



Civil Rights Battle #7: Nonviolent Resistance

Martin Luther King, Jr. was only 26 years old when he was called upon by the local Montgomery chapter of the NAACP to be the spokesperson for the Bus Boycott.

Real quick FUN FACT about MLK's name...

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Born Michael King, Jr. in 1929, King had to adjust to a new name in 1934 when he was just 5 years old.

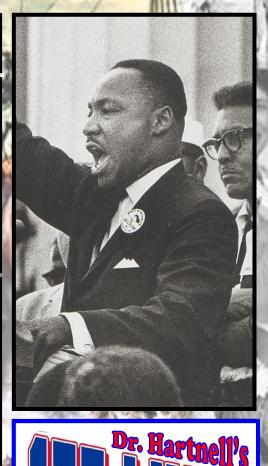


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In that year, his father, the Reverend Michael King, Sr. (1899-1984), returned home from a trip to Europe.

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While there, he toured the historic site where German theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546) challenged the Roman Catholic Church with his *Ninety-Five Theses* and started the Protestant Reformation.

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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

The elder King changed his and his son's names from "Michael" to "Martin Luther".

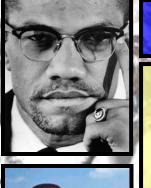
On July 23, 1957, MLK's birth certificate was (filed in Georgia) altered (at age 28). "Michael" is crossed out, and "Martin Luther, Jr." is printed next to it.

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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

MLK worked so diligently for civil rights that the Nobel Prize Committee gave him its peace prize in 1964, making him the youngest person to receive the award (until Malala Yousafzai won it in 2014 at age 17).

Yet there was a side of King unknown to most people.

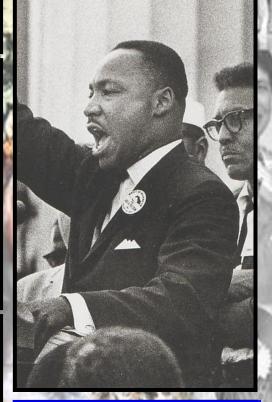
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King's inner battle was to overcome his hatred of the white bigots who lynched a neighbor, firebombed his own house, and spit on him.





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As a youth, MLK had once vowed "to hate all white people".

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As leader of the Civil Rights Movement, MLK looked forward to a world in which people of all races respected each other.

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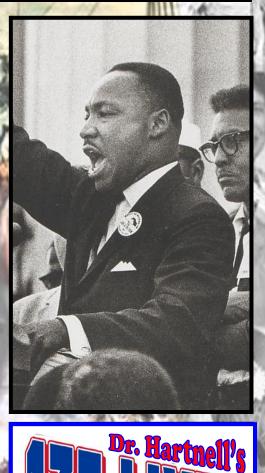


MLK said:

"Ultimately, we are trying to free all of America. Negroes from the bonds of segregation and shame, whites from the bonds of bigotry and fear."

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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

To achieve this, MLK didn't want to use violence.

His nonviolent resistance was based on four influential people. The first was:

1. Henry David Thoreau. In particular, MLK was drawn to Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*.

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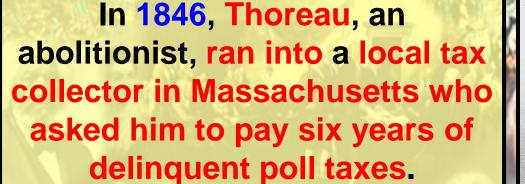
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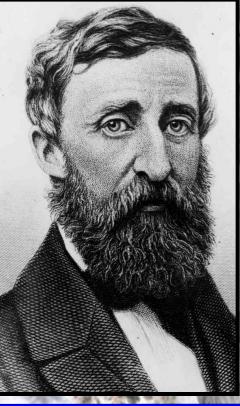












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Thoreau refused because of his opposition to the Mexican-American War, which he felt the taxes were funding.

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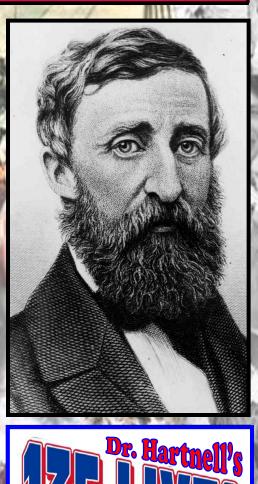


He was arrested and spent a night in jail. He was freed the next day when his aunt paid his back taxes.

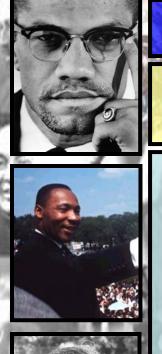


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The experience resulted in him publishing an essay called Resistance to Civil Government (also called Civil Disobedience).







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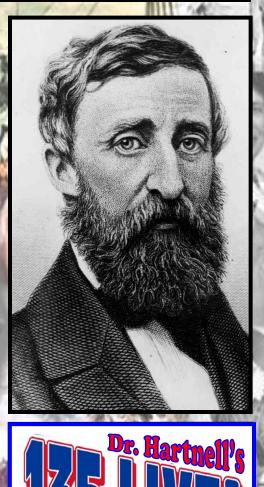
CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

His essay said:

"If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood."

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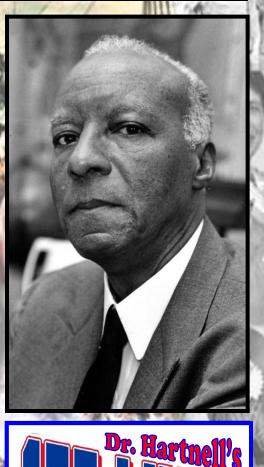
The second person that influenced MLK's nonviolent resistance was:

2. A. Philip Randolph. In particular, MLK was drawn to Randolph's ability to hold massive (and peaceful) demonstrations.

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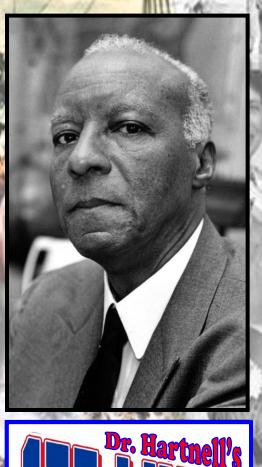




In 1941, and during World War II, Randolph began organizing the "March on Washington Movement" to protest racial discrimination in war industries, an end to segregation, and the passage of anti-lynching laws.

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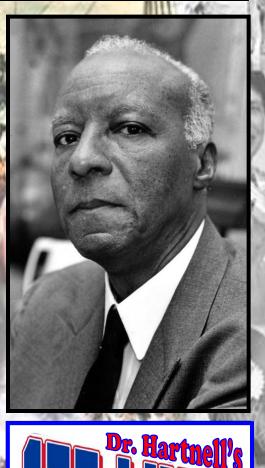
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Randolph was ready to have 50,000 blacks march on D.C. but called it off when President FDR passed Executive Order 8802 that prohibited racial discrimination in the war industries.

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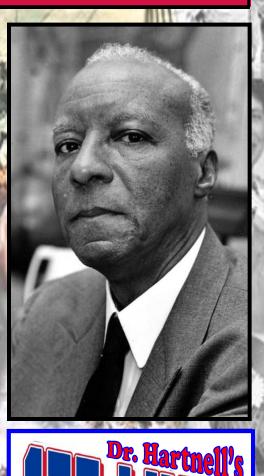




Randolph famously said:

"Freedom is never granted: It is won. Justice is never given: It is exacted. The struggle must be continuous. Freedom is ... an evolving process to higher levels of human, social, economic, political, and religious relationship."

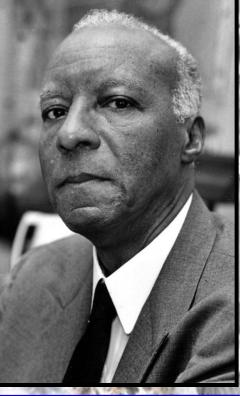
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Randolph's promotion of nonviolent actions to advance goals for blacks strongly influenced the up-and-coming new generation of Civil Rights advocates.





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Randolph's belief in the power of peaceful protest was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi.

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The third person that influenced MLK's nonviolent resistance was:

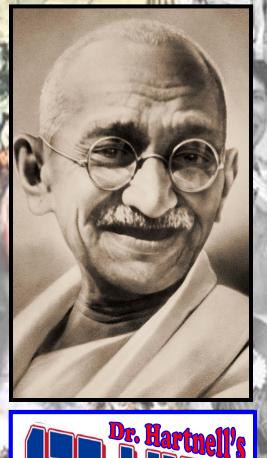
3. Mahatma Gandhi. In particular, MLK was drawn to Gandhi's use of passive resistance to accomplish his goals.

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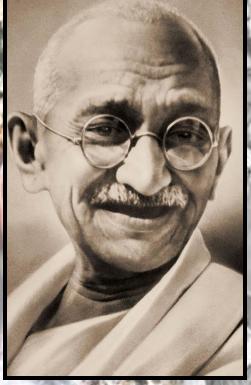




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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

Gandhi was an Indian activist who founded the Indian Independence Movement against British colonial rule. One of his most powerful quotes was:



"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

Some of his other famous quotes include:

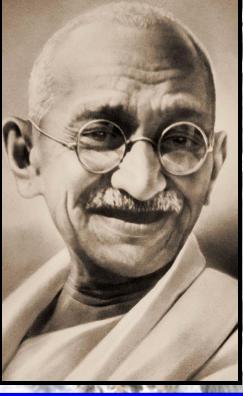
"In a gentle way, you can shake the world."



"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

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CRB7: Nonviolent Resistance

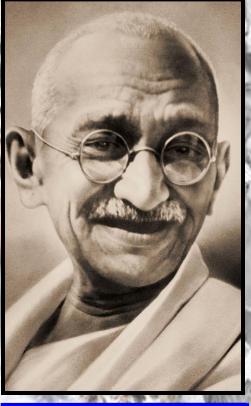
Some of his other famous quotes include:

"An eye for an eye ends up making the whole world blind."

"You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."

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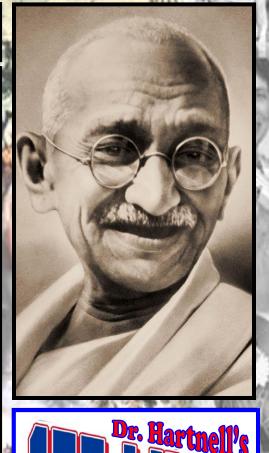




Using tactics like hunger strikes and other forms of passive resistance to help bring together Hindus and Muslims, Gandhi led India to independence in 1947 and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world. (Sadly, he was assassinated in 1948.)

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The final person that influenced MLK's nonviolent resistance was:

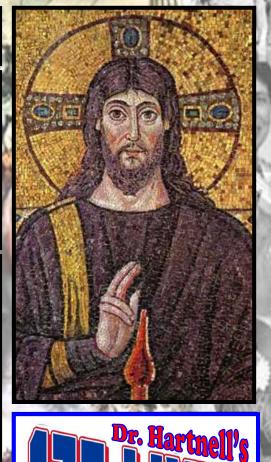


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4. Jesus Christ. In particular, MLK was drawn to Christ's preaching about loving your enemies. (MLK and his father were both reverends.)

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Christ preached turning the other cheek as well as multiple ways to keep the peace despite disagreements. He said:

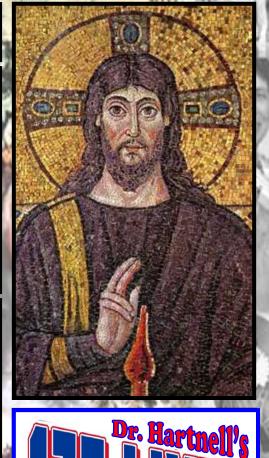


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"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

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MLK relied heavily on this nonviolent resistance and soul force because *"in order to gain our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deed"*.

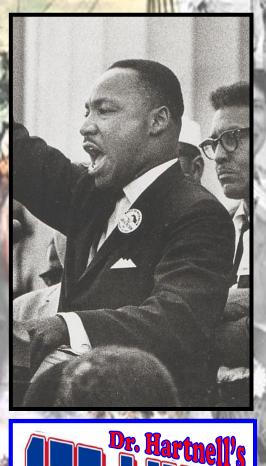


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"Sit-ins" would soon become a tactic of the movement. This is where demonstrators remain seated until forcibly removed.

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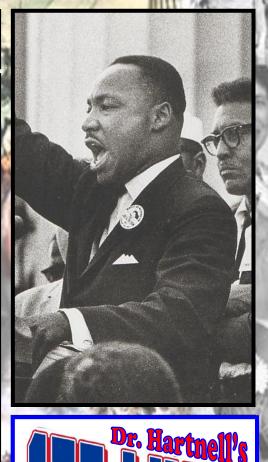
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After the Montgomery Bus Boycott ended, MLK began teaming up with civil rights leaders to found the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to continue** nonviolent actions. Using black churches as a base, the SCLC staged protests throughout the South.

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Civil Rights Battle #8: "Sit-ins"

On February 1, 1960, four black students in Greensboro, North Carolina sat at the "whitesonly" counter.



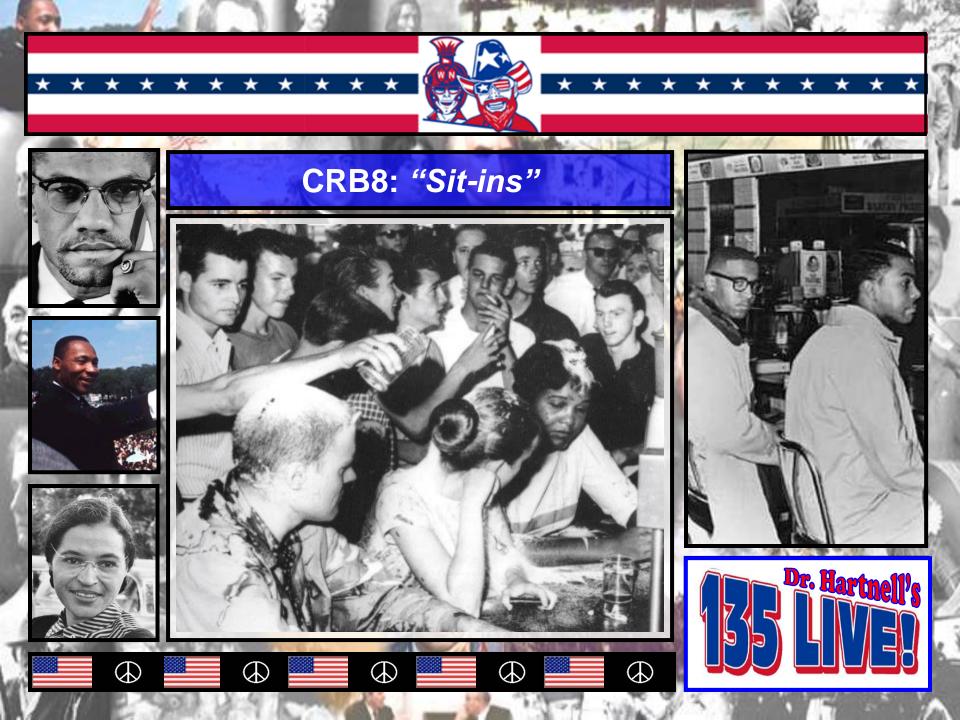
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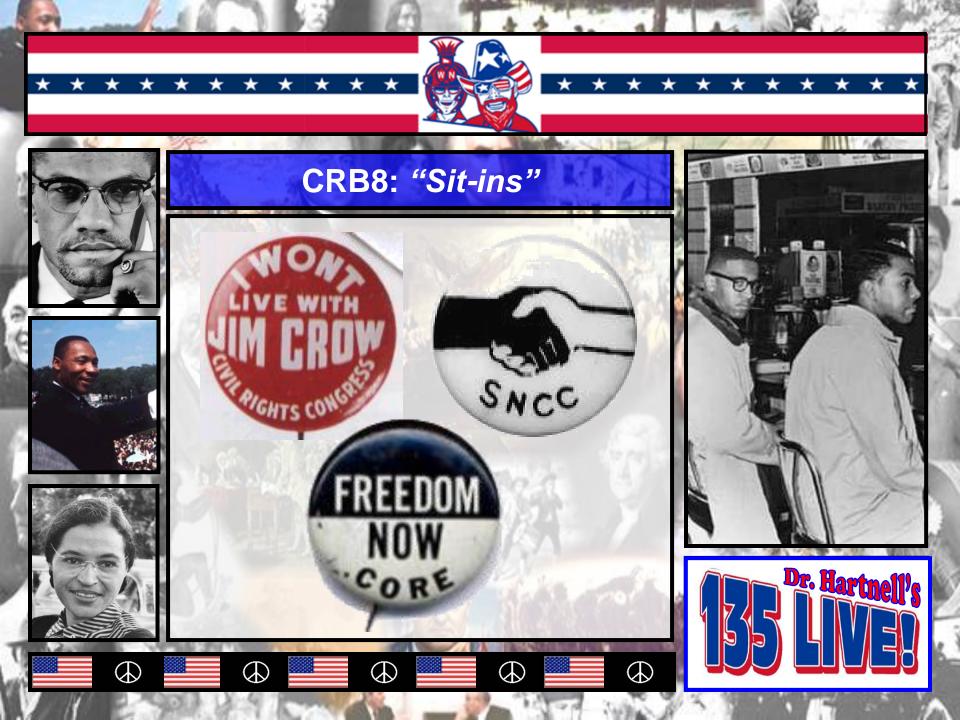
They were refused service, but the "sit-in" grew to 150. Whites attacked the students, and the event was covered on TV.

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Civil Rights Battle #9: "Freedom Rides"

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) soon set out to test compliance with a 1960 Supreme Court ruling that prohibited segregation in facilities for interstate travel.

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CRB9: "Freedom Rides"

To do so, they organized the "Freedom Rides".



These were bus trips throughout the South that attempted to desegregate buses.

As expected, they encountered violent resistance from whites.

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CRB9: "Freedom Rides"

Some of the buses that these "Freedom Riders" were on were bombed.

The Freedom Riders gave world publicity to the racial discrimination and, in doing so, helped bring about positive change.

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 Explain the story behind MLK, Jr.'s "name change".





QUESTION

2. MLK's nonviolent resistance was based on four influential people. Who were the first and second? What drew MLK to each? What did these two do that made them "nonviolent"?





QUESTION

3. MLK's nonviolent resistance was based on four influential people. Who were the third and fourth? What drew MLK to each? What did these two do that made them "nonviolent"?





4. How does a "sit-in" work?

QUESTION

Explain happened in North Carolina on February 1, 1960.







5. Who were the "Freedom Riders"? What were they trying to do? What happened to many of them?



