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### Directing "The Dream Continues: The History of the Civil Rights Movement A Readers Theatre Oral History Play

Daniel Parker

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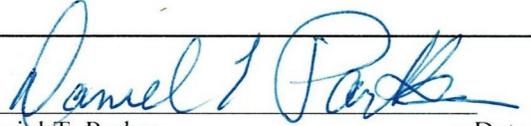
Directing The Dream  
Continues:  
The History of the Civil  
Rights Movement Readers  
Theatre Oral History Play

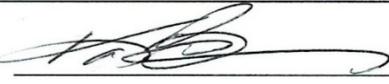
By

Daniel Timothy Parker

An Undergraduate Thesis Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the  
Midway Honors Scholars Program Honors College

And the  
Theatre and Dance  
Department College  
of Arts and Sciences

  
Daniel T. Parker Date  
3-10-23

  
Prof. Karen Brewster, Reader Date  
3-7-23

  
Prof. Robert Funk, Thesis mentor Date  
3-7-23



This project is about my directing a Readers Theatre play about the Civil Rights Movement. It covers the period from 1619 to the present. The script is written by Professor Bobby Funk of the Theatre and Dance Department of ETSU. I have only been in several plays and that as an actor. This will be first my first experience as a director. As this is my first time, I will endeavor to relate an exact as possible account of this experience. I will in my first chapter tell you about the play, the characters, and my research in preparing for the project. I have kept a journal of the things that occurred during the audition process and rehearsals. Finally, I will report on the culmination of all these steps, what worked and what did not.

## **Chapter 1**

The Dream Continues is a Readers play in two acts. It opens with the Negro blues song “I Been Buked, and I Been Scorned.” Music does not accompany every tableau but is brilliantly interwoven throughout the play highlighting and underlining the emotion of the piece. The readers take their places on stage. There are five men, Three black and two white. There are four women, three black and one white. These actors play one hundred and thirty-nine characters. The play begins with narration on how long racism and the color line has been a problem in the United State of America. It tells about slavery from its inception in 1619 when the first slave ship arrived in Jamestown. It tells of slavery’s effects on the African people upon which it was perpetrated. Through narration and the actual words of the people that were there, it takes it to its end with the passing of the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment and June 19, 1865. The play then documents the mistreatment of the American Black people, upon whose backs this country’s economy was

built, through the two world wars and Jim Crow. The first act end with the murder of Medgar Evers. The second act deals with desegregation on buses and lunch counters. It talks about the March on Washington D.C. and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church. It talks of the death of Martin Luther King, and up until the present day. It does not cover every major event the restraints of time prevent this. Through the words of one hundred and thirty-nine characters, the civil rights story is told. These characters are portrayed by nine actors, five men, and four women throughout pivotal scenes that highlight the Civil rights Movement.

## **Chapter 2**

I believe in the process of mounting a show, whether for the stage or for the screen, as the director, my mission is to develop the vision for the piece. In executing that vision, I am responsible for auditioning actors and hiring the team that will, under my direction, bring that vision to fruition. The director must create an atmosphere that will allow the actor through rehearsals to bring to the stage a performance that will accurately communicate an author's work. He will oversee and organize the designs for costumes, props, staging, technical elements, and music. He is the person who draws those disparate parts of the production together into a unified whole. The director reads the script and works with the author, when necessary, to insure the clarity of the message. His job is to bring to life what the writer is trying to say in his work. Some writers will only work with certain directors because they know that particular director understands their work. As a director, you must choose where the audience directs their attention by determining what works best to create the dramatic and emotional arc of the play.

Now in conventional theatre, which is representational, we have sets, props, staging, and a plot to represent the story. It flows chronologically. You can see it. In Readers Theatre things

work a bit differently. There are no sets, minimal to no props, and very little blocking. It is a staged, presentational art form, where two or more oral readers interpret a work by employing vocal and limited physical movement to make all kinds of literature live vividly in the audience's imagination, rather than literally on the stage. It is my job as the director to draw from my actors an interpretation that will elicit from the audience an empathic response. We are looking to capture the imagination of the audience, touch their hearts and enable them to relate to the material with the result being a satisfying and exciting creative partnership between the audience, the actors, and the author. We want to stimulate the creative ability to form a mental image of something neither present to the senses nor wholly perceived in reality. It is like when you are reading a book and, in your mind, you can see what is being described, the words paint the picture.

I had never heard of Readers Theater, although, I had certainly participated in readings of plays. In New York, an author might present a reading of their play so that a backer might express an interest in it. Another reason is that they might hear how their words sound coming out of actors to determine whether or not they sounded natural or awkward. Also, the first rehearsal might be a read-through. I was unaware that it is a type of theatre art form, except for references from ancient history. Historically, Readers Theater can be traced back to the first theater in Greece. The "rhapsodes" recited Homer's epics. Through medieval times in Germany, a group of sisters read the Nun Hrosvitha's Comedies aloud. In my research, I learned that Readers Theatre today started in the 1950s. In its current upsurge in popularity, it has its own identity and energy. I found examples of Readers Theater on the internet (YouTube). I realized that there is no one way to perform Readers Theater. The only limitation is the imagination of the director. There is no formula. Many kinds of literature may

be used - poetry, novels, short stories, plays, letters, etc. It is a flexible, malleable art form which can be performed standing, sitting, with or without scenery, in the theater, or a park. It is my job as the director to experiment to discover how to best communicate a script effectively. Every script is different and demands the director's interpretation to put forth the writer's purpose. The material will shape the method. One of the key ingredients is energy. We must remember that it is the readers that must excite the imagination to supply what can't be seen such as scenery and location. The passion and drama, the pathos of what is written on the page, must be related to the audience. We are talking about theatre, so, there must be theatrical effectiveness to what we do. We're asking people to see in their mind's eye something notable, unusual, exciting, and stimulating. I want the audience to become so enthralled with what they hear that they will forget they are being read to.

*“Think when we talk of horses, that you see them  
 Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth;  
 For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,  
 Carry them here and there; jumping o'er times,”*

(Shakespeare, Henry V, Act I, Prologue)

The portion of the prologue I just quoted is from Shakespeare's "Henry V". Though the play is representational, the narrator is asking the audience to accept what will be presented as actual, even though the stage is a much smaller venue than where the action originally took place. In Readers Theatre we're asking the audience to exercise and expand their imaginations to encompass what is being presented in words. The performance space is neutral. Rather than a localized place it's acoustical because it doesn't represent an actual time or place. There is no fourth wall. Characters do not speak to one another. If a speech is directed towards another character, the character exists in an imaginary space. This is called the mirror technique.

*“It is as though there is a large mirror out front, and in this mirror, you not only see the scene you are playing, but you respond as if you were seeing yourself and the other characters. At first it may seem difficult not to look at the person next to you when you are speaking lines. But, with rehearsal, the mirror convention becomes easier. Sometimes this technique is used in real life when shopping for clothes. We look at ourselves in the mirror and respond to the reflection of the clerk who answers our questions by looking not at us but at our reflection.”*

(Tanner, Readers Theatre Fundamentals pg. 14,).

There are occasions when a reader will speak directly to the audience. It is still presentational, more like narration rather than dialogue. In Readers Theater we must become adept at the art of suggestion. Subtlety is essential. We don't want to beat the audience over the head or force-feed the audience's emotions. We want to color our words with emotion and meaning that will lead the audience to see the reality and drama of the situation. We must choose our physical movements carefully, symbolizing them rather than acting them out. There is a subtleness that makes Readers Theatre rich.

*"A combination of three ingredients: literature, the source of the passion, effective performances by actor/readers and a participating audience, each possessing interacting properties."*

(Coger/White, Readers Theatre Handbook pg. 6).

Interaction is important and to be effective, the literature which is read cannot just be read. It must be personified and energized!

When Professor Funk asked me to direct his play, I thought he was joking. He was my director in “Bright Star.” I would ask questions, “why are we doing this or that?” “Have you thought about doing it this way?” I thought to myself you ran your mouth too much. Now he wants to see if you can do the job. I was not trying to be a nuisance. I was really interested in the process. One class I wanted to take was Bobby Funk’s directing class. Since I was unable to do so, I wanted to take advantage of every moment watching him direct this show. I met with my department head, Professor Karen Brewster, to determine the course load for my

final semester, those core classes which would complete the degree requirements. We realized an extra class would be needed. She said she would talk to Bobby Funk. He proposed the idea of directing his play as an independent study. After some discussion, I read the play. The play about the Civil Rights Movement was a tough read. There were parts that were heartbreaking and brought me to tears. I asked myself why do I want to direct this play? Why be involved in this project? First was the matter of education. I was amazed that I did not know seventy-five percent of the characters or situations the playwright was depicting. This knowledge had to get out there. So, I said yes to the project. I started to research some of the people that were portrayed in the body of the play. Professor Funk helped me in that he had done a great deal of research in writing the play. A couple of weeks later I was talking with him about my thesis paper, and the trouble I was having with it. He spoke to me about the possibility of making my independent study the subject of my honor thesis. I approached the administrators of the Honor College and the chair of the Theatre and Dance department. They both approved the new subject if all parties agreed. I talked to Professor Fugate, my mentor, and he agreed to let me make the change. It was a go!

I have continued to research the events that occurred discovering heroes that were not included in the script. This story is deeper than could ever be imagined. I was seriously under-educated about racism in the United States and how interwoven it is in the fabric of this country's history. It is a fact that little, to none of it, is taught in our schools. So much so that as I left the security of my rather mixed Bronx neighborhood, I was totally unprepared for the racist society I encountered. I was naïve and had no idea how to handle it. This play is a real education and a teaching tool for me.

Because I was so ignorant about the movement, I only knew what I saw on the news, I wanted to make certain I was equipped to direct the actors in giving an accurate portrayal of these men and women and how their sacrifice affected them, their families, and this cause. These people were wounded, crippled, and even killed, trying to secure civil and human rights for me. I had to know who they are.

As stated before, there are one hundred and thirty-nine characters in this play spread out between nine actors, five men, and four women. There are four or five storylines that run three and four pages long and several minor storylines as well. The challenge for me was to bring the nine actors and these one hundred and thirty-nine characters, and their storylines into a homogeneous life. My challenge as a director is to guide them in this. These are characters from every walk of life. Men and women who put their lives on the line for your rights and mine, both civil and human. Whether they were black, white, red, or yellow and all the hues in between, some died so that we all can be free.

### **Chapter 3. Research**

Once the decision was made to direct the play, I began to look up everything I could think of to try and put myself in the mind of the Civil Rights Movement. Growing up in the fifties/sixties I pretty much depended on the news to give me information about the movement. Needless to say, I was not politically inclined. In my house, we never talked about Civil Rights except to acknowledge that blacks very often got the short end of the stick. It was said in our household that things were getting better slowly, very, very slowly. In school there was no such thing as black studies. Everything was approached from the standpoint of white supremacy. I

even remember a teacher telling us that slaves were content to stay on with their masters after they were freed. I rejected that poison, but it was the omissions that were the most damaging.

So, I began to try to absorb everything I could to bring myself up to speed. There was the story of the “New Orleans’s Four”, four little girls who were picked to desegregate the elementary schools and what they had to suffer. There was the story of Fanny Lou Hamer who underwent forced sterilization. In her quest to be allowed to vote, she was kicked off her land, shot at, jailed, and beaten. A real eye-opener, and wonderful teaching tool, is the documentary “Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America” by Jeffrey Robinson. I also closely examined the situations in the script and listened to available recordings of the characters the actors would be portraying. Originally, I wanted to take time and coach each actor on how to mimic their character. But, by the time we got a cast together, there was no time to do that. Looking back, I am quite sure that was a good thing. In going over the character bios I added some things I thought were significant and deleted things I thought were not. At first, I was only going to include the characters I did not know. However, I decided to include everyone paying more attention to those who might not be as famous.

## **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY MAN #1**

**Harry S. Truman:** was the 33rd president of the United States from 1945 to 1953.

**Orval Faubus:** served as the 36th Governor of Arkansas from 1955 to 1967. In 1957, he refused to comply with a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of the United States

**Craig Raines:** was a former Little Rock Central High School student. As a student, he was the president of the student council.

**Eugene Smith:** was the Little Rock assistant police chief. On September 23, 1957, Smith and his policemen battled over a thousand angry white citizens, as they attacked both black and white reporters and threatened the "Little Rock Nine."

**Floyd Mann:** was director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety from 1959-1963. Best known for his interactions with the Freedom Riders who passed through Alabama in May 1961. He was credited for saving the life of Freedom Rider James Zwerg.

**Bernie Schweid:** founded an interracial chapter of the American Veterans Committee. During the early 1960's Schweid, co-owner of Mills Book Stores was one of the few white businessmen in downtown Nashville who spoke publicly against segregation and supported sit-in participants.

**Bull Connor:** served as Commissioner of Public Safety for the city of Birmingham, Alabama for more than two decades. He strongly opposed the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. Connor had responsibility for administrative oversight of the Birmingham Fire Department and the Birmingham Police Department. Bull Connor enforced legal racial segregation and denied civil rights to black citizens.

**James Blake:** was the bus driver who had the confrontation with Rosa Parks.

**George C. Wallace:** was the 45th governor of Alabama, and served for four terms. Wallace opposed desegregation and supported the policies of "Jim Crow" during the Civil Rights Movement,"

**John F. Kennedy:** was the 35th President of the United States. On June 11, 1963, Kennedy gave his famous Report to the American People on Civil Rights on national television and radio, launching his initiative for civil rights legislation—to provide equal access to public schools and other facilities, and greater protection of voting rights.

**Joseph Ellwanger:** was Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Birmingham, Alabama 1958-1967. Ellwanger recruited students and clergy to take part in the march for voting rights from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery.

**Richard Valeriani:** was a Correspondent for NBC News. Richard covered the Civil Rights Movement for the network and was seriously injured when hit in the head with an ax handle at a demonstration in Marion, Alabama, in 1965.

**Major John Cloud:** who was a member of the Alabama State Troopers ordered his troopers and local police to advance on the civil rights demonstrators on the Edmund Pettis Bridge, in Selma, AL.

**President Lyndon B. Johnson:** was the 36th president of the United States. Signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the most comprehensive Civil Rights legislation since the Reconstruction Era.

**David Vann:** was Clerk to the United States Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black. In 1963 Vann, a lawyer in Birmingham helped organize a referendum that changed Birmingham's form of government from a three-member commission to a mayor and nine-member council. Vann served as a special assistant to Birmingham mayor Albert Boutwell.

**Bob Zellner:** was an American Civil Rights activist. He was arrested and severely beaten for his activism several times. Zellner became a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) as

its first white field secretary in 1961. Zellner participated in numerous civil rights efforts, including nonviolence workshops, and organizing Freedom Schools. In 1964 during Freedom summer he with Rita Schwerner investigated the murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. He left SNCC in 1966 but continued his Civil Rights activism.

## CHARACTERS PLAYED BY MAN #2

**Mr. Brown:** His first is name unknown. His quote was taken from slave narratives collected through the Federal Writer's Project

**Booker T. Washington:** was a writer, educator, orator, and leader in the African American community. Washington was a key proponent of African American businesses and one of the founders of the National Negro Business League. He was the principal developer and first president of the Tuskegee Institute, Normal and Industrial Institute, in Tuskegee, Alabama, between 1865 and 1915.

**Richard R. Wright:** founded the Georgia State Industrial College for Colored Youth in Savannah, Georgia. In 1896 he was a founding member of the American Negro Academy, the leading organization of African American intellectuals at that time. In 1898 he was commissioned a major in the U.S. Army and appointed the first African American paymaster of the United States Volunteers in the U.S. Army, by President William McKinley. Richard R. Wright was the highest-ranking African-American officer during the Spanish-American War.

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:** Was the United States' most prominent leader in the 20th-century struggle for Civil Rights. As a leader in the NAACP, he helped create the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Launched a non-violent protest movement that spread across the United States.

**James Lawson:** is an American activist born September 22, 1928. He is a university professor and a leading theoretician and tactician of nonviolence within the Civil Rights Movement. He served during the 1960s as a mentor to the Nashville Student Movement and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

**Leo Lillard:** 1939-2020 was a Civil Rights leader who took part in the Nashville sit-ins and then became a Freedom Rider.

**Jack Young:** born in March 1908 was a distinguished self-taught Civil Rights attorney. He lived in Jackson, Mississippi with his wife, Aurelia. Young participated in defending more than three hundred Freedom riders and became a point man in Civil Rights legal battles.

**Jim Bevel:** (1936-2008) was a minister and a leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. He initiated the Children's Crusade in Birmingham in 1963. He served as the Director of Direct Action and Nonviolent Education of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference from 1960-1961.

**Albert Turner:** (1936-2000) was an American Civil Rights activist, and advisor to Martin Luther King Jr., the Alabama field secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Helped lead the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery. Was savagely beaten on Bloody Sunday.

**Frederick Reese:** (1929-2018) was an American Civil Rights activist, educator, and minister from Selma, Alabama. Known as a member of Selma's "Courageous Eight"; was the president of the Dallas County Voters League (DCVL)

**Nelson Malden:** is an African American Business entrepreneur He was Martin Luther King's barber from 1954 to 1960. He wrote "the Colored Waiting Room: Empowering the Original and the New Civil Rights Movements," along with Kevin Shird.

**Dave Dennis:** is a civil rights activist born in Omega, LA in 1940. He worked as Co-director of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), director of Mississippi's Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and one of the organizers of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964.

**Ivanhoe Donaldson:** (1941-2016) worked for SNCC as an organizer and held leadership positions within the organization. He Collected food in Michigan and Kentucky and transported it to Mississippi to help disenfranchised sharecroppers and tenant farmers who attempted to register to vote. Donaldson became one of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference organizers in Selma, Alabama.

**Ken Howard:** was a D.C. student working a summer job at the post office before entering Howard University who took part in the March on Washington.

**Pastor James Thompson:** was Pastor at the Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church on Bull Street, Charleston, SC. His wife, Myra Thompson, was among the nine victims killed in 2015 by a white supremacist in Emanuel AME Church. Quote: "to choose forgiveness is to choose love — love for our lives, morals, and of the love of God."

**Dick Gregory:** (1932-2017) was a pioneering American comedian, Civil Rights leader, and vegetarian activist. His writings were best sellers. Gregory, at the forefront of political activism in the 1960s, protested the Vietnam War and racial injustice. He was arrested multiple times and went on many hunger strikes.

**Fate Morris** is the brother of Cynthia Diane Morris, aka Cynthia D. Wesley, who was killed in the bombing at the 16th Street Baptist Church.

**Aaron Dixon:** born in 1949, marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to end housing discrimination in Seattle and was one of the first volunteers to participate in the busing program to integrate schools. King's assassination propelled him toward the Black Power Movement. While a member of the Black Panthers, Dixon started the Free Breakfast for Children program that fed thousands of African American children. He helped to open a free community medical and legal clinic which continues to this day as the Carolyn Downs Family Medical Center. After leaving the Panthers, Dixon worked for several non-profit organizations, focusing on drug and gang violence, and working with homeless youth.

**James Lawson:** born in 1928 is an American activist and university professor. He was a leading theoretician and tactician of nonviolence within the Civil Rights Movement. During the 1960s, he served as a mentor to the Nashville Student Movement and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Was expelled from Vanderbilt University for his Civil Rights activism in 1960. Later served as a pastor in Los Angeles for 25 years.

**Harold Jackson:** Grew up in Birmingham, Alabama. He was the editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer's editorial page. Jackson has also been an editorial writer at The Baltimore Sun and The Birmingham News. While at the News, he and two colleagues won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 1991 for a series on the inequalities of Alabama's tax system. He also worked for United Press International and the Birmingham Post-Herald.

**Julian Bond:** born in 1940 was an American social activist and a leader of the Civil Rights Movement. He was a protester, a politician, a professor, and a writer. He helped establish the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). In 1971, and helped found the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama. He served as its first president for nearly a decade. Bond was elected to serve four terms in the Georgia House of Representatives and was later elected to serve six terms in the Georgia State Senate, serving a total of twenty years in both legislative chambers. When Bond retired from the Georgia senate, he had been elected to office more times than any other Black Georgian. Following his career in the legislature, he was a professor of history at the University of Virginia from 1990 to 2012. From 1998 to 2010, he was chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He died on August 15, 2015

**Andrew Young:** born in 1932 is an American politician, diplomat, and activist. He began his career as a Pastor of a church in Marion, AL. Young was an early leader in the Civil Rights Movement, serving as executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1961 and a close confidant to Martin Luther King Jr. Young later became active in politics, serving as a U.S. Congressman from Georgia, United States Ambassador to the UN in the Carter Administration, and 55th Mayor of Atlanta.

**Jethro English:** born in Buttermilk Bottom both at home and in the community was a respected storyteller, who could spin tales steeped in history about two things he knew remarkably well - Ebenezer Baptist and the King family. He met his future wife at a church choir rehearsal. Auretha and Jethro were married by the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr.

**President Barak Obama:** the 44th president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. He was the first African American president of the United States.

### **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY MAN #3:**

**President Dwight D. Eisenhower:** (1890-1969) born in Texas was a distinguished American military 5-star general and a statesman. He served as the 34th president of the United States from 1953 to 1961. He

signed the Civil Rights Act of 1957 and sent Army troops to enforce federal court orders which integrated schools in Little Rock, Arkansas.

**Mayor W.A. Gayle:** American politician, soldier, and author. He was the mayor of Montgomery, Alabama from 1951 to 1959. The Montgomery Bus Boycott occurred during his term as mayor from 1955 to 1956. He was named the defendant of the Browder v. Gayle federal court case that ended the boycott and racial segregation on the buses in Montgomery.

**Mayor Ben West:** was Mayor of Nashville and Tennessee state senator from 1949 to 1951. He supported a change from at-large to single-member district voting to the Nashville City Council. This allowed the African-American minority to elect candidates of their choice. During the sit-in demonstrations of 1960, 2500 protesters marched to city hall and challenged West to take a stand against segregation. West appointed a biracial commission, and the Nashville business community quickly agreed to desegregate department store lunch counters. Nashville was the first southern city to desegregate public facilities.

**James Peck:** (1914-1993) was an American activist. He was a radical pacifist, trade union proponent, and Civil Rights hero. He participated in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, The March on Washington. Peck helped the Montgomery Improvement Association raise funds by sending the group matchbooks bearing slogans and was the only participant in the original Journey of Reconciliation to join the Freedom Rides in 1961. When the bus he was riding on arrived in Birmingham, Alabama, he was knocked unconscious and suffered a gash that required 53 stitches to close.

**John Seigenthaler:** (1927-2014) was an American journalist, writer, and political figure. He was known as a prominent defender of First Amendment rights. During the Freedom Rides of 1961, Seigenthaler was sent in his capacity as special assistant to the Deputy Attorney General for Civil Rights, John Doar. Seigenthaler was chief negotiator for the government in its attempts to work with Alabama Governor John Malcolm Patterson. After several days of refusing to return calls, Patterson finally agreed to protect the Riders, but their state trooper escort disappeared as soon as they arrived in Montgomery on May 20, 1961, leaving them unprotected before the waiting white mob.

**John Doar:** (1921-2014) was an American lawyer and senior counsel with the law firm Doar Rieck Kaley & Mack in New York City. During the administrations of presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, he served first as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and then as head of the division from 1965 until 1967. He led the government's response to events such as the admission and protection of James Meredith, the first black student admitted to the University of Mississippi, as well as the evolving response to the civil rights movement promoting integration and voter registration in the South. Doar served as Deputy Assistant and then Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the U.S. Dept. of Justice from 1960 to 1967, during which time he was involved in several of the most significant events of the American Civil Rights movement. In 1961 he operated in Montgomery, Alabama along with his assistant, John Seigenthaler, to protect the Freedom Riders. In 1962, he confronted Ross Barnett over Barnett's attempts to prevent James Meredith from entering the segregated University of Mississippi. He also prosecuted Collie Leroy Wilkins for Federal Civil Rights violations in the murder of Viola Liuzzo, gaining conviction by an all-white jury in Alabama. In 1963, he calmed an angry mob after the assassination of Civil Rights leader Medgar Evers, murdered outside his home. Doar prosecuted the

federal case for Civil Rights violations against the people who were accused of murdering Andrew Goodman, James Chaney, and Michael Schwerner, young Civil Rights workers in Mississippi. He had earlier contributed to drafting the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which Lyndon Johnson signed to try to enforce constitutional rights for all citizens. In March 1965, Doar was the first to arrive in Montgomery, Alabama during the third of the Selma to Montgomery marches. He walked into Montgomery half a block ahead of the march in his capacity as Assistant Attorney General. In 1912 he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

**Burke Marshall:** (1922-2003) was an American lawyer and the head of the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice during the Civil Rights Movement. Marshall was a significant contributor to many advances in Civil Rights. In 1961, segregation on interstate travel was banned. The following year the University of Mississippi was forced to admit James Meredith, a well-qualified black student. Marshall and the Attorney General persuaded President Kennedy to enforce the order using federal troops. Marshall also ran a campaign to increase voter registration by blacks. Within two years of coming into office, he had launched 42 federal lawsuits against states to reform their electoral legislation. Marshall's focus was on results. He argued to not use the Fourteenth Amendment to overcome discrimination, instead favoring the federal government's constitutional power to regulate interstate commerce. As that power was reserved for the government, states had few legal options of recourse. Marshall used it as a basis to write the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination in public facilities, in government, and employment. Marshall's reputation was that of a hands-on negotiator who dealt with many of the major figures across the Civil Rights Movement, ranging from Martin Luther King Jr. to Alabama Governor George Wallace. Marshall resigned from his office in December 1964. President Lyndon B. Johnson wrote on Marshall's formal letter of resignation, "I have never known any person who rendered a better quality of public service."

**Barry Rosenberg:** is a longtime activist who fought for Civil Rights and Environmental protections, as well as other causes.

**Howell Raines:** was born in Birmingham, Alabama, earned a bachelor's degree from Birmingham-Southern College in 1964 and a master's degree in English from the University of Alabama in 1973. In September 1964, Raines began his newspaper career as a reporter for the Birmingham Post-Herald in Alabama. He also reported for WBRC-TV in Birmingham. After a year as a reporter at the Birmingham News, Raines was selected to be the political editor of the Atlanta Constitution in 1971. In 1976 he left that post to become political editor at the St. Petersburg Times.

**Sheriff Jim Clark:** was the sheriff of Dallas County, Alabama from 1955 to 1966. He was one of the officials responsible for the violent arrests of Civil Rights protestors during the Selma to Montgomery marches of 1965. Clark is remembered as a racist whose brutal tactics included using cattle prods against unarmed Civil Rights supporters. As sheriff of Dallas County, Clark vocally opposed racial integration, wearing a button reading "Never". He wore military-style clothing and carried a cattle prod in addition to his pistol and club. In response to the voting drive, Clark recruited a horse-mounted posse of Ku Klux Klan members and supporters. Together with the highway patrolmen of Albert J. Lingo, the posse was intended to "operate ... as a mobile anti-civil rights force" and appeared at several Alabama towns outside of Clark's jurisdiction to assault and threaten Civil Rights workers. In Selma, the SNCC campaign was

met with violence and intimidation by Clark, who waited at the entrance to the county courthouse, beating and arresting registrants at the slightest provocation. At one point, Clark arrested around 300 students who were holding a silent protest outside the courthouse, force-marching them with cattle prods to a detention center three miles away.

**Clark Olsen:** The Rev. Clark Olsen was minister of the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarians at the time of the Selma Civil Rights March in 1965, where he survived an attack that fatally injured the Rev. James J. Reeb. Eventually, he left parish ministry for a career as an organizational consultant. From 1986 to 1988 he was vice president of Programs and Planning for the Unitarian Universalists Association. He later served on the UUA's Fulfilling the Promise Committee. He received the UUA's Distinguished Service Award in 2015.

**Nicholas Katzenbach:** (1922-2012) was an American lawyer who served as United States Attorney General during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. On June 11, 1963, Katzenbach was a primary participant in one of the most famous incidents of the Civil Rights struggle. Alabama Governor George Wallace stood in front of Foster Auditorium at the University of Alabama in an attempt to stop the desegregation of that institution by the enrollment of two black students, Vivian Malone, and James Hood. This became known as the "Stand in the Schoolhouse Door". Hours later, Wallace stood aside only after being ordered to do so by Guard General Henry V. Graham.

**Dana Greeley:** (1908-1986) The Rev. Dana McLean Greeley, a Bostonian who was the first president of the Unitarian Universalist Association and minister of the First Parish in Concord, Mass. In 1965 he headed a contingent of Unitarian Universalist ministers in the Civil Rights march in Selma, Ala. He was an outspoken opponent of the war in Vietnam.

**Taylor Branch:** is an American author and historian born in 1947. He wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning trilogy chronicling the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and much of the history of the American Civil Rights Movement.

#### **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY MAN # 4**

**Frederick Douglass:** born circa 1817/1818 was an African-American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. A former slave, he became a national leader of the Abolitionist Movement in Massachusetts and New York. He was famous for his oratory and incisive antislavery writings. Frederick Douglass died on February 20, 1895.

**John Hope:** (1868-1936) was born in Augusta, Georgia, was an American educator and political activist. Hope was active in national Civil Rights organizations including the Niagara Movement, the succeeding National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Southern-based Commission on Interracial Cooperation. In addition, he was active in the National Urban League, the YMCA, and the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools. He was the first African-descended president of both Morehouse (1906) and of Atlanta University (1929).

**Langston Hughes:** (1901-1967) was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist from Joplin, Missouri. One of the earliest innovators of the literary art form called jazz poetry, Hughes is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance.

**Earnest Green:** Was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1941. He is one of the Little Rock Nine. His parents instilled in him confidence and self-respect that helped him to become a leader among his peers and a Civil Rights advocate. Federal troops were sent in to protect the rights of the beleaguered students, and the students ultimately prevailed. Green graduated from Michigan State University with a B.A. in 1962 and an M.A. in 1964. He directed the A. Phillip Randolph Education Fund from 1968 to 1976. Between 1977 and 1981, he served as Assistant Secretary in the Labor Department under President Jimmy Carter. He was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Bill Clinton.

**Ralph Abernathy:** (1926-1990) was an American Civil Rights activist, a Baptist minister, one of the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and a close friend and mentor of Martin Luther King Jr. He collaborated with King and E. D. Nixon to create the Montgomery Improvement Association, which led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He co-created and was an executive board member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Ralph Abernathy became president of the SCLC following the assassination of King in 1968. Led the Poor People's Campaign in Washington, D.C. as well as other marches and demonstrations for disenfranchised Americans. He also served as an advisory committee member of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE).

**C.T. Vivian: Cordy Tindell Vivian** (July 30, 1924 – July 17, 2020): was an American minister, author, close friend, and lieutenant of Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement. Vivian resided in Atlanta, Georgia, and founded the C. T. Vivian Leadership Institute, Inc. He helped found the Nashville Christian Leadership Conference. He helped organize the first sit-ins in Nashville in 1960 and the first Civil Rights march in 1961. In 1961 Vivian participated in Freedom Rides and worked alongside Martin Luther King Jr. as the national director of affiliates for the SCLC. During the summer following the Selma Voting Rights Movement, Vivian conceived and directed an educational program, "Vision," and supported 702 Alabama students with college scholarships (this program later became "Upward Bound"). His 1970 "Black Power and the American Myth" was the first book on the Civil Rights Movement by a member of Martin Luther King's staff.

**Fred Leonard:** Leonard participated in the Nashville sit-ins in 1960 while attending Tennessee State University. He participated in a Freedom Ride that started on May 17, 1961, from Nashville to Birmingham. In a 1985 interview with Blackside Inc., which produced *Eyes on the Prize*, Leonard elaborated on his experience on the Freedom Ride.

**Bob Moses:** Born in 1935 in New York City earned a master's degree in Philosophy in 1957 from Harvard University. He became a mathematics teacher at Horace Mann School. In 1960 he used his summer teaching break to go to Atlanta and work with King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In Atlanta, Moses volunteered to travel on behalf of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He returned to Mississippi in 1961 to work on voter registration. Initially a volunteer, Moses quickly joined SNCC's staff of three as the special field secretary for voter registration based in McComb, Mississippi. The following year Bob was named the co-director of the

Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), a cooperative of Civil Rights groups in the state. Moses developed the idea for the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project, which recruited northern college students to join Mississippi blacks in conducting a grassroots voter registration drive.

**Reverend John Cross Jr:** (January 27, 1925 – November 15, 2007) was an American pastor and Civil Rights activist. He was best known as the pastor of the 16th Street Baptist Church, in Birmingham, Alabama, where the racially motivated bombing ripped through the church and killed four young girls. It became a rallying cry for the Civil Rights Movement. Cross spent much of the rest of his life working for racial reconciliation in the South.

**Dave Dennis:** born in 1940 is a Civil Rights activist. He was part of the movement since the 1960s. Grew up in the segregated area of Omega, Louisiana, and worked as co-director of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), as director of Mississippi's Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and as one of the organizers of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964. Dave Dennis worked closely with both Bob Moses and Medgar Evers as well as members of SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Dennis' first involvement in the Civil Rights Movement was at a Woolworth sit-in organized by CORE. he went on to become a Freedom Rider in 1961.

**Malcolm X:** Born May 19, 1925, he was an African-American Muslim minister and human rights activist who was a prominent figure during the Civil Rights Movement. A spokesman for the Nation of Islam until 1964, he was a vocal advocate for black empowerment and the promotion of Islam within the black community. In the 1960s, he grew disillusioned with the Nation of Islam, as well as with its leader Elijah Muhammad. He subsequently embraced Sunni Islam and the Civil Rights Movement. After a brief period of travel across Africa, he publicly renounced the Nation of Islam and founded the Islamic Muslim Mosque, Inc. (MMI) and the Pan-African Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated in New York City.

**Benjamin Hooks:** (1925-2010) was an American Civil Rights leader and government official, Baptist minister, and practicing attorney. He served as executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1977 to 1992. Throughout his career, Hooks was a vocal campaigner for Civil Rights in the United States. Served from 1972 to 1977 as the first African American member of the Federal Communications Commission

**James Baldwin:** (1925-1987) was an African-American writer and Human Rights activist. Authored essays, novels, plays, and poems. His first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, was published in 1953. While he wrote about the movement, Baldwin aligned himself with the ideals of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Joining CORE allowed him to travel across the American South lecturing on his views of racial inequality. His insights into both the North and South gave him a unique perspective on the racial problems the United States was facing. He rejected the label "Civil Rights activist", or that he had participated in a Civil Rights Movement. Instead agreeing with Malcolm X's assertion that if one is a citizen, one should not have to fight for one's Civil Rights.

**Floyd McKissick:** (1922-1991) was an American lawyer and Civil Rights activist. He became the first African- American student at the University of North Carolina School of Law. In 1966 he became the leader of CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality, taking over from James Farmer. A supporter of Black Power, he turned CORE into a more radical movement. In 1968, McKissick left CORE to found Soul City in Warren County, North Carolina.

**Jesse Jackson:** born in 1941 in Greenville SC, is an American political activist, a Baptist minister, and a politician. He was a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984 and 1988 and served as a shadow U.S. senator for the District of Columbia from 1991 to 1997. On July 16, 1960, while home from college, Jackson joined seven other African Americans in a sit-in at the Greenville Public Library in Greenville, South Carolina. In 1965 he participated in the Selma to Montgomery marches organized by James Bevel, King, and other Civil Rights leaders in Alabama. Impressed by Jackson's drive and organizational abilities, King soon began giving Jackson a role in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In 1966 King and Bevel selected Jackson to head the Chicago branch of the SCLC's economic arm, Operation Breadbasket. He was promoted to national director in 1967.

**Frankie Gross:** Frankie Gross was a 17-year-old, African-American man at the time of Reverend King's death. He is quoted in the book *The Heavens Might Crack: The Death and Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.* By Jason Sokol

#### **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY MAN # 5**

**Samuel Cabble:** was a private in the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Infantry (colored). He was a slave before he joined the army at age 21. Samuel Cabble survived the war and returned to Missouri for his wife, and together they moved to Denver, Colorado.

**W.E.B. Dubois:** (1868-1963) was an American sociologist, historian, and Pan-Africanist Civil Rights activist. After completing graduate work at the University of Berlin and Harvard, where he was the first African-American to earn a doctorate, he became a professor of history, sociology, and economics at Atlanta University. W.E.B. DuBois was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. DuBois had risen to national prominence as a leader of the Niagara Movement, a group of African-American activists who wanted equal civil rights for blacks and increased political representation, which he believed would be brought about by the African-American intellectual elite. He referred to this group as the Talented Tenth, a concept under the umbrella of racial uplift. He believed that African- Americans needed the chance for advanced education to develop their leadership.

**John Lewis:** born in 1940 was an American politician and Civil Rights activist who served in the United States House of Representatives for Georgia's 5th congressional district from 1987 until his death in 2020. He was the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) from 1963 to 1966. Lewis was one of the "Big Six" leaders of groups who organized the 1963 March on Washington. He fulfilled many key roles in the Civil Rights Movement and its actions to end legalized racial segregation in the United States. In 1965, Lewis led the first of three Selma to Montgomery marches across the

Edmund Pettus Bridge. In an incident that became known as Bloody Sunday, state troopers and police attacked the marchers, which included Lewis.

**James Farmer Jr.:** (1920-1999) was an American Civil Rights activist. As a leader of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), he helped shape the Civil Rights Movement through his nonviolent activism and organizing of sit-ins and Freedom Rides, which broadened popular support for the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts in the mid-1960s. In 1942 he co-founded CORE, which originated integrated bus trips through the South called Freedom Rides, to challenge local efforts to block the desegregation of interstate busing. Farmer, who sought racial justice through nonviolence, was often a target of racial violence himself.

**Medgar Evers:** (1925-1963) was an American Civil Rights activist and the NAACP's first field secretary in Mississippi. He was assassinated by a white supremacist. Evers, a decorated U.S. Army combat veteran who had served in World War II, was engaged in efforts to overturn segregation at the University of Mississippi, end the segregation of public facilities, and expand opportunities for African-Americans including the enforcement of voting rights. A college graduate, Evers became active in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s. Following the 1954 ruling of the United States Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregated public schools were unconstitutional, Evers challenged the segregation of the state-supported public University of Mississippi, applying to law school there. He also worked for voting rights, economic opportunity, access to public facilities, and other changes in the segregated society. Evers was awarded the 1963 NAACP Spingarn Medal.

**Courtland Cox:** born in 1941 spent his childhood between New York City and Trinidad. Upon arrival at Howard University in 1960, he joined the Nonviolent Action Group (NAG), already committed to fighting segregation and white supremacy. Cox met classmates like Stokely Carmichael, Ed Brown, Michael Thelwell, Jean Wheeler, and others as NAG became involved in sit-ins along Route 40, Freedom Rides, and demonstrations on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Later, Cox became Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee's program coordinator, and in 1967 traveled to Stockholm to represent SNCC at the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal. Cox remained committed to the idea of economic empowerment. Black communities, he noted, whether in the Deep South or northern cities, lacked "any kind of economic infrastructure that could make a difference". Atlantic City had helped him realize that "you could not keep asking people ... who were, in fact, benefitting from the status quo, to change the status quo."

**Wyatt Tee Walker:** (1928-2018) was an African-American pastor, a national Civil Rights leader, a theologian, and a cultural historian. He was chief of staff for Martin Luther King Jr., and in 1958 became an early board member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). He helped found a Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) chapter in 1958. As executive director of the SCLC from 1960 to 1964, Walker helped to bring the group to national prominence. Walker sat at the feet of his mentor, BG Crawley, who was a Baptist Minister in Brooklyn, NY, and a New York State Judge. Walker started as pastor at historic Gillfield Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia, where he entered the Civil Rights Movement. For 37 years Walker was senior pastor at Canaan Baptist Church of Christ in Harlem, New York, where he also co-founded the Religious Action Network of Africa Action to oppose apartheid in South Africa and chaired the Central Harlem Local Development Corporation.

**A. Philip Randolph:** (1889-1979) was a labor leader, and a Civil Rights activist who founded the nation's first major Black labor union, The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) in 1925. In the 1930s, his organizing efforts helped end racial discrimination in both defense industries and segregation in the U.S. armed forces. Mr. Randolph was also a principal organizer of the March on Washington in 1963, which paved the way for the passage of the Civil Rights Act the following year.

**James E. Smith:** An African-American Civil Rights worker and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) staff member featured in the Alabama Department of Public Safety's publication- Individuals active in civil disturbances.

**William Lucy:** was born on November 26, 1933, for over four decades, he was at the forefront of the labor movement in America and around the world. As International Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) for nearly 40 years, Lucy helped the union grow from 200,000 to over 1.4 million members in 3,500 local unions nationwide. He also helped define the role of African-Americans in the labor unions when he co-founded the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) in 1972. Along the way, he stood alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Civil Rights struggles and Nelson Mandela in opposition to apartheid. Lucy co-founded the Free South Africa Movement, a grassroots campaign that sparked widespread opposition to apartheid across the United States.

**Samuel "Billy" Kyles:** Reverend Samuel "Billy" Kyles was born in Shelby, Mississippi, on September 26, 1934. A longtime participant in the Civil Rights Movement, Kyles was the founding pastor of the Monumental Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee in 1959. After Memphis sanitation workers went on strike in February 1968 due to low pay and poor working conditions, Kyles led the effort to gain community support for the striking workers. He organized nightly rallies and raised money before scheduling a major rally for April 3, 1968. Kyles persuaded the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to come to Memphis and speak at the event. Kyles accompanied King and his entourage that day and was on hand when King was assassinated in the early evening. He passed away in 2016.

**Don Browne:** African-American Soldier who served in Vietnam.

**Stokely Carmichael:** (born June 29, 1941) was a prominent organizer in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and the Global Pan-African Movement. Born in Trinidad, he grew up in the United States from the age of 11 and became an activist while attending the Bronx High School of Science. He was a key leader in the development of the Black Power movement, first while leading the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), then as the "Honorary Prime Minister" of the Black Panther Party (BPP), and last as a leader of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party. Carmichael was one of the original SNCC freedom riders of 1961 under Diane Nash's leadership. He became a major voting rights activist in Mississippi and Alabama after being mentored by Ella Baker and Bob Moses. Inspired by Malcolm X's example, he articulated a philosophy of Black Power and popularized it both through provocative speeches and more sober writings. Carmichael became one of the most popular and controversial Black leaders of the late 1960s. he passed away on November 15, 1998.

**Hollis Watkins:** born in 1941 was an activist in the Civil Rights Movement in the state of Mississippi during the 1960s. He became a member and organizer with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1961 and was a county organizer for 1964's "Freedom Summer." He assisted the efforts of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to unseat the regular Mississippi delegation from their chairs at the 1964 Democratic Party national convention in Atlantic City. He founded Southern Echo, a group that gives support to other grass-roots organizations in Mississippi. He also is a founder of the Mississippi Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement. During his youth, Watkins attended National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) youth meetings led by Medgar Evers. In 1961 Watkins met Bob Moses who was organizing in Mississippi for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Watkins was asked by Bob Moses to join the Voter Registration Organization effort in McComb. Watkins became involved the next day. He joined SNCC and began canvassing potential voters around McComb, Mississippi in Amite County. He soon became a mentor and role model for McComb High school activists. He participated in McComb's first sit-in at a Woolworth's lunch counter in an attempt to achieve integration, for which he was jailed for 34 days. During his time in jail, he was threatened on several occasions, including once being shown a noose and told that he would be hung that night. He kept his decision to participate in the sit-in a secret from his parents knowing they wouldn't allow him to do so. But when his father found out, he spoke at a mass meeting protesting their arrest. This support helped encourage Watkins during his difficult time in jail. Afterward, he took part in a walk-out at McComb's black high school, along with dozens of other activists including Brenda Travis, which resulted in his being sentenced to 39 more days in jail. Watkins' activism also had a personal price. Many of his extended family ostracized him and would not recognize him in public for fear of losing their jobs. The White Citizens Council and other groups conducted economic boycotts against activist blacks, getting them fired, evicted from rental properties, and refusing loans and credit. In 2011 Watkins was honored by Jackson State University with a Fannie Lou Hamer Humanitarian Award.

## **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY WOMAN #1**

**Susie King Taylor:** Born into slavery in Georgia in 1848, Susie, born Susan Baker, lived on a plantation for the first seven years of her life. In 1855, Susie was allowed to go live with her free grandmother in Savannah. Despite Georgia's harsh laws prohibiting formal education for African-Americans, Susie attended two secret schools taught by black women and was tutored by two white youths. In April 1862, Susie was able to escape slavery with her uncle and other African-Americans who fled to a federal gunboat near Confederate-held Fort Pulaski. She went to live on Union-occupied St. Simons Island off the southern Georgia coast along with hundreds of other formerly enslaved refugees. There, at only 14 years old, Susie became the first black teacher to openly educate African-Americans in Georgia. That same year Susie married Edward King, a black officer in the 33rd United States Colored Infantry Regiment, and began serving as a nurse and laundress for his regiment. Off hours she taught the soldiers reading and writing and, according to her memoirs, "...learned to handle a musket very well...and could shoot straight and often hit the target." Susie served as a nurse at a hospital for African-American soldiers in Beaumont, South Carolina, where she met and worked with Clara Barton. For four years and three months, she served the Union military without pay. Susie and Edward remained with the 33rd Regiment until they were mustered out at the end of the war. Susan Taylor died in 1912.

**Elizabeth Eckford:** made history as a member of the Little Rock Nine. In 1957 nine African- American students participated in the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School. The image of fifteen-year-old Eckford, walking alone through a screaming mob in front of Central High School, propelled the crisis into the nation's living rooms and brought international attention to Little Rock (Pulaski County).

Elizabeth was born on October 4, 1941, to Oscar and Birdie Eckford, and is one of six children. Her father worked nights as a dining car maintenance worker for the Missouri Pacific Railroad's Little Rock station. Her mother taught at the segregated state school for blind and deaf children, instructing them on how to wash and iron for themselves. On September 4, 1957, Eckford arrived at Central High School alone. The Little Rock Nine were supposed to go together, but their meeting place was changed the previous night. The Eckford family had no phone. Daisy Bates intended to go to their place early the next day but never made it. As a result, Elizabeth was alone when she got off the bus a block from the school and tried to enter the campus. She tried twice, only to be turned away both times by Arkansas National Guard troops, who were there under orders from Governor Orval Faubus. Because all of the city's high schools were closed the following year, Eckford did not graduate from Central High School, but she had taken correspondence and night courses and had enough credits. She was accepted by Knox College in Illinois but soon returned to Little Rock to be closer to her parents. She also attended Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio. Received a BA in history.

**Jo Ann Robinson:** (1912-1992) was an activist during the Civil Rights Movement and an educator in Montgomery, Alabama. Robinson received her BA from Fort Valley State College in 1934 and became a public school teacher in Macon where she was married to Wilbur Robinson for a short time. Five years later she went to Atlanta, where she earned an M.A. in English at Atlanta University. Robinson continued her education even after earning her Masters at New York's Columbia University and continued to study English. She taught at Mary Allen College in Texas and then accepted a position at Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) in Montgomery, Al. She joined the Women's Political Council, which Mary Fair Burks had founded three years earlier. The WPC was an organization dedicated to inspiring African-Americans to rise above the level of mediocrity that they had been conditioned to accept, to fight juvenile delinquency, to increase voter registration in the African-American community, and to improve their status as a group. In 1949, Robinson was verbally attacked by a bus driver for sitting in the front "Whites only" section of the bus. The whites-only section was empty. Out of fear that the incident would escalate, and that the driver would go from verbal abuse to physical, Robinson left the bus. Her response to the incident was to attempt to start a protest boycott against bus segregation in Alabama. However, when Robinson approached fellow WPC members with her story and proposal, she was told that it was "a fact of life in Montgomery." In late 1950, she succeeded Burks as president of the WPC and helped focus the group's efforts on bus abuses. On Thursday, December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to move from her seat in the black area of the bus she was traveling on to make way for a white passenger who was standing. That night, with Parks' permission, Robinson stayed up mimeographing 35,000 handbills calling for a boycott of the Montgomery bus system, with the help of the chairman of the Alabama State College business department, John Cannon, and two students.

**Ruby Doris Smith:** (1942-1967) worked with the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) from its earliest days in 1960 until her death in October 1967. She served the organization as an activist in the field and as an administrator in the Atlanta central office, the only woman ever to serve in this

capacity. She was well respected by her SNCC colleagues and others within the movement for her work ethic and dedication to those around her.

**Coretta Scott King:** (1927-2006), the wife of Martin Luther King Jr, was an American author, activist, and Civil Rights leader. As an advocate for African-American equality, she was a leader of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. King was also a singer who often incorporated music into her civil rights work. King met her husband while attending graduate school in Boston. They both became increasingly active in the American Civil Rights Movement. Mrs. King played a prominent role in the years after her husband's assassination in 1968 when she took on the leadership of the struggle for racial equality herself and became active in the Women's Movement. Coretta King founded the King Center and successfully sought to make his birthday a national holiday.

**Gwen Moten:** On September 15, 1963, the Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Four young girls were murdered. Gwen Moten was best friends with Denise McNair one of the murdered four.

**Marian Logan:** (1919-1993) Marian Bruce Logan was a cabaret singer who performed in clubs in New York, London, and Paris. She recorded a single album, *Halfway to Dawn*, before marrying Dr. Arthur C. Logan, personal physician to Duke Ellington, and subsequently retiring from the stage. Logan later worked with Jackie Robinson and the Student Emergency Fund, which helped African- American students make their tuition payments. Logan came to the attention of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who asked for her assistance in raising funds for the non-violent protests organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. She was the first Northern member of the board and remained with the organization until 1969.

**Georgia Ayers:** (1928-2014) was one of Miami's most influential Civil Rights activists who worked tirelessly to guide troubled young people away from the criminal justice system and encouraged them to lead productive lives. Her work as the founder of the Alternative Programs will always be remembered, as well as her contributions to Miami-Dade County's history. Georgia Jones Ayers was the true definition of courage and commitment. She worked tirelessly on behalf of those less fortunate.

**Eleanor Holmes:** was born in Washington, D.C. in 1937. While in college and graduate school, she was active in the Civil Rights Movement and an organizer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. By the time she graduated from Antioch, she had already been arrested for organizing and participating in sit-ins in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Ohio. While in law school, she traveled to Mississippi for the Mississippi Freedom Summer and worked with civil rights leaders such as Medgar Evers. Her time with the SNCC inspired her lifelong commitment to social activism and her budding sense of feminism. President Jimmy Carter appointed Holmes Norton as the chair of the EEOC in 1977. She later became the first female head of the agency. Norton was elected in 1990 as a Democratic delegate to the House of Representatives.

## **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY WOMAN #2**

**Grace Lorch:** (1903-1974) Was a teacher and Civil Rights activist best known for her work as a white escort for the Little Rock Nine. Lorch, a teacher in Boston, served as President of the Boston Teachers Union and was a member of the Boston Central Labor Council. The Lorches were activists in the Civil Rights struggle in the 1940s and 1950s. Two weeks after moving to Little Rock, Grace Lorch wrote a letter to the local school superintendent asking that eleven-year-old Alice be allowed to attend the neighborhood school: "Since we live at 1801 High Street, located in a Negro neighborhood, this would be a Negro school," she wrote, adding that it "might also provide a useful and unobtrusive example of the benefit to the process of integrating Little Rock schools." The request was denied. In 1957, the Lorches were involved in the Little Rock branch of the NAACP and were intimately involved in the Little Rock Nine's struggle to desegregate Little Rock Central High School. On their first day of school, the Nine were to arrive together. However, this instruction never reached fifteen-year-old Elizabeth Eckford who arrived separately and found herself facing an angry mob threatening to lynch her. Grace Lorch arrived, having just dropped off her daughter at a nearby junior high, rescued Eckford, and escorted her home. Lorch's rescue of Eckford made the Lorches a target. Dynamite was placed in their garage, the Lorches were harassed in the press, Alice faced bullying at school and Grace was subpoenaed by the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security.

**Marcia Webb Lecky:** Was the secretary of the senior class at Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas during the 1957-58 academic school year.

**Rachelle Horowitz:** Was an organizer and strategist during the height of the Civil Rights Movement and is a major figure in labor union politics. As a student member of the Socialist Party during the late 1950s, Horowitz was encouraged to become involved in the Civil Rights Movement by party leaders who recognized the leadership potential she and other young members possessed. She and other socialists, such as Tom Khan and Norm Hill, worked with Bayard Rustin, assisting with planning for demonstrations and labor organization efforts. At Rustin's request, Horowitz served as the transportation coordinator for the 1963 March on Washington. She was responsible for securing transportation to get leaders, organizations, and March participants to and from Washington, DC. Horowitz also assisted Rustin with running the March's organizing headquarters in New York. In the following year, Horowitz spent three months in Jackson, Mississippi for the formation of the Freedom Democrats, assisting with organizing Freedom Summer. She also continued to work with Rustin, serving as his assistant from 1964 to 1973, working with him and others to form the Social Democrats, USA Party.

**Joyce K. Laird:** of Lafayette, Calif. was interviewed by Time Magazine about the King assassination.

**Kim Lawton:** is a correspondent at the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama

**Maria Saporta:** wrote the following: "I had the good fortune to be born to two enlightened and compassionate parents, Spanish Jews from Greece who had experienced the horrors of World War II in Europe. When they moved to Atlanta in 1948, they naturally sympathized with the plight of blacks and became active in Civil Rights. As a family, we would participate in picket lines, with my parents, my sister, and me. I also remember Mama making a point to have us sit in the back of buses as our own private protest. It was September 1966 when the children of Coretta and Martin Luther King Jr. and the children of Juanita and Ralph David Abernathy began attending Spring Street Elementary School, where

we went to school. One day in the girl's bathroom, I saw that a girl my age was crying. Someone had made a nasty comment to her. I tried to give her comfort, and that's how Yolanda King, then called "Yoki," and I became close friends, even best friends for a precious time in my life."

**Susan Wilber:** was a student at Peabody College in Nashville. She became involved in what was then known as the "Movement." Together with students from Fisk and Tennessee A&I, she demonstrated for the rights of everyone, regardless of color, to eat at a downtown restaurant or sit anywhere they wished in a movie theater. She was also one of about three white students who participated in the second freedom ride and was injured!

### CHARACTERS PLAYED BY WOMAN #3

**Harriet Tubman:** she was born Araminta Ross but was known as the "Moses of her people," was enslaved, escaped, and helped others gain their freedom as a "conductor" of the Underground Railroad. Tubman also served as a scout, spy, guerrilla soldier, and nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War. She is considered the first African-American woman to serve in the military. Tubman's exact birth date is unknown, but estimates place it between 1820 and 1822 in Dorchester County, Maryland. She died in Auburn, NY on March 3, 1913.

**Grandmother Dolly Reed:** Lived in Savanna and was the grandmother to Susie King Taylor. Mrs. Reed is believed to have been formerly enslaved by the Grests. She was arrested during a raid on a church and charged with breaking curfew and singing hymns about freedom, which were considered treasonous.

**Sarah Song:** In Memphis, Tennessee, in May of 1866, whites on a rampage of murder killed forty-six blacks, most of them veterans of the Union army, as well as two white sympathizers. Five black women were raped. Ninety homes, twelve schools, and four churches were burned. Mrs. Song testified before congress.

**Melba Pattillo:** (Melba Joy Pattillo Beals) 1941 An American journalist and educator who was a member of the Little Rock Nine. Mrs. Beals was 15 years old when she chose to enroll at Central High School in May 1956. She planned on returning to Central High for the 1958–1959 school year, but Governor Faubus shut down all Little Rock high schools that failed to resist integration. Melba relocated to Santa Rosa, California with help from the NAACP to complete her senior year of high school at Montgomery High School. She lived with the family of foster parents Dr. George and Carol McCabe. At the age of seventeen, she began writing for major newspapers and magazines. Mrs. Beals attended San Francisco State University, earning a bachelor's degree. She later earned a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University. On May 22, 2009, she received her Doctoral Degree in Education at the University of San Francisco.

**Juanita Abernathy:** (Juanita Odessa Jones) was born in Uniontown, Alabama. She studied at Selma University, then attended and graduated from Tennessee State University. She worked as a teacher and for Mary Kay Cosmetics. She was part of the team that organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott of December 1955 - December 1956. In 1957. Her home was bombed. In 1965 she walked in the Selma to Montgomery March. She was married to Ralph Abernathy.

**Sarah Collins Rudolph:** (1949) was the sister of Addie Mae Collins. After the bomb exploded at the 16th Street Baptist Church she called her sister's name three times, but she never answered. The blast killed her sister, Addie Mae Collins. Rudolph survived the blast but lost her right eye when shards struck her face. She was never compensated for the loss of her sight and the hardship she bore.

**Carol McKinstry:** A lifelong member of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, Carolyn was present on September 15, 1963, when white racists bombed the Church. As a teenager, Carolyn felt her “calling” by attending the mass meetings and rallies at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. She was among thousands of students hosed by firemen during the 1963 marches. She survived a second bomb explosion that destroyed a large portion of her home in 1964. An “authentic child of the movement,” Carolyn believed that God spared her life on September 15, 1963, so that she could continue to live in service to others.

**Amelia Boynton:** (1911-2015 (Amelia Isadora Platts Boynton Robinson) was an American activist, and leader of the American Civil Rights Movement in Selma, Alabama. She was a key figure in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches. She was awarded the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Medal in 1990.

#### **CHARACTERS PLAYED BY WOMAN #4**

**Susie Melton:** Former slave interviewed by the Federal Writers' Project in the 1930s

**Nurse Maid:** In a 1912 article entitled "More Slavery in the South" was published by The Independent. (The online source). Documenting the American South, the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, does not give the location of The Independent, but it is assumed they refer to the New York newspaper that was published from 1848 to 1921. The article was written by a reporter from a transcription of an interview with an anonymous African-American domestic worker living in Georgia.

**Rosa Parks:** (1913-2005) helped initiate the Civil Rights Movement in the United States when she refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama bus in 1955. Her actions inspired the leaders of the local Black community to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Led by a young Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The boycott lasted more than a year, during which Parks lost her job, and ended only when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation was unconstitutional. When Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat in 1955, it wasn't the first time she'd clashed with driver James Blake. Parks stepped onto his very crowded bus 12 years earlier, paid her fare at the front, then resisted the rule in place for Black people to disembark and re-enter through the back door. She stood her ground until Blake pulled her coat sleeve, enraged, to demand her cooperation. Parks left the bus rather than give in. Black residents of Montgomery often avoided municipal buses, if possible, because they found the Negroes-in-back policy so demeaning. Nonetheless, 70 percent or more riders on a typical day were Black.

**Diane Nash:** (Diane Judith Nash, Born May 15, 1938) is an American Civil Rights activist, leader, and strategist of the student wing of the Civil Rights Movement. She is a Civil Rights hero. Nash's campaigns were among the most successful of the era. Her efforts included the first successful Civil Rights campaign

to integrate lunch counters (Nashville), the Freedom Riders, who desegregated interstate travel, co-founding the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), co-initiating the Alabama Voting Rights Project, and working on the Selma Voting Rights Movement. This helped gain Congressional passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which authorized the federal government to oversee and enforce state practices to ensure that African-Americans, and other minorities, were not prevented from registering and voting.

At Fisk, Nash searched for a way to challenge segregation. Nash began attending non-violent civil disobedience workshops led by James Lawson. While in India, James Lawson studied Mahatma Gandhi's techniques of non-violent direct action and passive resistance used in his political movement. By the end of her first semester at Fisk, Nash had become one of Lawson's most devoted disciples. Although originally a reluctant participant in non-violence, Nash emerged as a leader due to her well-spoken, composed manner when addressing authorities and the press. In 1960 at age 22, she became the leader of the Nashville sit-ins, which lasted from February to May. Lawson's workshops included simulations to prepare the students to handle verbal and physical harassment that they would ultimately face during the sit-ins.

This movement was unique for the time in that it was led by, and composed primarily of, college students and young people. The Nashville sit-ins spread to 69 cities across the United States "We will not stop. There is only one outcome," stated Diane Nash, referring to the 1961 CORE Freedom Riders. Nash took over responsibility for the Freedom Rides and worked to recruit Riders, acted as a media spokesperson, and garnered the support of the government and other Movement leaders. Coordinating from Nashville, she led the Freedom Riders from Birmingham, Alabama to Jackson, Mississippi, where CORE Field Secretary Tom Gaither coordinated a massive program on the ground.

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy appointed Nash to a national committee to promote Civil Rights legislation. Eventually, his proposed bill was passed as the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In July 2022, Joe Biden presented Nash with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

**Sheyann Webb:** (Sheyann Webb-Christburg) Known as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Smallest Freedom Fighter" and co-author of the book *Selma, Lord, Selma*. As a nine-year-old, Webb took part in the first attempt at the Selma to Montgomery march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, known as Bloody Sunday. Born on February 17, 1956, in Selma, Alabama to John and Betty Webb, she was one of the first black children to integrate into an all-white school. She was pushed down the stairs, called derogatory names, and spit on. At nine years old, marching alongside her teacher, Margaret Moore, Sheyann Webb was among the protesters who were beaten with billy clubs and gassed with tear gas. A fellow demonstrator, Hosea Williams, picked up Webb and rescued her from the violent turn of the protest. She ran home "like [she] was running for [her] life". After the first attempted march, Webb was still determined to return to Brown's Chapel Church. She was willing to march again. She wrote her funeral arrangements the night of Bloody Sunday. The Selma to Montgomery marches took place from March 7 to March 25. The third and final march began on March 21, 1965. Webb participated in the last march without her parent's permission and didn't end up marching the whole way. She was picked up in a van and driven to Montgomery with Dr. King's secretaries. Her parents were informed of her location and that she was safe, and not long after she was picked up and driven home. However, her parents' support was increasing, and her father drove her back to Montgomery the next morning so she could finish the march. As a result of participating in the march, Webb was suspended from her predominantly white school.

**Myrlie Evers:** (Myrlie Louise Evers-Williams, aka-née Beasley, born March 17, 1933) was an American Civil Rights activist and journalist. She worked for over three decades to seek justice for the 1963 murder of her husband Medgar Evers, a Civil Rights activist. She served as chairwoman of the NAACP and published several books on topics related to Civil Rights and her husband's legacy. When Medgar Evers became the Mississippi field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1954, Myrlie worked alongside him. Myrlie became his secretary and together they organized voter registration drives and Civil Rights demonstrations. She assisted him as he struggled to end the practice of racial segregation in schools and other public facilities, and as he campaigned for voting rights. Many African-Americans were denied this right in the South. For more than a decade, the Evers fought for voting rights, equal access to public accommodations, the desegregation of the University of Mississippi, and equal rights in general for Mississippi's African-American population. As prominent Civil Rights leaders in Mississippi, the Evers became high-profile targets for pro-segregationist violence and terrorism. In 1962, their home in Jackson, Mississippi was firebombed in reaction to an organized boycott of downtown Jackson's white merchants. The family had been threatened and Evers targeted by the Ku Klux Klan.

**Maxine McNair:** McNair's daughter, 11-year-old Denise McNair, was the youngest girl killed in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church. Maxine McNair worked as a teacher for over three decades in Birmingham public schools. Her daughter, Lisa McNair, said she changed many lives through education and left a lasting legacy through the students she touched.

**Dorothy Newby:** an 18-year-old high school student at the time of Dr. King's death. She attended Hamilton High School in Memphis, TN.

**Deborah Preble:** from Pasadena, California. She was quoted in *Time Magazine* along with other responses to the death of Dr. Martin Luther King.

**Nancy Jefferson:** was known as the "mother of the West Side." (Chicago, Illinois) For 25 years, she headed the Midwest Community Council, which helped rebuild the area after urban rioting in the 1960s left much of it burned out. In 1963, Nancy was named executive director of the council, the oldest and largest community-based social action group on the West Side. Mrs. Jefferson stopped running the day-to-day operations of the group in January 1986, but she remained active as chairman of its board of directors. She was a devoted, principled champion for equal rights and equal opportunity who matched her inspiring words with inspiring deeds. Nancy Jefferson (1923-1992) was a nurse, social worker, and accomplished civic leader who helped improve the lives of residents of Chicago's west side. Born and raised in Tennessee, Ms. Jefferson received a nursing degree from Philander Smith College and went on to receive a degree in social work from Michigan State University. After settling in Chicago, she attended classes at the University of Illinois at Chicago, which allowed her to keep her certification and licensing up to date. Ms. Jefferson spent over thirty years championing Civil Rights, advocating open and affordable housing, crusading for improved health care, and working for prison reform.

**The following are mentioned in the play:**

**Viola Gregg Liuzzo:** was a housewife and mother from Detroit. Drove alone to Alabama to help with the Selma march after seeing televised reports of the attack at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. She was ferrying marchers between Selma and Montgomery when she was shot and killed by a Klansmen in a passing car.

**Robert Graetz:** a white minister of an African-American congregation in Montgomery, Alabama, Graetz's home was bombed several times and harassed by white residents for his participation in the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

**Thelma Mothershed Wair:** born in 1949 is the eldest member of the "Little Rock nine" who attended Little Rock's Central High School. The school was closed the following year. She had to take correspondence courses to finish high school and received her diploma by mail. Ms. Wair earned her BA in Home Economics and her Master's in Guidance and Counseling from Southern Illinois University, in addition to an Administrative Certificate in Education from this same university in 1972. She received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in 2016.

## **The Music**

Music has been a particularly important part of black culture, and music is an extremely important part of this piece. The placement of every song comments on what is happening in that part of history. The songs were chosen from the collection of songs used to encourage the protesters as they marched or were imprisoned. Many of the songs were taken from their church hymnals with one or two words changed to fit the situations they were in. Some were made up on the spot, but most were spirituals and hymns which had been passed down from the days of slavery when the only hope of freedom they were sure of was the hope of going to a heavenly to meet their Lord. From the very beginning of our rehearsals, we sang many of the songs extemporaneously being familiar with the tunes. My wife who has thirty years of experience as a choir director researched the songs, especially the ones we did not know. She arranged every one of the songs we sang. As a result, the songs solidified the bridge between fact and emotion. In their expressing of emotion, the songs made a statement of their own as well as commented on the text.

## Chapter 4. Journal

4/13,2022- I received an email from Bobby Funk, the professor who directed the musical “Bright Star” in which I had a role. I needed one more class to complete the requirements for graduation.

The head of the theatre department asked Bobby if he had any ideas. This is a copy of the Email:

I recently updated and expanded a play I wrote in 1992. Here is the information on it:

*The Dream Continues: The History of the Civil Rights Movement* was created for the opening of the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama in 1992. It was first performed as a one-act reader's theatre piece by students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The play toured schools around the Birmingham area throughout that school year.

In 2018 the play was updated and expanded to a full-length play thanks in part to a Research Development Committee, Small Grant Award from East Tennessee State University that allowed necessary research to happen in Washington, DC. Much thanks to the Library of Congress and The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture as well as the ETSU Department of Theatre and Dance and the ETSU School of Arts and Sciences.

I have spoken with Dr. Daryl Carter about producing the play here on campus.

Associate Dean CAS Equity & Inclusion, Director of Black American Studies [carterda@etsu.edu](mailto:carterda@etsu.edu)

We talked about presenting it as a reader's theatre piece. Our problem was finding a person with the time and ability to direct it. Yesterday, while thinking about a class substitution, I had this idea. Would you be interested in directing a staged reading of this script in the fall? You would cast the production, rehearse it then perform it. So, the class would be an Independent Study in Directing. We would do the play as a collaboration between Black American Studies and Theatre and Dance.

I am attaching the script for you to read.

I urge you to read over it and see if it is something you might be interested in doing. If not, we can look at a different project for you to work on as an actor or director.

Let me know what you decide, and we will then get the ball rolling.

Hopefully, we can find you a project/class that you will really enjoy working on.

Sincerely,

bobby

*Bobby Funk*

*Stage Directors and Choreographers Society Member*

*Professor of Theatre*

*ETSU Department of Theatre and Dance*

I was so excited that it was hard for me to be still long enough to read the script. I did finally read the script. I cried through both acts. It was beautifully written and drama, even action, was there. What bothered me was that I was unaware of so much of this. There were people professor Funk wrote of in the script, and I had no knowledge of them. I did find out I wasn't alone in the documentary called "who we are" by Jeffrey Robinson. At the very outset of his piece, he complains. "Here am I, a lawyer with one of the best educations money could buy. Why wasn't I taught this? It is a reoccurring theme in all my research, how this government has intentionally whitewashed the history of our country. At this point, I began to research the over one hundred characters whose words were to be spoken by actors in this piece.

4/28/2022

I received this e-mail from Tiffany Angaran the executive aide for the department that we had received permission to begin working on our project.

*Hi Dan,*

*You are receiving this email because you have been permitted into THEA 4900-005 Independent Study: Acting for TV/Film. I have attached instructions for how to register with a permit. The CRN for this course is 85268.*

*Thanks,*

*Tiffany Angaran, MA*

*Executive Aide*

*Department of Theatre and Dance*

Bob and I met several times that month. He gave me a book to read on Readers Theatre. He also began to mentor me instructing me on what I needed to do. He told me that he was going to get in touch with Doctor Darryl Carter, the head of The Black studies department. Dr. Carter responded immediately and said that due to the constraints of time, he wouldn't be able to meet with us until mid-July.

During the interim, Bob and I did meet once or twice. It wasn't until the beginning of August that we met on zoom to talk with Doctor Carter. He was incredibly open to our project and our ideas. He wanted to know what we needed from him. I wished that I knew. I had no idea what we needed. I let him and Bob do all the talking. Within the week Bob sent me an e-mail apprising me of the fact that we had a definite date for the performance of the play.

*Thu 8/18/2022 2:44 PM*

*Bobby Funk*

Funk, Robert D.

To: Brewster, Karen; PARKERD1; Carter, Daryl Anthony

Thu 8/18/2022 2:44 PM

Anna Janeen Dalton just let me know that we have booked The Bud Frank Theatre for A Rehearsal on February 5 from 6:00-10:00 and a performance of The Dream Continues for February 6 at 7:00 pm. (We have the Theatre starting at 6 and until 10:00 pm. The theatre is booked for the rest of that week.

Bobby Funk  
Stage Directors and Choreographers Society Member

8/25/2022

My wife and I began to read through the play's first act to begin to determine the musical cues.

8/27/2022

It was serendipitous that I happen to go see one of my favorite storytellers Sheila Arnold on August 27th she presented in her set that day a telling of the story of Fannie Lou Hamer. Again, one of the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. This woman in her quest to be allowed to vote was kicked off her land, shot at, beaten, and jailed. She remained resolute until she was granted her civil right.

8/31/2022 – 9/01/2022

We decided to have a read-through. Teresa and I began to call friends and family to do a full read-through on September 10, 2022, at 1:00 pm in our church fellowship hall. I also emailed Bob and asked him for 10 scripts. He responded almost immediately and brought 11.

9/10/2022

At one o'clock everyone arrived and was ready. It was Bob Funk reading Man #1, I read Man #2, Josh Bass read Man #3, Keith Brady read Man #4, Jovan Bass read Man #5 Cynthia Brady read Woman #1, Jamie Schaff read Woman #2, Aleshia Watson read Woman #3 Lou Crandall read Woman #4. Teresa was taking care of the music and lead singing. For a cold reading, it went very well. I was most impressed with how well the music interlude fell into the flow of the readings. We had no accompaniment. We sang acapella and that increased the power of it.

9/11/2022

Bob emails me that he thought the read-through went very well. I agreed.

It was time to meet and go over where I was and where I ought to be.

9/15/ 2022

Bob informed me that he had updated "The Dream Continues." he trimmed a few speeches and cleaned it up a bit. Some speeches sounded a bit awkward I emailed him back thanking him and asking him if I could come by and talk.

I suggested that we use a diverse cast and ignore the black-and-white categorization and open it up to different ethnic groups. The play breakdown does not classify a reader as being black or white. The audience, I thought, if I was not aware of who more than of these people were neither would they. When I mentioned this to the playwright he was not in agreement. He thought that it would confuse the audience and lessen the impact of the message of the piece. I could understand that he has taught me that we must keep the message clear. He told me that he intended to keep the music a cappella. He went over some organization tips and calmed me down. I appreciate the confidence he has in me. It helps me with the stress of dealing with something so completely new to me. I have not directed a full-length work and the concept of Readers Theatre is new to me as well.

9/28/2022

On the 28<sup>th</sup> I emailed Ms. Tiffany Angaran asking about using studio 205 for our auditions. She responded that I should ask Bobby to contact her when we had the dates firmed. Bob and I went back and forth because of his previous commitments.

10/7-9/2022

Also, at this time I attended the International Storytelling festival. During the festival, there was an interview with three ladies and one of their mothers, who were on the front line of the Civil Rights Movement. November 14, 1960, they were only six years old when they were chosen to integrate an elementary school in McDonogh County in New Orleans. Part of "The Dream Continues" depicts the terror of the Little Rock Nine. So, I took advantage of the opportunity to hear firsthand people who had gone through this. They talked about being isolated because the white parents pulled their children out of the school rather than let them be taught along with black children. This was up until middle school when there were no federal marshals to escort them. They were physically assaulted, spat at, and taunted. It confirmed in my mind just how powerful the spoken words of truth could be.



10/14/2022

I also put the event on the campus calendar and received an email from Tiffany:

Hi Dan,

Sherry Martinez just reached out to me. She is the web coordinator for the University. She said that she was approving event requests and saw yours for *The Dream Continues*. She wasn't exactly clear what it was from the description, so she has requested that you provide her with some more information about what your event is. If you would like to call her and speak with her, the number is 423 439 8249.

Thank you,  
Tiffany Angaran, MA

I called Ms. Martinez and explained what the project was all about. She had no idea what Readers Theatre was. When I told her that the play was written by one of the professors, she relaxed a little. I promised that I would go back into the calendar site and give a better explanation of what the audition was for.

10/24/2022

Bob has sent me an audition form.

**Audition Form for *The Dream Continues***

Name (As you would want it in the program) **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone where you can be reached: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

ETSU Student? (Circle one) Yes / No If yes, what do you believe is your current grade point average? \_\_\_\_\_

*The Dream Continues* contains "Adult" situations and language. The dialogue will not be changed. We want you to know this going into the audition.

Are there any roles in the production you will **not** accept? (Circle one) Yes / No If so, which role(s) will you **not** accept?

\_\_\_\_\_

I have looked over the tentative schedule and I **have conflicts** on the following days and /or times: (if you have no conflicts, please write in “no conflicts”)

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\*I have read the schedule and have listed **all** conflicts. Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If **not** cast, would you be interested in a stage management position for the production? Please circle. YES NO

You Don't have to use this, but I thought I'd share the one we use.  
He has also sent me a sample schedule to use since we ask if there are any conflicts.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR BASKERVILLE**

SEPTEMBER

4	T	Readthrough/Meeting	6:45– 9:30	Studio 205	
6	R	Dialects	6:45– 9:30	“	“
10	M	Block 13-36	6:45–10:00	“	“
11	T	Work 13-36	6:45-10:00	“	“
12	W	Block 37-56	8:00-10:00	“	“
13	R	Block/work 37-56	6:45-10:00	“	“
14	F	Work 13-36	6:45-10:00	“	“
17	M	Block 57-70	6:45–9:30	“	“
18	T	Work 57-70	6:45–9:30	“	“
20	R	Work 37-56	6:45-9:30	“	“
24	M	Work 57-70	6:45-10:00	“	“
25	T	Work 13-36	6:45-10:00	“	“
26	W	Work 37-56	8:00-10:00	“	“
27	R	Block 70-90	6:45-10:00	“	“
28	F	Work 70-90	6:45-10:00	“	“

OCTOBER

1	M	Work 13-36	6:45-9:30	“	“
2	T	Work 37-56	6:45-		
9:30	“	“			
3	W	Work 57-70	8:00-9:30	“	“
17	W	Work 70-90	8:00-9:30	“	“
18	R	Work TBA	6:45-9:30	“	“
22	M	Work 13-36 Off Book	6:45-10:00	“	“
23	T	Work 37-56 Off Book	6:45-10:00	“	“
24	W	Work 57-70 Off Book	8:00-10:00	“	“
25	R	Work 70-90 Off Book	6:45-10:00	“	“
26	F	Act I	6:30-10:00	“	“
29	M	Act II	6:45-9:30	Bud Frank	

30	T	Run through for Designers	6:45-9:30	Bud Frank
31	W	Act I	8:00-9:30	Bud Frank
November				
1	R	Act II	6:45-9:30	Bud Frank
2	F	Act I	6:45-9:30	Bud Frank
4	Sun	Act II	6:45-9:45	Bud Frank
5	M	Act I	6:45-10:00	Bud Frank
6	T	Act II	6:45-10:00	Bud Frank
7	W	Run-through	8:00-10:00	Bud Frank
8	R	Run-through	6:45-10:00	Bud Frank
9	F	OFF		
10	S	Dry Tech	9:00-12:00	Bud Frank
10	S	Tech Act I	2:00-5:00	Bud Frank
10	S	Tech Act II	7:00-10:00	Bud Frank
11	Sun	Rehearse Costume Changes	1:00-5:00	Bud Frank

I used them both. My schedule, of course, was much shorter.

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR: The Dream Continues

##### November

11 Fri read through Act 1 06:00-7:30 studio 205

12 Sat read through Act 2 12:00-01:30 studio 205

##### January

06 Fri Act 1 05:30-07:30 St. Paul's

07 Sat Act 2 10:00-12:00 St. Paul's

13 Fri Act 1 05:30-07:30 St. Paul's

14 Sat Act 2 10:00-12:00 St. Paul's

20 Fri Act 1 05:30-07:30 St. Paul's

21 Sat Act 2 10:00-12:00 St. Paul's

27 Fri Act 1, Act 2 05:30-07:30 St. Paul's

28 Sat Act 1, Act 2 10:00-12:00 St. Paul's

##### February

03 Fri Act 1, Act 2 05:30-08:30 St. Paul's

05 Sun Dress Rehearsal Act 1, Act 2 06:00-10:00 Bach Theatre, Martin Center

06 Mon Performance 06: 00 call Bach Theatre, Martin Center

10/27/2022

I asked him what scenes he thought were good audition pieces. And proud to say that we, for the most part, picked out the same pieces. I am learning to trust my instincts. I made copies of everything and headed over to the school campus to studio 205. I had a class that day and the auditions were after the class. My wife, Teresa, came with me to monitor the audition. She would take names and numbers so that we could get in touch with the people who had auditioned to ask if they would accept the part. I was so nervous the whole day. My wife asked me if I was afraid no one would show. I said I was more afraid someone would show. One gentleman did show up Jim Reid. He was very good. That was it. We went home, but it was done. I had held my first audition. The next audition was Saturday. No one showed. But, if they had, I was ready.

10/31/2022

I have sent Mr. Reid an email today asking him to be a part of our production.

Dear: Jim

I would like to offer you the role of Man #3

Please let me know as soon as possible if you accept the role.

Rehearsals begin Friday 11/11/2022 at 5:00 pm in Studio 205 in the Campus Center Building.

We will hand out scripts, have a short meeting, and read the play.

Thank you for your audition. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Dan Parker

I received an email back from Jim on the same day:

*Thanks so much. WOW! See y'all at 5 on 11/11!!!*

*Jim*

*On Monday, October 31, 2022, at 09:11:05 AM*

11/6/2022

I emailed Bob and told him I would need scripts for the rehearsal he said he would get them.

11/7/2022

Bob tells me the scripts are on the way and asks me do I have my cast.

I reply that I am short three people and that I might have to press him into service.

11/8/2022

Several days later I was in the line at Starbucks and this wonderful male voice asked, "What can I get started for you". When I got to the window I asked the man (his name is Tanner) if he would be interested in reading for my thesis play. I gave him my email address and hoped he would get in touch. It wasn't until 11/08 that I received an email from him expressing interest. So, I am having him come in this Friday to our first rehearsal.

I have also spoken to a classmate and asked her to come in and read, Ms. Tatijhana Cambell. Her classwork is good, and I have seen her in a couple of productions. I think she would be a good fit.

I am also emailing Herb Parker my diction teacher and asking him to help. There is one more person that I must get in touch with and that is Dr. Daryl Carter, our producer. Will ask him if he has any ideas as to who might be available to read.

11/9/2022

Today I am sending an email to Dr. Daryl Carter in hope that he might be able to send some people my way.

*Good morning, Dr. Carter,*

*This is Dan Parker. Following find information relating to our previous zoom meeting regarding the mounting of "The Dream Continues; an oral history of the Civil Rights Movement."*

*Bobby and I have been working on casting. On October 27 and 29 auditions were held on campus. Casting has been a challenge. Most of my classmates are involved in school productions and many are quite young. However, one of my classmates, Ms. Tatijhana Campbell will join us to read this Friday and Saturday, our first scheduled rehearsals. The bulk of the rehearsals will take place in January.*

*I am still looking for additional cast members, black, white, male, and female. Because life happens, we want to make certain we are covered. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please forward their information to us.*

*Daniel Parker*

11/10/2022

Dr. Carter answered my email. Thanked me for the update and said he was willing to post any flyers that we would forward to him.

I also received this from Bob.

*Dan,*

*I truly do not want to perform in the Dream Continues. As the playwright and as your advisor it is important that I observe and take notes.*

*I will be at many rehearsals but not all. For example, I cannot be at any rehearsals on Saturday as I am taking my kids out of town.*

*We can talk more about this.*

*Bobby*

11/11/2022

Today was my first rehearsal. It rained all day, and I was nervous as to who would or would not show. My wife, who has volunteered to be the assistant stage manager, has put together the scripts into folders. She also is working to get the music together. I am recommending her for MVP. We arrived early to set up. I received an email from Tanner at 1:37 telling me he could not get off from work. I wrote him back hoping he can come tomorrow. I asked Bob to read his part and he said he did not mind helping out in rehearsal, but not the performance. I had to text Ms. Campbell and ask her if she was coming. She apologized and said she was not able to make it. The rehearsal felt a little awkward, but we did not know each other.

After it was over, and everyone had left Bob talked to me.

- ✓ don't be afraid to stop and correct things as you go. You don't want mistakes to become ingrained.
- ✓ Do not feel you have to run the whole act. Work through it, stopping when you need to.
- ✓ You do not need to have the whole cast at every rehearsal. Work with one, two, and three at a time.
- ✓ We have good voices. Now characters need development. You cannot use the same voice all the time.
- ✓ Work out the music separately.

I have decided to call Keila my niece, who is a schoolteacher, to see if she would be interested in joining the cast.

11/12/2022

Teresa also recommended Father Tim. Jim Reid suggested that I ask Bob to get in touch with Pat Cronin. He thought that Mr. Cronin might be interested in doing Readers Theatre. We also talked about the Tri-cities Theatre collective as a possible source of readers. Keith Brady's sister wants to work with us and has been given a script. With her and Keila the women's roles will be cast. The gentleman I met at Starbucks works Friday nights and Saturdays. He seems to have given up because of his schedule. Because of my talk with Bob on Friday, I am thinking of changing the schedule to allow for some solo work and work with teams.

Jim had a question that I will have to put to Bob, is there a way to identify whom we are representing? How is the audience to know who these characters are? I said that most of these people were not known to me when I read it. Would it make a difference to the audience? For surely, they will not know who they are even if we tell them. I do not think that my answer satisfied him.

11/16/2022

Bob posted on Facebook that we needed Actors. I got a response from Dalton Lawson. I emailed him back giving him info on the show, plus two examples of what his part would be like. No response yet.

11/17/2022

I worked on the script tonight making director's notes regarding directions for individual speeches. Texted the two black women who are thinking about participating regarding whether they had read any of the script yet. I am waiting on a response from them.

11/18/2022

I received an email from Jim Reid letting me know that he had changed his mind and no longer wanted to be in the piece. I must admit I was beginning to feel that he was not as comfortable reading the more difficult racist parts of the script. Oh well, that's show biz. I'm glad I have the weekend to think about how to proceed.

11/20/2022

Today while in rehearsal for a Christmas Cantata that I will be performing with a combination church choir, the conductor knowing I was looking for readers, introduced me to four gentlemen that might be interested. John Bunn, Jim Nolan, Larry Jeffers, and Tom Tull. I emailed each one the info about the piece.

11/22/2022

Larry said that he could not do it because of family commitments. Jim has said yes, and I have not heard from Tom. I am due to talk with John Bunn at our next rehearsal.

11/30

Both Jim Nolan and John Bunn said they would do it. With rehearsals for Christmas concerts in progress, I have yet to figure out a schedule. I want to see them individually during the Christmas break. I will e-mail them as a group and ask them to submit times when they are available.

12/28

We had a read thru rehearsal today. It was mainly for the newest members of the cast. Unfortunately, because of Christmas week, there were a few absences. I see the need to slow down my readers. I feel that they are more focused on reading than expressing what the passages are all about. All these people are non-professional. The challenge will be to get them into shape

within the month. We have only two days a week to rehearse. I noticed that Professor Funk took lots of notes. I took none trusting in my mind to remember what needed to be said. I remembered that during “Bright Star” he took lots of notes. I will begin to take notes in the future.

1/6-7/2023

I had my first music rehearsal Friday, January 6, 2023, and it turned out very well. There were a couple who were unable to attend. The following day, Saturday, we worked on two major scenes from act one and my cast responded well to direction. I decided to conduct physical and vocal warm-ups before we started. They were a little slow on the uptake, but they went along with it. There were two no-shows on Saturday as well. I am a little concerned, but I will see what Monday brings, that is our next music rehearsal.

Here is a copy of our revised schedule:

### **SCHEDULE FOR The Dream Continues**

#### November

11	Fri	read through Act 1	06:00-7:30	studio 205
12	Sat	read through Act 2	12:00-01:30	studio 205

#### January

##### January

06	Fri	Act 1 Music	06:30-08:30	St. Paul's
07	Sat	Act 1	10:00-01:00	St. Paul's
13	Fri	Act 2 Music	06:30-08:30	St. Paul's
14	Sat	Act 2	10:00-01:00	St. Paul's
20	Fri	Act 1/music	06:30-08:30	St. Paul's
21	Sat	Act 2/music	10:00-01:00	St. Paul's
27	Fri	Act 1, Act 2	06:30-08:30	St. Paul's
28	Sat	Act 1, Act 2	10:00-01:00	St. Paul's

#### February

03	Fri	Act 1, Act 2	06:30-09:00	St. Paul's
04	Sat	Act 1, Act 2	10:00-02:00	St. Paul's
05	Sun	Dress Rehearsal Act 1, Act 2	04:00-08:00	Bud Frank Theatre,
06	Mon	Performance 7:30	06:00 call	Bud Frank Theatre,

I am hoping that we can get into the Bud Frank a day early for any tech that might need to be done,

Rehearsals have been going well. There is a problem with attendance. These people are not being paid. So, there are things that take priority over my rehearsals. I am trying to encourage myself. I learned that I would have little support from the theatre department. There were things that I had envisioned - media, and lighting I needed help with. For a minute they seemed forthcoming. About a week ago I was told that besides the stools and chairs, I needed nothing else would be provided. I have tried not to let it bother me, but I feel like the carpet has been pulled out from under me. Of course, the show must go on. If it is a bare stage and my actors, we will try and give the best performance we know how.

The music is going very well. My wife has patiently been tutoring the cast and arranging songs. All of the cast can sing.

1/21

We have amended our rehearsal schedule to include Mondays. At first, it was just to rehearse the music but as of the 23<sup>rd</sup> we have begun with music at 6:00 and started working through the script stopping to correct things as necessary. The cast is responding well to the work. They are getting better with each rehearsal. Quite a few absences today there is a youth conference at Pidgeon Forge this weekend that has taken three of our cast members. We did the best we could with Act 1. I doubled up on roles. Directing and acting are quite the chore. I find that my mind is torn in two. I salute those actors who can direct themselves.

1/23

This is the last week we will stop and start. It is my wife's birthday, and we have company. I am not appreciative. That said, the rehearsal goes extremely well. We go thru Act 2.

1/27

Zach Olsen, the scene builder, and lighting coordinator for the theater department emailed me about going to the Bud Frank Theatre and looking it over. That is great news, and I am encouraged. My Theatre department has not let me down. Also, the updated program has come through with the actor bios intact. It looks great. We make an appointment with Zach to meet on Monday afternoon. In Act 2 Bob decides he wants the cast to stand and hold hands as they sing "We Shall not be Moved." We do have an absence due to illness today and two of the cast is wearing masks because of exposure to Covid. How that virus has changed our lives is amazing. The performance is getting close now. I can feel the excitement.

1/28

Good Rehearsal. I will continue to tell the cast to take their time reading. I so wish I could get them out of their scripts a little more. They are getting more comfortable with the music cues and their solos.

1/30

The meeting with Zach went very well. I found out that the Theatre Department was not in charge of that space, which is why they are limited in what they can do for me. I owe them an apology. They will try and get the backstage as clear as possible. There is an opera with a construction theme rehearsing there. So, what looks like trash is props. I love the theatre. Bob gave me the run down as to what should happen for the next couple of rehearsals. There are only two. A straight run through the Acts without stopping going back to fix whatever needs to be fixed at the end. At the Bud Frank, we will practice entrances and exits three or four times and perhaps music. There will be one run-through. Dress rehearsal will be filmed.

The rehearsal went well. We rehearsed music and ran Act 1 without stopping. Bob made some cuts that he felt would make the play run a little closer to one hour. That session ended and everyone pretty much went straight home. It was late.

2/3

Friday we had music at 6:00 pm. We tried to make sure that everyone was caught up on the cuts that were made on Monday. We ran Act 2 and Bob made a few cuts, trying to get each act to an hour in length. I wished I could have one more rehearsal to cement the cuts that were made that week. I could not in good conscience work them the whole weekend and expect a performance on Monday night. It would just have to do.

2/5

**Dress Rehearsal** – It had already been decided to spend whatever time was needed to practice entrances and exits, as the stage was a bit damaged from a water event. I had seen a picture of some people singing at a rally with their arms linked crosswise. I wanted to duplicate that picture at the beginning of the second act. There was also a song where we wanted to stand and hold hands. We also entered and left singing several times during the play. These things needed to be worked out. Then there were our bows. I was getting nervous and was beginning to yell. (You do not yell at southern ladies.) Regardless of the stress of a dress rehearsal. I have been taught this having been married to a very beautiful southern lady for over thirty years.

It was a long night, but everyone stepped up to the challenge. None of us are young so we left there ready for bed. I felt strange. Not empty, maybe I was tired. I just felt tired. One thing I knew this project has changed me as a black man, as a black artist, and as a black American. I look forward to and am encouraged that one day when the adjective black will not be necessary.

2/6

This is the **day of the performance**. We arrived at six and had to put the stage together as there had been classes there that day. The cast arrived and took their seats as soon as the chairs were in place. We warmed up vocally and I gave them what few notes that I had from the day before. Mostly, I wanted to congratulate them for the effort they put into making this production work. These were non-professionals (not getting paid), they had jobs and families and illnesses to deal with, and they worked through it with no complaints. I reminded them to take their time and not to feel rushed. If they made a mistake, keep going. Focus on cues and as much as possible, some of these storylines were quite sad, enjoy what you are doing. We all agreed that this is an important story that needed to be told.

## Epilogue

We did not have the luxury of time to experiment with effects, special or otherwise. We had no access to lighting or media. Truly, we had trouble finding people to do the piece. Once we finally assembled a cast, we scarcely had a month to put the work together. That is, with three rehearsals a week. We rehearsed in a church sanctuary and fellowship hall. The theater space was not even available until the day before the performance. The blessing in that is, the less you have the less that can go wrong. We experimented with song arrangements. My wife, having more than thirty years of experience directing choirs, had my complete confidence. Though I agreed with the author that the songs should be acapella, I would have loved some percussion to back up the singing. What I was most concerned about was humming under the dialogue to give the script a little background music. There were certain scenes that needed accompaniment like the letter scene of a Black Civil War soldier to his wife and the young man talking to his mother. So, to the best of our ability, everything worked. There was nothing that we attempted that did not work. The challenge was to work within the limits of our abilities. We strove for the stars. Lest we fall, our focus was up.

Still, the question was would the audience receive the piece. I knew the music was excellent! Everyone was a singer. Were the characterizations enough to carry the drama of the piece? In musical comedy, we judge our acceptance by the applause. My wife stepped out on stage and began the first song "I Been 'buked and I Been Scorned." We timed it so that the first bit of dialogue, that introduced the story, would be part of the song. My wife finished the song and slowly made it to her seat as the rest of us sat down. I instructed the cast to wait for the applause to die down before speaking. I never thought that there would be no applause, but there was nothing. You could have heard a pin drop. The next speaker waited a respectful moment and began to read her line. Then it hit me! The magic of theatre. Even though it is Readers Theatre they have something visual. They were expectant. Waiting for the story to begin they were waiting to see what would happen next. I saw directing a play in a whole new light. As the director I was so concerned with the, so many, parts. The fact that those parts make a whole work eluded me. I could not see the forest for the trees. You have to make it interesting. No matter what the Theatre is a visual medium, you have to give the audience something to see. And that seeing is three-dimensional eyes, heart, and mind.

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