Multimedia Primary Source Discussion Set
The Black Power Movement

URL: https://americanarchive.org/primary_source_sets/black-power

Teaching Tips

The resources in this set are composed of video and audio clips from the 1960s of Black Power advocates and activists speaking in various settings, including interviews, conferences, rallies, protests, television broadcasts, and press conferences. Arranged chronologically by date, this resource set allows students to see how Black Power definitions and issues evolved over time and to consider how and why African Americans from different walks of life thought about and engaged with the movement.

Background Information

Before engaging with this resource set, students should possess the following:

- a general understanding of Jim Crow, racial segregation, racial violence in the mid-twentieth-century era, and pre-1960s Black nationalist movements
- a general understanding of the civil rights era and Black Power era timeframe
- an understanding of differences between civil rights and Black Power politics
- knowledge of nationally recognized Black figures and organizations in the post-World War II United States
- an understanding of nonviolent direct-action protest
- a general understanding of issues impacting African Americans in U.S. cities, such as de facto segregation, unemployment, unequal housing and education, and police violence
- a general knowledge of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War
- a general understanding of other 1960s social movements, including second-wave feminism and the antiwar movement
Essential Question

What do the voices of Black Power activists contribute to our understanding about African Americans’ rights and experiences in the post-civil rights era United States?

General Discussion Questions

- What do you think the goals of the Black Power Movement were?
- What challenges did Black Power activists face?
- How have these primary source audio and video clips affected your understanding about Black Power as a concept or a movement?

Classroom Activities

Ask students to engage in group work around specific topics, then come together to discuss.

1) Divide the class into four groups. Ask each group to watch or listen to the sources in their assigned topics, as organized below.

**Group 1: Black Power Politics**

- [Stokely Carmichael Discusses Black Power](#) (1966)

**Group 2: Nonviolence and Black Power**

- [Stokely Carmichael Discusses Organizing and Voting](#) (1966)
- [Activist James Bevel Promotes Nonviolence](#) (1966)

**Group 3: Black Panther Party for Self Defense**

- [Radio broadcast of Bobby Seale at “Free Huey Newton” Rally](#) (1968)
- [Black Student Takeover at Brandeis University](#) (1969)
- [Angela Davis Speaks at Black Panther Rally](#) (1969)
Group 4: Student Protests

- Stokely Carmichael Discusses Black Power (1966)
- Black Student Takeover at Brandeis University (1969)
- Student Press Conference Following Student Takeover at Amherst College (1970)

2. Bring the groups back together for a discussion guided by the following questions.

- How did Black Power advocates define Black Power? What, if any, thread was running through their definitions?
- What distinguished Black Power objectives and protests from those of the civil rights era?
- What issues did Black Power activists identify as the biggest challenges to Black people and Black communities?
- What was the relationship between Black Power and education?
- How did Stokely Carmichael and James Bevel, both well-known and important activists in the civil rights movement, view Black Power?