., *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Carson, et al., eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. III*; J. Mills Thornton, *Dividing Lines: Municipal Politics and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002); Catherine Barnes, *Journey From Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

movement, which a number of movement scholars have also highlighted. Rosa Parks, whose refusal to surrender her bus seat sparked the bus boycott, has an autobiography and a biography that look at her role in events. Robert Graetz looks at the boycott from the perspective of a sympathetic liberal white minister; Fred D. Gray gives the MIA attorney's view; Solomon S. Seay gives an account of events by a black MIA minister; and black minister U. J. Fields's account is noteworthy since it provides a critical perspective on events in Montgomery from a disgruntled member of the MIA.¹⁴

Studies by Adam Fairclough and David Garrow look at the origins and founding of the SCLC after the Montgomery bus boycott. Biographies of Bayard Rustin and Ella Baker expand upon the roles played by those two influential figures. There is no autobiography or biography of the third person instrumental in the formation of the SCLC, Stanley Levison. The founding of the SCLC aside, the period between the end of the Montgomery bus boycott and the 1960 Sit-Ins is often viewed, as Fairclough titles his chapter on the period, as King and the movement's "Fallow Years." Sociologist Aldon D. Morris offers a different interpretation of the civil rights movement during these years, arguing that the organizational foundations for the burst of black activism that followed were being laid at a grassroots level in Southern communities. Apart from King biographies, which often skip quickly over this period, little has been written about it. The King Papers partially fill the gap, but do not offer much by way of critical analysis about the importance of these years, which included King's visits to Africa and

¹⁴ On the Montgomery bus boycott, see M. L. King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom*; Jo Ann Robinson, with David Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989); Rosa Parks, with Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story* (New York: Dial Books, 1992); Douglas Brinkley, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: The Life of Rosa Parks* (New York: Viking Press, 2000); Robert Graetz, *A White Preacher's Memoir: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1999); Fred D. Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice: Changing the System by the System: The Life and Works of Fred D. Gray, Preacher, Attorney, Politician: Lawyer for Rosa Parks* (Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1999); Solomon S. Seay, *I Was There By The Grace Of God* (Montgomery, AL: S.S. Seay Educational Foundation 1990); U. J. Fields, *The Montgomery Story: The Unhappy Effects of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (New York: Exposition Press, 1959). On women's activism in the movement see Vicki Crawford, Jacqueline Rouse and Barbara Woods, eds., *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1941–1965* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1990); Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long? African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith, eds., *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999) reprinted (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004); Bettye Collier-Thomas and V. P. Franklin, eds., *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

India, several appearances on the national stage, as well as a failed attempt upon his life by a mentally ill black woman.¹⁵

King was only tangentially involved in the 1960 Sit-Ins and the 1961 Freedom Rides. After participating in an Atlanta sit-in, King's arrest and jailing became a campaign issue in the 1960 presidential race between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Kennedy aide Harris Wofford documents those events, and Clifford M. Kuhn provides an important revisionist article that suggests behind the scenes political maneuvering rather than a bullish Kennedy entourage secured King's release.¹⁶ Howard Zinn, Clayborne Carson and Emily Stoper all write on the sit-ins and the subsequent formation and development of SNCC. Aldon Morris provides a sociological analysis of the sit-ins; William H. Chafe places the first Greensboro, North Carolina, sit-ins within their wider city and state context; David Halberstam writes a collective biography of the influential Nashville group of SNCC students; and Cheryl Greenberg provides a collection of reminiscences by SNCC members on various topics.¹⁷ Raymond Arsenault is currently in the process of completing the first comprehensive history of the Freedom Rides. Studies by Catherine Barnes and Clayborne Carson, as well as autobiographies by James Farmer, John Lewis and James Forman, offer other good starting points. August Meier and Elliott Rudwick provide a history of CORE, which organized the Freedom Rides.¹⁸

¹⁵ Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America*; Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*; Jervis Anderson, *Bayard Rustin: Troubles I've Seen: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Daniel Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000); John D'Emillio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (New York: Free Press, 2003); Joanne Grant, *Ella Baker: Freedom Bound* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1998); Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Carson et al., eds., *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. IV*; Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: Free Press, 1984).

¹⁶ Harris Wofford, *Of Kennedy's and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980); Clifford M. Kuhn, "'There's a Footnote to History!' Memory and the History of Martin Luther King's October 1960 Arrest and Its Aftermath," *Journal of American History* 84 (Sept. 1997), 583–95.

¹⁷ Howard Zinn, *SNCC: The New Abolitionists* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1965); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981); Emily Stoper, *The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee: The Growth of Radicalism in a Civil Rights Organization* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*; Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*; David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998); Cheryl Greenberg, ed., *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).

¹⁸ Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*; Carson, *In Struggle*; Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*; Lewis, *Walking with the Wind*; Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*; August Meier and Elliott Rudwick,

King's 1961–2 participation in the local movement in Albany, Georgia, is widely viewed as a failure, since it did not secure any local gains or elicit federal intervention. The failure has largely been attributed to the shrewd policing of demonstrations by Albany's police chief Laurie Pritchett, who arrested and jailed demonstrators on charges of obstruction rather than seeking a showdown over segregation, and to internal movement divisions between the SCLC, SNCC, the NAACP, and local people. The Albany movement does not have its own dedicated monograph. There is, however, a *Journal of South-West Georgia History* volume containing essays on the movement, including a useful overview by John A. Ricks. Journalist Pat Watters has written two accounts based upon his observations of events. Stephen G. N. Tuck locates the Albany movement within the context of SNCC organizing in southwest Georgia, and within the broader context of the black struggle for freedom and equality within the state.¹⁹

King and the SCLC's 1963 campaign in Birmingham, Alabama, marked a pivotal turning point for King and the civil rights movement. Employing nonviolent direct action tactics, King and the SCLC, in concert with local blacks under the leadership of Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, president of the SCLC-affiliated Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR), organized mass demonstrations. Public Safety Commissioner T. Eugene "Bull" Connor's men clashed with demonstrators, and their use of police dogs and spray from high-powered fire hoses against peaceful protests provoked a national outcry and forced a previously recalcitrant Kennedy administration to intervene. Glenn T. Eskew provides the best existing study of events, looking particularly at the intersection of local and national civil rights movements and the class tensions that existed in Birmingham's black community. J. Mills Thornton locates events within the context of municipal politics and points to Connor's desire to retain political office as a motivating force in his actions. Andrew M. Mannis provides an account of the life and career of fiery local black leader Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth. Dianne McWhorter looks at the role played by the Ku Klux Klan in Birmingham, and Jonathan S. Bass looks at the role played by Birmingham's white clergymen, whose criticism of King's nonviolent direct action tactics prompted

CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942–1968 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹⁹ John A. Ricks, "De Lawd Descends and is Crucified: Martin Luther King, Jr. in Albany, Georgia," *Journal of South-West Georgia History* 2 (Fall 1984), 3–14; Pat Watters and Reese Cleghorn, *Climbing Jacob's Ladder* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1967); Pat Watters, *Down to Now: Reflections on the Southern Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971); Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta*.

King to write his “Letter from Birmingham City Jail,” one of his most eloquent defences of the use of nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience.²⁰

The 1963 March on Washington lacks its own dedicated study. Although King’s “I Have A Dream” speech has come to dominate the popular memory of the march, the event was in fact conceived of by A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin. Randolph had threatened such a march in 1941, but had called it off when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which banned racial discrimination in wartime industry hiring practices and set up the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) to enforce the ban. In late 1962, Randolph resurrected the idea of a “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom” to coincide with the new burst of black activism and the 100th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln’s signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Taylor Branch’s biography of King contains a chapter on the march, as does Drew Hansen’s book on King’s “I Have A Dream” speech. Biographies of A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin look at their crucial organizing roles. The autobiographies of Ralph Abernathy, James Farmer, James Forman, Coretta Scott King, John Lewis, Roy Wilkins and Andrew Young, all touch upon events.²¹

David R. Colburn’s book covers King and the SCLC’s 1964 St. Augustine campaign and makes no bones about its shortcomings. The campaign was run ostensibly to keep the issue of civil rights in the headlines as Congress debated the 1964 Civil Rights Bill. By targeting America’s oldest city in the run up to its quadricentennial celebrations, King and the SCLC sought to symbolically highlight the persistence of racism in the United States. There is little evidence to suggest that the demonstrations made any impact upon Congress (although it did, eventually, pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act). The local white business community did comply with the terms of the act, but

²⁰ Eskew, *But For Birmingham*; Thornton, *Dividing Lines*; Andrew M. Mannis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out: The Civil Right's Life of Birmingham's Fred Shuttlesworth* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Dianne McWhorter, *Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama – The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001); Jonathan S. Bass, *Blessed Are The Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders, and the “Letter from Birmingham City Jail”* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001).

²¹ Branch, *Parting the Waters*; Drew D. Hansen, *The Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Speech that Inspired a Nation* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003); For the Rustin biographies see footnote 15; for the Shuttlesworth biography see footnote 20; for the Whitney Young and A. Philip Randolph biographies, and the autobiographies of Ralph Abernathy, James Farmer, James Forman, Coretta Scott King, John Lewis, Roy Wilkins, and Andrew Young, see footnote 11.

only, pointedly, after King and the SCLC left. As an edited collection of essays by Elizabeth Jacoway and David Colburn notes, white businessmen in St. Augustine, and in many other localities, played a pivotal role in negotiations to end segregation. Many local blacks, Colburn notes in his book on the St. Augustine campaign, felt aggrieved that the campaign had stirred racial violence in the city yet had not addressed many of the core economic issues that affected them. Two studies, one by Charles W. Whalen and Barbara Whalen and the other by Robert D. Loevy, look at the difficulties encountered in Congress over the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Hugh D. Graham locates the act within evolving federal policy on civil rights in the 1960s and early 1970s.²²

King played only a minor role in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer, run under the banner of a coalition of organizations in a Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) that SNCC dominated. King was more prominent in Atlantic City, New Jersey, when the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), formed as part of Freedom Summer, attempted to seat its delegates at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. However, King's refusal to unequivocally back MFDP demands at the convention further widened the gap between himself and SNCC and many Mississippi grassroots activists. The best accounts of the civil rights struggle in Mississippi are studies by John Dittmer and Charles Payne. Of these two, Dittmer has most to say about the MFDP challenge, which is also covered in biographies of MFDP activists Fannie Lou Hamer, Robert Moses, and Ella Baker.²³

²² Colburn, *Racial Change and Community Crisis*; Elizabeth Jacoway and David R. Colburn, eds., *Southern Businessmen and Desegregation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982) (see also the review essay by Tony Badger, "Segregation and the Southern Business Elite," *Journal of American Studies* 18 (April 1984), 105–9); Charles W. Whalen and Barbara Whalen, *The Longest Debate: A Legislative History of the 1964 Civil Rights Act* (Cabin John, MD: Seven Locks Press, 1985); Robert D. Loevy, *To End All Segregation: The Politics of the Passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990); Hugh D. Graham, *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960–1972* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

²³ Dittmer, *Local People*; Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*; Kay Mills, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1994); Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Eric R. Burner, *And Gently Shall He Lead Them: Robert Parris Moses and Civil Rights in Mississippi* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Grant, *Ella Baker*; Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*. Other works on Freedom Summer include a sociological analysis by Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); two studies on the three murdered civil rights workers, William Bradford Huie, *Three Lives For Mississippi* (London: Heineman, 1965), and Seth Cagin and Philip Dray, *We Are Not Afraid: The Story of Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney and the Civil Rights Campaign for Mississippi*

The 1965 Selma campaign and the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act is viewed by many commentators as the pinnacle of King and the SCLC's achievements. In concert with SNCC and local people, King and the SCLC ran a campaign of nonviolent direct action centred upon Selma's attempts to block black voter registration. The campaign culminated in a showdown on Edmund Pettus Bridge when state law enforcement officers broke up a peaceful march with tear gas and billy clubs. The conflict prompted federal intervention by the Johnson administration and generated an unprecedented degree of public sympathy and support. Thousands travelled to the city to join a Selma to Montgomery march that rounded off the campaign. David Garrow provides the most comprehensive analysis of the campaign and its impact on the subsequent passage of the Voting Rights Act. J. Mills Thornton again locates events within the context of developments in local municipal politics. Stephen L. Longencker writes an account of events based upon the journal of a local white clergyman, and Mary Stanton recalls the life and investigates the death of Viola Liuzzo, a white woman murdered by members of the Ku Klux Klan at the end of the Selma to Montgomery march. There are two useful first-hand accounts of the Selma campaign from black participants: J. L. Chestnut, Jr views events from the perspective of a local black attorney, and Sheyann Webb and Rachel West Nelson remember their roles from the perspective of two local black school girls who participated in the campaign. Charles Fager recalls his involvement in Selma as a white SCLC staff member, and Richard D. Leonard provides a memoir of his role as a New York Unitarian Universalist minister who answered King's call for the support of white Northern liberal clergy on the Selma to Montgomery march.²⁴

(New York: Macmillan, 1988); two memoirs by white, northern, female participants in Freedom Summer, Sally Belfrage, *Freedom Summer* (London: Deutsch, 1965), and Mary King, *Freedom Song: A Personal Story of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement* (New York: William Morrow, 1987); two autobiographies by black, female Mississippians, Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1968), and Fannie Lou Hamer, *To Praise Our Bridges: An Autobiography* (Jackson, MS: KIPCO, 1967); and a look at the long-term impact of Freedom Summer in Frank Parker, *Black Votes Count: Political Empowerment in Mississippi after 1965* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

²⁴ David J. Garrow, *Protest at Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Voting Rights Act of 1965* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978); Thornton, *Dividing Lines*; Stephen L. Longencker, *Selma's Peacemaker: Ralph Smeltzer and Civil Rights Mediation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Mary Stanton, *From Selma to Sorrow: The Life and Death of Viola Liuzzo* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998); J. L. Chestnut, Jr., with Julia Cass, *Black in Selma: The Uncommon Life of J. L. Chestnut, Jr.* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991); Sheyann Webb and Rachel West Nelson, *Selma, Lord, Selma: Girlhood Memories of the Civil Rights Days* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1980); Charles Fager, *Selma,*

King and the SCLC's 1965–6 Chicago campaign marked their first sustained engagement with racial discrimination in a Northern city. In a protracted campaign, King and the SCLC attempted to tackle the problems of economic deprivation and *de facto* segregation that blacks faced in the city. The campaign culminated in “open housing” marches through white neighbourhoods that met with violent resistance. This brought Mayor Richard J. Daley and other city officials to the negotiating table where they hammered out a “Summit Agreement” with movement representatives for change in a number of areas. However, when King and the SCLC left Chicago little of the agreement was implemented. James R. Ralph Jr.'s study is the best starting point for an overview of the Chicago campaign. Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering's account is also useful, but somewhat heavy going in its social scientific approach. Mike Royko offers a city newspaper columnist's view on Daley's role in events. Alan Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor's biography of Daley provides a more substantial academic treatment. Stephen Grant Meyer looks at the larger issue of race and housing, which was central to the Chicago campaign; Thomas Sugrue writes on wartime and postwar white resistance to civil rights in northern cities in general; Arnold R. Hirsch writes specifically on issues of race and housing in Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s; and Dan T. Carter places the “white backlash” to civil rights activism in the 1960s within its larger political context.²⁵

In June 1966, just as King and the SCLC were gearing up for “open housing” marches in Chicago, King was sidetracked by his participation in the Meredith March Against Fear. The march initially represented a one-man protest by James Meredith, who had integrated the University of Mississippi

1965: *The March that Changed the South* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974); Richard D. Leonard, *Call to Selma: Eighteen Days of Witness* (Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2002).

²⁵ James R. Ralph, Jr., *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Mike Royko, *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1971); Alan Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor, *American Pharaoh: Mayor Richard J. Daley, His Battle for Chicago and the Nation* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 2000); Stephen Grant Meyer, *As Long As They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000); Thomas Sugrue, “Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940–1964,” *Journal of American History* 82 (Sept. 1995), 551–78; Arnold R. Hirsch, “Massive Resistance in the Urban North: Trumbull Park, Chicago, 1953–1966,” *Journal of American History* 82 (Sept. 1995), 522–50; Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).

at Oxford amid much controversy and violent white resistance in 1962. Meredith set out on a march from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi, to assert his right to free movement in the state. Not long after setting off, he was felled and hospitalized by gunshot wounds. King and other civil rights leaders declared their intent to continue the march. New SNCC chair Stokely Carmichael subsequently used the march to publicize the organization's more radical departure, away from integration to an embrace of black nationalism and separatism and away from nonviolence to an advocacy of armed self-defense. This stance was crystallized in the slogan of "black power," which Carmichael popularized on the march. King's thoughts on the 1966 Meredith March Against Fear and the emergence of black power can be found in chapter two of his 1967 book *Where Do We Go From Here?* Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton give an introduction to what they see as the various meanings of black power. Timothy B. Tyson's study makes the important point that figures like NAACP leader Robert F. Williams in North Carolina predated the emergence of black power in many ways, not least in staunchly advocating black armed self-defense. William L. Van Deburg provides a comprehensive analysis of black power in its broadest dimensions.²⁶

Far fewer studies exist on King's final and more radical years from 1965 to 1968, a fact that has been noted by black activist and academic Vincent Harding. During this period King's focus began to shift from civil rights to human rights, and from desegregation and voting rights to economic issues. King's April 1967 "Beyond Vietnam" speech at the Riverside Church in New York delivered an unequivocal statement against the war after several years of wavering about speaking out on the issue. It marked a final, decisive break with the Johnson administration. The studies of King and the SCLC by Adam Fairclough and David Garrow provide the most extensive discussion on King's stand against the Vietnam War to date. King and the SCLC's planned 1968 Poor People's campaign, which called for an interracial march of the poor on Washington, DC and for mass civil disobedience, is covered in Gerald D. McKnight's study, which highlights the FBI's harassment of King and its attempts to disrupt the march. Joan Turner Biefuss documents the issues and events in the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers' strike, the last community campaign that King was involved in before his assassination.

²⁶ M. L. King, Jr, *Where Do We Go From Here?*; Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in Black America* (New York: Random House, 1967); Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965–1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Michael Honey edits a chapter of oral histories by black Memphis workers involved with the strike, in a book that places that event within the wider context of the intersection of black unionism and civil rights.²⁷

King's assassination has been the subject of much controversy and many conspiracy theories. The official line is that career criminal and known racist James Earl Ray shot and killed King. In 1977–8 the House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that “there is a likelihood” that Ray did not plan the assassination alone. In 1997, King's son, Dexter Scott King, met with Ray and declared that he believed Ray was innocent of the crime. The following year, US Attorney General Janet Reno opened a limited investigation into events without finding evidence of a conspiracy. In December 1999, a Memphis jury awarded the King family token damages of \$100 in a wrongful death lawsuit. The jury concluded that King's death had been the result of a conspiracy. William Bradford Huie, Gerold Frank, and Mark Lane and Dick Gregory were among the first to publish conspiracy theories. William F. Pepper, James Earl Ray's attorney, puts forward the most recent case. Ray wrote his own account of events in a plea of innocence before his death in 1998. Gerald Posner offers one of the most comprehensive reviews of available material. He concludes that the evidence that Ray killed King is compelling.²⁸

David Garrow has edited a number of volumes that have made available primary and hard-to-find secondary sources related to King. Three volumes of collected essays are particularly helpful in gathering together the most important disparate articles on King up until the late 1980s. A collection of

²⁷ Vincent Harding, *Martin Luther King: The Inconvenient Hero* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996); Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America*; Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*; Gerald D. McKnight, *The Last Crusade: Martin Luther King Jr., the FBI, and the Poor People's Campaign* (Denver, CO: Westview Press, 1998); Joan Turner Biefuss, *At the River I Stand: Memphis, the 1968 Strike, and Martin Luther King* (Memphis, TN: B & W Books, 1985); Michael Honey, ed., *Black Workers Remember: An Oral History of Segregation, Unionism and the Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

²⁸ William Bradford Huie, *He Slew the Dreamer: My Search with James Earl Ray for the Truth About the Murder of Martin Luther King* (Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1970); Gerold Frank, *An American Death: The True Story of the Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Greatest Manhunt of Our Time* (London: Hamilton, 1972); Mark Lane and Dick Gregory, *Code Name 'Zorro': The Murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Englewood Cliffs, NY: Prentice Hall, 1977) revised and updated in *Murder in Memphis: The FBI and the Assassination of Martin Luther King* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1993); William F. Pepper, *Orders to Kill: The Truth Behind the Murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1995) revised and updated in *An Act of State: The Execution of Martin Luther King* (London: Verso Books, 2003); James Earl Ray, *Who Killed Martin Luther King, Jr.?: The True Story by the Alleged Assassin* (New York: National Press Books, 1992); Gerald Posner, *Killing the Dream: James Earl Ray and the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Random House, 1998).

articles in the *Journal of American History*, and edited essay collections by Charles W. Eagles, Peter J. Albert and Ronald Hoffman, Brian Ward and Tony Badger, and Lewis Baldwin et al., provide useful additions.²⁹

A number of studies have been written on what might be broadly termed as King's thought and culture. Two central debates have emerged from this work. The first concerns the question of the extent to which King was an original thinker, and the extent to which his ideas were derived from those of others (the debate over King's sermons outlined earlier in this essay forms part of that wider debate). The second, and related debate, concerns the question of the extent to which King was shaped by black Southern Baptist church traditions through his family background, and the extent to which he was shaped by white Northern academic traditions through his time spent studying at Crozer Seminary in Pennsylvania and Boston University. Kenneth L. Smith and Ira G. Zepp, Noel Leo Erskine and Bernice A. King, Luther D. Ivory, and Russell Moldovan look at King's theological ideas. David L. Chappell's study on the role of prophetic religion in the civil rights movement offers an important corollary in this context. John J. Ansbro, James P. Hanigan, William D. Watley, and Greg Moses, look at King's ideas in relation to nonviolence. Sudarshan Kapur locates King's nonviolence within the context of a larger tradition of African American encounters with Gandhism. Hanes Walton and Richard King are both concerned with King's political philosophy, Ervin Smith with King's ethics, and Michael G. Long with King's concept of the state. Lewis Baldwin has written extensively on King's cultural roots and King's cultural legacy.³⁰

²⁹ David J. Garrow, ed., *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Civil Rights Leader, Theologian, Orator, Three Volumes* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); David J. Garrow, ed., *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955–1956* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); David J. Garrow, ed., *Birmingham, Alabama, 1956–1963: The Black Struggle For Civil Rights* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); David J. Garrow, ed., *Atlanta, Georgia, 1960–1961: Sit-Ins and Student Activism* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); David J. Garrow, ed., *St. Augustine, Florida, 1963–1964: Mass Protest and Racial Violence* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); David J. Garrow, ed., *Chicago 1966: Open Housing Marches, Summit Negotiations, and Operation Breadbasket* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1989); "A Round Table: Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Journal of American History* 74 (Sept. 1987), 436–81; Charles W. Eagles, ed., *The Civil Rights Movement in America* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986); Peter J. Albert and Ronald Hoffman, eds., *We Shall Overcome: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Black Freedom Struggle* (New York: Pantheon, 1990); Brian Ward and Tony Badger, eds., *The Making of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement* (London: Macmillan, 1996); Lewis V. Baldwin with Rufus Burrow, Jr, Barbara A. Holmes and Susan Holmes Winfield, eds., *The Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Boundaries of Law, Politics, and Religion* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

³⁰ Kenneth L. Smith and Ira G. Zepp, *Search for the Beloved Community: The Thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986); Noel Leo Erskine and

King has inspired a number of comparisons with other figures from the more plausible, such as Malcolm X, to the less likely, such as Gautama the Buddha.³¹ Surprisingly little has been written about King, the movement and the media. Richard Lentz offers a start, focusing on the print media, and Brian Ward has edited a suggestive collection of essays on where such studies might go in the future.³² Presidential perspectives on King and the civil rights movement can be found in studies by James C. Durham and Robert F. Burk on Eisenhower; Carl M. Brauer on Kennedy; Mark Stern, and Jonathan Rosenberg and Zachary Karabell, on Kennedy and Johnson; Robert Mann

Bernice A. King, *King Among Theologians* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1995); Luther D. Ivory, *Toward a Theology of Radical Involvement: The Theological Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997); Russell Moldovan, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: An Oral History of his Religious Witness and his Life* (Lanham, MD: International Scholars, 1999); David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); John J. Ansbro, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Making of a Mind* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), reprinted as *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Nonviolent Strategies and Tactics for Social Change* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 2000); James P. Hanigan, *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Foundations of Nonviolence* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984); William D. Watley, *Roots of Resistance: The Nonviolent Ethic of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1985); Greg Moses, *Revolution of Conscience: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Philosophy of Nonviolence* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997); Sudarshan Kapur, *Raising Up a Prophet: the African American Encounter with Gandhi* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992); Hanes Walton, *The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Newport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972); R. H. King, *Civil Rights and the Idea of Freedom* (M. L. King, Jr. is covered in chapters four and five); Ervin Smith, *The Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1981); Michael G. Long, *Against Us, But For Us: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the State* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002); Baldwin, *There is a Balm in Gilead*; Lewis V. Baldwin, *To Make the Wounded Whole: The Cultural Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortram Press, 1992).

³¹ James H. Cone, *Martin, Malcolm and America: A Dream or Nightmare?* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); Allan Aubrey Boesak, *Coming In Out of the Wilderness: A Comparative Interpretation of the Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X* (Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok, 1976); Larry L. MacOn, *The Religious Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr. & Malcolm X* (Euclid, OH: Lakeshore Communications, 2000); Peter J. Paris, *Black Leaders in Conflict: Joseph H. Jackson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1978); Julius R. Scruggs, *Baptist Preachers with Social Consciousness: A Comparative Study of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Harry Emerson Fosdick* (Philadelphia: Dorrance Books, 1978); Walter E. Fluker, *They Looked for a City: a Comparative Analysis of the Ideal of Community in the Thought of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989); Mary King, *Mabatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Power of Nonviolent Direct Action* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1999); A. L. Herman, *Community, Violence, and Peace: Aldo Leopold, Mobandas K. Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gautama the Buddha in the Twenty-First Century* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

³² Richard Lentz, *Symbols, the News Magazines and Martin Luther King* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990); Brian Ward, ed., *Media, Culture and the Modern African American Freedom Struggle* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

on Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey; Dean J. Kotlowksi on Nixon; and Kenneth O'Reilly on presidents from George Washington to William Jefferson Clinton.³³

Despite the attention given to Martin Luther King, Jr. and the SCLC by historians of the civil rights movement, a number of gaps remain. Many key advisors to King and influential members of the SCLC such as Stanley Levison, James Bevel, Wyatt Tee Walker, James M. Lawson and Dorothy Cotton, still lack dedicated studies. Critical campaigns, such as Albany (1962) and the March on Washington (1963), have yet to be scrutinized in any great depth or detail. Although recent works have gone some way in correcting the neglect of King's later years from 1965–8, there is still too little thorough investigation of them and in particular of King's stance on the Vietnam War and the issues surrounding the Poor People's campaign. King's formative years after the Montgomery bus boycott from 1957 to 1959 also remain relatively overlooked. Most studies of King's thought and culture have tended to focus quite narrowly upon the questions of the originality of King's thought and the roots of King's influences. Far fewer studies have expanded upon King's ideas, influences and tactics, and located them within the wider context of the civil rights movement. Themes such as the role of religion, the use of nonviolence, and the impact of the media, are the most obvious fertile ground for further study. Thus, as movement scholarship continues to expand beyond the scope of King, and to chart new territory in the history of the struggle for black freedom and equality, there are still plenty of areas in our existing knowledge and understanding of King and his role in the civil rights movement that yet remain to be filled.

³³ James C. Durham, *A Moderate Amongst Extremists: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the School Desegregation Crisis* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981); Robert F. Burk, *The Eisenhower Administration and Black Civil Rights* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984); Carl M. Brauer, *John F. Kennedy and the Second Reconstruction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Mark Stern, *Calculating Visions: Kennedy, Johnson and Civil Rights* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987); Jonathan Rosenberg and Zachary Karabell, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Quest For Justice: The Civil Rights Tapes* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003); Robert Mann, *The Walls of Jericho: Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey and the Struggle For Civil Rights* (New York: Harcourt, 1996); Dean J. Kotlowksi, *Nixon's Civil Rights: Politics, Principle and Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Kenneth O'Reilly, *Nixon's Piano: Presidents and Racial Politics from Washington to Clinton* (New York: Free Press, 1995).