

SNCC West Coast Regional Conference....Sunday Workshop....Nov. 13th-15th  
Graduate Students and Researchers

Possibilities for initiating research related to the civil rights movement.

A. The research bureau department of the Atlanta Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee should be stimulated and encouraged to become a bank and a clearing house for all studies relating to the problems of the Negro in both the North and the South. It could coordinate and make available research done in this area at universities, by independent organizations (such as association for the study of Negro life and History in Washington, D. C.)

B. Friends of SNCC Groups should set up their own research bureaus which would compile studies made in their respective communities and tap and distribute the resources of the central bureau.

C. Committed students on all levels must press for the creation of courses on all aspects of Negro History in their respective institutions. In the state of California the state and Junior colleges (Oakland City College, San Jose State) seem to be further advanced in this direction than other colleges and universities.

D. Extensive negro bibliographies must be compiled and distributed to public libraries, all school libraries, Freedom Schools. The American Council of Learned Societies has on microfilm all negro newspapers since the early 19th century.

E. Libraries must be encouraged to build their Negro History collections.

F. Students must push for opening up possibilities to do undergraduate and graduate work in all areas of Negro History and Contemporary Negro Problems which are in any way relevant to their courses. This work can be used subsequently by them and by the Civil Rights Movement. Money must be made available to take advantage of Negro Research Facilities in the East. (Harvard U., Howard U.).

II. Examples of and suggestions for specific types of research in various fields:

A. Examples of two directly effective studies....

1. Report on The Negro in American History Textbooks: a panel of professors from the University of California reviewed texts and issued this report based on their work to the Department of Education at Sacramento. The Department of Education adopted the report which was then circulated at the expense of the state to principals, guidance people, other school administrators. An advisory board of these same professors was constituted to review texts and make recommendations to publishers.

2. Report on The San Francisco Civil Rights Trials was compiled by a group of university students on the basis of legal historical research and comparative contemporary studies. They found the sentences handed down in the San Francisco Civil Rights Trials to be worse than those handed down in the South or in New York. This report was circulated to state and City politicians (among them Mayor Shelley) and to Religious groups in the Bay Area. Partly as a result of the impact of the report the trials were stopped.

B. Suggestions for further specific research:

1. Research on contemporary society

a. research to be used as a weapon in direct action. Floyd Hunter's book on Community Power Structure (see attached bibliography) is an example of a type of study needed as the basis for specific action. Pragmatic questions should be posed. Particular problems (such as the Civil Rights Trials) should be focused on. The facts gathered must be incorporated into some sort of tactical framework.

- b. Research to be used as a tool for self-analysis: focus on the Civil Rights Movement. What is the nature of the relations between Civil Rights leaders and community leaders? What is the organizational structure of various civil rights groups? Are tactics transplanted from the south to the north valid? What should be the present direction of the movement (more political?). How can goals be maintained without compromise within a new thrust?
- c. Programmatic Aid Research: seek to understand the community in which you want to work. Who are leaders etc.? The civil rights movement does not want to be considered an outsider.

2. Areas for Historical Research

- a. Role and importance of the 19th century: Persistent images and myths (such as "The dark days of reconstruction when the negroes were given responsibility") must be analyzed and revised in light of new material. The coincidence of further suppression of the negro and territorial expansion could be studied. Also, the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1875.
- b. Historical Research in the period after 1890 has been overlooked. The relevance of the Populist Movement to contemporary civil rights problems is one important field.
- c. The relation of African History to Negro History must be developed.

3. The field of literature should be explored. The Negro Author by Vernon Loggins is an excellent base study.

RESEARCH OF THE SORT DESCRIBED IS IMPORTANT TO ALL ASPECTS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.