



# North Central College and the Civil Rights Movement

By Eleanor Barbino '03

## North Centralites Return From Selma



### NC Represented At Pre-March

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## Human Relations: Black Relevance

### Behind Black Power



### 4 NC Buses Go To Freedom Fest; See It As Boost To 'Overcome'

### Actions Of Summer '67

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# **NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

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*North Central College  
and the Civil Rights Movement*

BY ELEANOR BARBINO

The civil rights movement directly affected life on the campus of North Central College (“NCC”). Student involvement in the movement during the early sixties was minimal, but, after 1965, North Central College students joined the movement as the focus began to shift from southern oppression to northern urban poverty and segregation of African American neighborhoods. By the spring of 1965, civil rights victories in the south led many Americans to believe that the hardest work had been accomplished and that the major battles had been won. In his book Black Power and White Protestants, Joseph C. Hough suggests that whites did not comprehend the magnitude of the segregation issue across the United States and had fallen into a false sense of exuberance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Hough, Jr., Black Power and White Protestants. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968): 5.

Throughout the African American community, dissatisfaction with non-violence caused a more militant approach to civil rights protesting. Dr. Martin Luther King's march from Selma to Montgomery marked the end of the southern civil rights movement and a shift of focus to northern cities. The non-violence campaign of Dr. King met with little success in Chicago, leading to the growth of frustration among African Americans living in the slums and a rise of the Black Power Movement nationwide. The North Central College newspaper, *The NC Chronicle* ("*The Chronicle*"), documented early student involvement in the Chicago Freedom Movement and, later, changing attitudes across the campus that reflected a larger national trend.

During the early sixties, while empathizing with southern protestors, most North Central students expressed feelings of detachment from civil rights issues. North Central College students were similarly divorced from the events in Chicago concerning the African American boycott of Chicago schools during 1963. Through the efforts of the campus ministry program under the direction of Chaplain George St. Angelo, the civil rights movement at North Central College gained momentum. During the spring of 1965, campus ministry shifted the focus of the North Central Chapel Convocation Series (a lecture series sponsored by the campus ministry) "to emphasize the goals of the racial revolution and

moral issues involved.”<sup>2</sup> During the series, the campus ministry invited civil rights activists to speak at the college and share their views with the students and faculty. James Farmer, the director of the Congress of Racial Equality (“CORE”)



appeared at the college as part of this series. *The Chronicle* did not run a commentary on Farmer’s visit, but two weeks after his appearance, three busloads of students and area residents departed from North Central College for Selma, Alabama, to support Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern

Christian Leadership Conference (“SCLC”) in protesting voter discrimination in Alabama.<sup>3</sup> In an article that ran in the March 26<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Chronicle*, Cathy George, a NCC student who made the trip south, credited Farmer’s speech with inspiring her to participate in the protest. She introduced her article “Personal Comments on Guess Where,” with a quote from Farmer’s speech: “One can’t be neutral today...if you are

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<sup>2</sup> Tom Eimermann, *Political Scientist Sees Civil Rights*. NC Chronicle, April 2, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Ann Keating and Pierre Lebeau. A Shared History. (North Central College).

a bystander you are not innocent...the greatest crime of all is the crime of silence.”<sup>4</sup>

In the Spring of 1965, Dr. King and the SCLC organized marches from Selma to highlight white resistance to black voter registration and force Congress to pass the Voter Rights Act. The first march met with violent resistance from white police and received national media coverage. Juan Williams explained that the ABC television station broke into *Judgment at Nuremburg* to televise the violence.<sup>5</sup> Eirling Peterson of North Central College recounted watching the broadcast and drawing a parallel between Nazi brutality and southern white abuse of the marchers.<sup>6</sup>



Until the Selma trip, most North Central College students paid little attention to the civil rights movement. Articles submitted to *The Chronicle* describing the experiences of the students who traveled to Selma underscore the indifference or detachment felt by most North Central students

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<sup>4</sup> Cathy George. “*Personal Comments on Guess Where?*” NC Chronicle, 26 March 1965.

<sup>5</sup> Juan Williams. *Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, 1954 – 1965*. (New York: Viking 1987): 273

<sup>6</sup> Eirling Peterson. “*Instructor Tells ‘Why’*” NC Chronicle 26 March 1965.

before the trip. Many students explained that they chose to go because they wanted to find out what was going on in the south; others explained that they did not feel as though they had a stake in the civil rights movement prior to the trip. Phil Eichling stated, “A few months ago, if someone would have mentioned Selma, Alabama, to me the reply would have been ‘where?’”<sup>7</sup> Judy Cesna reported, “I was interested in racial problems for a long time, but being a typical suburbanite I wasn’t involved in it. I felt that in going on this trip I could see what the problem really was.”<sup>8</sup> Other articles published in *The Chronicle* also suggested that some students chose not to participate in the trip since they believed that the effort was a waste of time. In announcing an open seminar for faculty and students to discuss the Selma trip, called a “Bull Session”, *The Chronicle* listed common opinions and questions linked to the trip. The seminar sponsors hoped that these questions would be answered at the forum: “I can’t understand why all those people went to Selma. What did they prove? What right did they have to intrude? What did it all do?”<sup>9</sup> In an editorial piece, Dick Mills reported, “Many who did not make the trip feel that it was useless; what good did it really do?”<sup>10</sup> These

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<sup>7</sup> Phil Eichling. “*NC Represented at Premarch*”, NC Chronicle 26 March 1965.

<sup>8</sup> Judy Cesna. “*You’re Going to Selma?*” NCC Chronicle 26 March 1965.

<sup>9</sup> “*Bull Session*,” NC Chronicle 26 March 1965.

<sup>10</sup> Dick Mills. *Editorial* NC Chronicle 26 March 1965.

sentiments suggest that the trip did not have the support of the entire school body, and many students maintained that the civil rights movement had little to do with them. Though the students could not have known it at the time, the Selma campaign achieved its goal. On August 6 1965, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law.<sup>11</sup>

Students that traveled south to Selma described the experience as life changing and focused on the sense of belonging to a community, echoing Williams’s quotes of Selma participants.<sup>12</sup> Cathy George of North Central College



described the camaraderie of the experience, “Our experience will never leave us, [sic] when we were in Selma, each person from our group

was one of 120... we were 120 of 6,000. Each one was of 6,000 and 6,000 were one.”<sup>13</sup>

The victory at Selma prompted Dr. King to take the movement north. James R. Ralph explains that the depth of despair in northern ghettos compelled King and the SCLC to take the movement into northern cities. Encouraged by

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<sup>11</sup> United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Voting Section [http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting/intro/intro\\_b.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting/intro/intro_b.htm)

<sup>12</sup> Williams, 284

<sup>13</sup> Cathy George, “*Personal Comments on Guess Where?*” NC Chronicle 26 March 1965

Chicago civil rights leaders, King and the SCLC chose to focus their attention on Chicago, shifting the goals of the movement from “civil rights to human rights,”<sup>14</sup> and teaming with a federation of civil rights groups known as the Coordinated Council of Community Organizations (“CCCCO”) to form the Chicago Freedom Movement.<sup>15</sup> According to Ralph, the climate for reform had already begun to deteriorate with national attention focused more on the Vietnam War.<sup>16</sup> In spite of this, King and the SCLC believed that they could revive the struggling Chicago movement.

After the success of the Selma campaign and a summer of marches protesting the inequality of the Chicago school system, the fall of 1965 witnessed an increase in NCC student involvement in the civil rights movement. According to an article in *The Chronicle*, North Central College students participated in a program that investigated poverty in Chicago and the church’s responsibility to the poor. NCC students went into poor neighborhoods of Chicago to talk with the residents and tried to rent apartments and store fronts in an effort to investigate segregation within those neighborhoods. Dianna

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<sup>14</sup> Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, Voices of Freedom. (New York: Bantam Books. 1990): 298.

<sup>15</sup> James R. Ralph, Jr. Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement. (Cambridge: Harvard Press 1993): 1

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*, 2

Brause described it as difficult but invigorating work.<sup>17</sup> In the same issue of *The Chronicle*, Ginni Rode ran an article on a southern civil rights group called SCOPE. She stated SCOPE's mission and explained that a North Central College alumnus, active in SCOPE, wrote to the chaplain requesting financial assistance from North Central College students. Rode briefly described the challenges facing SCOPE and requested that students "give when someone comes to your door."<sup>18</sup>

Students did not always receive a warm reception from Chicago's poor. In the December 10 issue, *The Chronicle* reported that about forty students canvassed the Garfield Park area of Chicago, testing young children for lead paint exposure. Gene Arnould described being turned away from a home by the father of a young child. He quoted the father, "We don't visit nobody, and nobody visits us," demonstrating the father's lack of trust in the white students who believed that their only mission was to help.<sup>19</sup> Arnould expressed shock and disappointment along with understanding. He asked, "Did he perhaps know something about our help that we ourselves did not know? What had he experienced to make him react as he did?"<sup>20</sup> Attitudes toward white involvement in civil rights and

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<sup>17</sup> Dianne Brause, "NC In 'Inner-city'" NC Chronicle 12 November 1965.

<sup>18</sup> Ginni Rodes. "SCOPE an Opportunity for All" NC Chronicle 12 November 1965.

<sup>19</sup> Gene Arnould "Behind Me." NC Chronicle, 10 December 1965

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

black communities had begun to change, leading to confusion among white civil rights workers.

Articles written in *The Chronicle* by exchange students also reflected the changing awareness of North Central College students to the civil rights movement. During the early sixties, the campus ministry program sponsored an exchange program between North Central College and Spelman College, an African-American all women's college in Atlanta, Georgia. The campus ministry program later broadened the exchange program to include Morris Brown College, an African-American all male college, thus opening the exchange program opportunity to male students. Early articles written by exchange students from 1961 to 1963 were very short and focused on the differences in academics between the colleges and the positive experiences of the students, which included how welcomed they felt at the host colleges. This focus began



to change with articles that began to appear around 1966, reflecting the experiences of the exchange students with northern racism. Morris Brown College students, Frank Jenkins and Don Small, recalled that their first impression “upon arriving on campus...was the

hospitality exhibited by the students that we met.”<sup>21</sup> They also described their impression of the academic standards in both Morris Brown College and North Central College. Jenkins and Small stressed the value of the exchange program to understanding civil rights issues and recommended participation in the program to others. In May 1966, Jenkins and another fellow exchange student, Jane Smith, from Spelman College, ran a follow up article describing their experiences as exchange students. These articles are much less positive than the first, but still stress the value of their experiences. For example, Smith wrote, “We have gained some invaluable insight to how people of an entirely different culture and background interpret what



happens around them... We’re positive that we brought with us many of our southern stereotypes of Caucasians. We may note here that we will most certainly be carrying some of them back with us,”<sup>22</sup> This passage suggests a less than positive experience with northern white

society. In his article, Jenkins explained, “The kids that I’ve really gotten to know have really increased my understanding

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<sup>21</sup> Jenkins, Frank and Don Small. “*M Brown Students Note Academic Atmosphere.*” NC Chronicle 25 February 1966, 4

<sup>22</sup> Jane Smith, “*NCC A Last Farewell.*” NC Chronicle 13 May 1966, 4

of the problems that confront the typical student here who wants to be open-minded toward Negroes but who faces an onslaught of criticism from his 'friends' and also goes home to and is subjected to that same sort of thing.”<sup>23</sup>

Letters published in *The Chronicle* from the North Central College students who traveled south described a different experience and a new understanding of northern racism. Like the students who traveled to Selma in March 1965, exchange students Rich Ploch and Fred Roesti described a warm welcome by southern blacks in their initial article. Ploch wrote:

“Our initial reception at Morris Brown was far warmer and openly friendlier than my greatest anticipation...Everywhere I went students and faculty members made an effort to introduce themselves personally and offer any assistance I might need. The atmosphere immediately seemed to dispel any feelings of anxiety. I never felt any alienation or hostility directed toward me...”<sup>24</sup>

In the same article both Ploch and Roesti expressed surprise at their own prejudice. Ploch explained, “It has been revealing to discover how many stereotypes a liberal, open-minded, unprejudiced (?) person can possess without being at

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<sup>23</sup> Frank Jenkins, “*NCC A Last Farewell*” NC Chronicle 13 May 1966, 4

<sup>24</sup> Rich Ploch, “*Confronts White Problem.*” NC Chronicle 25 March 1966, 5

all aware of them.”<sup>25</sup> He also described an awareness of the nature of northern racism, suggesting that increased communication between races offered the only solution to discrimination. Roesti recounted his first experience with his own prejudice:

“Across the hall from my room, two fellows were playing chess with soft classical music in the background. This took me by surprise, for after all don’t Negroes listen to soul music only? And who ever heard of Negroes playing chess? Perhaps this indicates the extent to which limited contact develops a disposition of regarding others as stereotypes rather than individuals.”<sup>26</sup>

In their last reports in the May 6 issue of *The Chronicle*, both Ploch and Roesti expressed a greater understanding of northern racism. Ploch described the hypocrisy of the north and explained that his time at Morris Brown College had opened his eyes to the “million little mental roadblocks perpetuating attitudes which will ruin all of the recent legal victories.”<sup>27</sup>

Roesti also described experiences with northern racism, recounting a trip with the Morris Brown College choir, during which an elevator operator asked, “Are you with **them**?”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid.* The question mark in quotations is part of Ploch’s quote.

<sup>26</sup> Fred Roesti, “*Faces Own Prejudice*” NC Chronicle 25 March 1966, 5

<sup>27</sup> Rich Ploch, “*Last Report from Exchange to South*” NC Chronicle 6 May 1966, 5

<sup>28</sup> Fred Roesti. “*Last Report from Exchange to South*” NC Chronicle 6 May 1966, 5

Roesti reported a new understanding of the harm that the “nice white” had done the Negro. “The nice white, although not a rabid racist, is still afraid to incorporate Negro history with American history, is still afraid to discover personal relationships with Negroes, is still the person who says, ‘I’m all for integration, **but**’... We whites want to see Negroes in an image which we build...”<sup>29</sup>

Throughout its involvement in Chicago, the Chicago Freedom Movement tried to gain the support of white Chicagoans. The Freedom Festival marked the pinnacle of those efforts. The CCCO planned the event in an effort to increase awareness and raise money to support the cause. According to Ralph, twelve thousand people, about ten percent of whom were white, attended the festival at the International Amphitheater in Chicago. Various performers appeared to support the event and provide entertainment for the crowd. The event “grossed more than \$100,000 from contributions of whites and blacks.”<sup>30</sup> During a speech to the crowd, Dr. King directed comments to the whites in the audience, entreating them to join the fight to eliminate slums and emphasizing the need for an interracial coalition. The Campus Church Community (“CCC”) of North Central College played a role in planning and supporting the Freedom Festival. According to

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<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Ralph, 75

an article entitled *Response to a Program*, the CCC was part of the CCCO, a federation of civil rights organizations “which has as its purpose the combating of slums and segregation in Chicago.”<sup>31</sup> The article described North Central College’s commitment to support the Freedom Festival in Chicago on March 12. The article also contained a letter written to Dave Catlin, who helped “coordinate CCC activities with the Freedom Festival.” The letter, sent by Dr. King and Albert Raby, thanked the CCC for their “swift and generous response to (their) appeal.”<sup>32</sup>



Frank Jenkins, a reporter for *The Chronicle* during his term at North Central College, covered the Freedom Festival for the paper. Four busloads of North Central

College students left the college to join the Freedom Festival and “help finance the campaign to alleviate slum conditions in the Chicago area.”<sup>33</sup> He described North Central College students’ reaction to the festival as “very complimentary.” Jenkins also reported that the Freedom Festival was held to “urge more people to become involved in the ‘war on

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<sup>31</sup> *Response to a Program*. NC Chronicle. 11 March 1966, 6

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Frank Jenkins, “4 NC Buses Go To Freedom Fest; See It As Boost To ‘Overcome’” NC Chronicle 25 March 1966, 4

slums’.”<sup>34</sup> He stated, “It is hoped that the event will serve to bring into focus the problems to the thousands of people who live in Chicago but who are only aware that there is a problem of some kind. There is a dire need for a communication between these people and the ‘other America which they so rarely are really exposed to.’”<sup>35</sup> Jenkins’ article had an optimistic tone and attempted to convince other students to join in the effort to eliminate slums and racial inequality. Jenkins then expressed disappointment in the turn out of North Central College students to the Freedom Festival. He stated, “It is my opinion that the Freedom Festival should have had an even larger attendance than it did; its purpose would have been served to an even greater extent. The event was very effective in its purpose which was a presentment [sic] of the facts of the problems of slums to the masses of people who live in the “Other America.”<sup>36</sup> These statements illustrated Jenkins’ belief that most whites were unaware of the challenges faced by black communities.

Within the Freedom Festival article, Jenkins reported that the CCC was planned to participate in the boycott of Jenner Elementary School to protest the principal’s “lack of cooperation... with the P.T.A. in looking for solutions to the

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

problems of the school”<sup>37</sup>. Jenkins encouraged white students to join, referring to it as “a chance to do something about our unawareness of these problems.”<sup>38</sup> Critics accused the principal, Mildred Chuchut, of maladministration and prejudice and demanded her resignation.<sup>39</sup> In mid-March a number of civil rights organizations joined the boycott, including members of CORE, SCLC and CCCO.<sup>40</sup>

*The Chronicle* ran a big story on the Jenner school boycott titled “CCC Sends Troublemakers to Chicago Boycott,” written by Gene Arnould. In spite of Jenkin’s earlier article encouraging participation and the exuberant air of the report, only five North Central College students participated in the boycott by becoming Freedom School teachers. Arnould boasted, “North Central College Students maintained their role as ‘troublemakers.’”<sup>41</sup> The article outlined the problems of Jenner Elementary School and stated “Results of the boycott are not clear.”<sup>42</sup> According to James Ralph, the demonstration succeeded in removing Chuchut from Jenner Elementary School.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Ralph, 66

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Gene Arnould. “*CCC Sends Troublemakers to Chicago Boycott*”. NC Chronicle 29 April 1966, 4

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Ralph, 66.

In spite of small victories, the Chicago civil rights movement had not made any real progress, and the frustration of the African-American community erupted in the summer of 1966. Non-violence had produced few gains in northern cities across the United States. In response, the Black Power movement, a more militant response to racism and inequality, gained momentum and divided civil rights leaders, causing a split between civil rights organizations. Harry Hampton and Steve Fayer suggest that Dr. King endorsed a more militant movement but warned against alienating whites from the movement.<sup>44</sup> James Ralph points out that King shunned the Black Power movement because it would destroy the black/white coalition upon which the movement depended.<sup>45</sup>

The shift in racial relations played out in *The Chronicle* during the 1966-67 school year. North Central College experienced a rise in the Black Power movement and white backlash associated with it. *The Chronicle* began the year by running a series of articles explaining the Black Power movement. These articles take on a more assertive, almost anti-white tone. John Daniel's article appearing in the September 16 issue of *The Chronicle* explained that Black Power was not about military but economic strength. He wrote:

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<sup>44</sup> Hampton and Fayer, 305.

<sup>45</sup> Ralph, 96.

“It means the little dirty Negro boy won’t go into Mr. Bill’s corner store and be charged outrageous prices simply because Mr. Bill knows the county check won’t come ‘till the third so the only way Joe and his eight brothers and sisters can eat is on credit...It’s knowing that Whitey’s sacred neighborhood school system is against you and anything you do is all by yourself...If you try to beat me, I’ll try my best to beat you twice as badly.”<sup>46</sup>

The confrontational tone of this article mirrored a wider trend in the civil rights movement. The Black Power movement, initiated by Stokely Carmichael and his supporters after the shooting of James Meredith during the Meredith March in 1966, immediately intimidated whites involved in the movement. Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer included a quote in Voices of Freedom from David Dawley, describing his feelings at a meeting where black civil rights activists began calling for Black Power, “That was frightening. Suddenly the happy feeling of the march was threatened. Suddenly I felt threatened. It seemed like a division between black and white. It seemed like a hit on well-intentioned northern whites like me...”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> John Daniels. “*Negroes Ask for Black Identity*,” NC Chronicle 16 September 1966, 4

<sup>47</sup> Hampton and Fayer, 290.

In its September 23 issue, *The Chronicle* ran an article entitled “Human Relations: Black Relevance,” which reported the formation of the “NCC Human Relations Council” and discussed the schism in the civil rights movement in more detail. A student panel, led by John Daniels, discussed the events of the summer of ’66 and the various interpretations of “Black Power.” Concerning the violence, Schultz wrote, “The riots that swept through our country’s ghettos created a division of opinions...In one camp the threat of violence was pictured as the only really effective catalyst to the accomplishment of civil rights goals.”<sup>48</sup>

Edward Karanja’s article titled “Behind Black Power” illustrated the extent to which blacks dismissed white involvement in the movement. He wrote:

“The young and more militant leaders are disenchanted and dissatisfied with the slow movement of the old civil rights organizations like the Urban League and the NAACP, which they correctly assess as too often identified with the white power structure to be adequately critical of it...Black Power, although not anti-white realizes that Negroes must be aware of the problem of liberating themselves from inferiority complexes borne of slavery and its attendant stigmas, and receiving flattery from whites...Negro leaders

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<sup>48</sup> Don Schultz. “*Human Relations: Black Relevance*” NC Chronicle 23 September 1966.

want to sit down at the bargaining table and have something more substantial than white sympathy.”<sup>49</sup>

The departure from interracial, non-violent participation, advocated by most civil rights groups in the early sixties indicated a new direction for the movement; a direction that excluded white involvement.

The responses of white students to the rise of the Black Power movement illustrated a growing impatience and lack of sympathy with the goals of the civil rights activists. In an editorial that ran on September 23, Bill Edson spoke out against the Black Power movement, demonstrating student backlash to the Black Power movement. “I’m tired of hearing about Civil Rights, too. Civil Rights does not have my sympathy... I don’t know what the Negro is really feeling or experiencing... The Negro does not want my sympathies much less a put up front which I might be able to make.”<sup>50</sup>

The backlash against Black Power continued in the “Letters to the Editor” printed in the September 30<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Chronicle*. Liz Stacey complained that she “often finds herself in the position of being unable to express a minority opinion...”<sup>51</sup> She resented the use of the school newspaper to

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<sup>49</sup> Edward Karanja. “*Behind Black Power*,” NC Chronicle 23 September 1966.

<sup>50</sup> Bill Edson. “*The Battered Briefcase*,” NC Chronicle 23 September 1966.

<sup>51</sup> Liz Stacey. “*Too Much Black Power*” . NC Chronicle 30 September 1966.

argue the validity of the Black Power movement. She stated, “I think it is a simply ‘grand idea’ that people become ‘involved,’ but I sincerely resent the abridgement of my freedom of choice by the execution of their ‘involvement.’ ...Look around my dear editor, and perhaps if you listen quite intently you might hear the hushed rumble of the ‘majority’ talking in low undertones about something subversive – like the rule of the majority.”<sup>52</sup> This letter suggests that whites began to feel exasperated by the increasing demands of blacks.

While the Black Power movement elicited some backlash from white students, this backlash may not have been campus wide. Stacey’s letter elicited negative reactions from Mary Stutzman, a fellow student, and Linnea Schoppe, the faculty advisor of the newspaper, in the October 14 edition of *The Chronicle*. In a scathing rebuttal, Stutzman blasted Stacey’s letter and states, “Look around my dear Miss Stacey, and perhaps if you look quite intently, you’ll see there’s a world away from our secluded campus and a majority which isn’t always right.”<sup>53</sup>

Linnea Schoppe took both Liz Stacey and Bill Edson to task in her “Letter to the Editor”. In her response to Stacey’s

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Mary Stutzman. “*Trite ‘Involvement,’ – Responses.*” NC Chronicle 14 October 1966.

letter, Schoppe explained that white, middle class Anglo-Saxon Protestants are the minority in the world and “if the world were to be ruled by the majority, it would be ruled by relatively poor, dark-skinned, non-Christians. To the world-at-large, Black Power is vitally important.” She then turned to Edson’s comments of apathy toward the civil rights movement stating, “it is very easy for him to say ‘live and let live’; he is, presumably, living on the safe comfortable NCC campus where he can do just that.”<sup>54</sup> These rebuttals had the air of a personal attack against Stacey and Edson, demonstrating the highly emotional nature of the issue.

An editorial written by civil rights activist Gene Arnould entitled “‘Find the Faith, Baby’ – Please” illustrated the increasing alienation of white civil rights activists as that school year progressed. Arnould denounced the tactics of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell who tried to incite a riot because the House of Representatives refused to allow him to take his seat as Representative of Harlem, pending investigation on his use of funds and general behavior. Powell urged the crowd to refuse to pay taxes and burn their draft cards. Arnould concluded his article stating, “May we hope that the responsibility characteristic of the terribly slow movement of the past toward human rights for all men, the

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<sup>54</sup> Linnea Schoppe. “A World of Our Own?” NC Chronicle 14 October 1966.

responsibility characteristic of Dr. King, returns in growing force to battle the disgraceful neglect of a ‘nation under God.’”<sup>55</sup> White activists clung to the ideal of an interracial coalition supported by Dr. King to fight racial injustice and inequality.

By August 1966, Dr. King decided to leave Chicago. The violence of the summer and the implacable resistance of whites convinced Dr. King that he and the SCLC could do nothing more for Chicago at that time. SCLC sponsored programs ceased, as did North Central College involvement in Chicago’s city slums. By March 1967, student participation in the civil rights movement had shifted from active involvement to apathy and criticism. In the March 10 issue of *The Chronicle*, Cathy Dunn ran an interview with Dr. Richard Thurston, of North Central College’s Sociology and Anthropology Department in which she explained, “Dr. Thurston senses that the Left and student groups such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) show feelings of ‘whining about the world.’”<sup>56</sup> She quoted Dr. Thurston, “all young people show dissatisfaction with the world’s values, and want the world to be better...”<sup>57</sup> Thurston charged that

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<sup>55</sup>Gene Arnould. “*Find the Faith Baby – Please*,” NC Chronicle 3 February 1967.

<sup>56</sup>Cathy Dunn. “*An Interview with Dr. Thurston: The New Left Out*,” NC Chronicle 10 March 1967.

<sup>57</sup>ibid.

students needed to “pitch in and stop whining.”<sup>58</sup> The tone of this article suggests that Dr. Thurston felt that the student body was immature and somewhat out of touch. The lack of involvement may have had more to do with a feeling of confusion and lack of programs in Chicago than Dr. Thurston realized. This confusion is evident in the articles that ran covering James Meredith’s visit to North Central College.

James Meredith spoke at the College on April 4, 1967. The announcement in the March 10<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Chronicle* recapped his contributions to the civil rights movement and



explained that Mr. Meredith would “present his views - his own, individual ideas, he stresses, [sic] even though they are often at variance with those of official Negro organizations.”<sup>59</sup> In the April 7 edition of *The Chronicle*, Pamela Klass reviewed Meredith’s visit, summarizing his key points and explaining that Meredith wanted to build an interracial majority to combat

stereotypes and fight for equality.<sup>60</sup> Klass expressed disappointment with the result of Meredith’s appearance,

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> “*Meredith Scheduled to Appear April 4,*” *NC Chronicle* 10 March 1967.

<sup>60</sup> Pamela Klass. “*The Sounds of Silence,*” *NC Chronicle* 7 April 1967.

wishing that Meredith had laid a plan for building a majority. Her article also suggested that the students who attended the lecture disagreed on civil rights issues, illustrating the difficulty of creating a majority. She wrote, “Unfortunately, he did not deal with how he is building his majority. Within the small group present, no majority opinion was even reached. In fact, there seemed to be a barrier which was slowly being erected. It was not particularly racial; it was more emotional and personal.”<sup>61</sup> A letter to the Editor of *The Chronicle* written by Linnea Shoppe supports Klass’ conclusion that many students expressed dissatisfaction with Meredith’s appearance. She explained, “We all, I think, expected different things from James Meredith. Some, a prophet crying in the wilderness. Some, a zealot calling for us to follow him. Some a preacher chastising us for our sins. Some, a potential philosopher-king with all the wisdom and knowledge, wanting only power. Some were disappointed that he didn’t try to preach or teach.”<sup>62</sup> Clearly, North Central College students were hoping for direction and found none.

The polarization between North Central College’s black and white students grew even more pronounced during the 1967 – 68 school year. Doug Smith, *The Chronicle*’s assistant

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<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Linnea Shoppe, “*Letters to the Editor: James Meredith.*” NC Chronicle 7 April 1967.

editor during that year, ran yet another appeal for whites to understand Black Power not as a militant movement against whites but as quest to “develop a positive self-image within the individual Negro, from which self-respect and self-determination can develop.”<sup>63</sup>

African-American frustration with the slow progress of the civil rights movement is evident in Tim Collier’s article, “Reflection of Summer ’67,” that ran in the September 22<sup>nd</sup> issue of *The Chronicle*. Collier defended the riots of the summer stating, “The brothers burned, bombed and killed for what they believed was the lone last alternative to eliminate oppression. Unanimously they felt that there was nothing to lose.”<sup>64</sup> He went on to explain, “the peaceful non-violent approach is dead. It achieved its purpose during its time. The pace now is indiscriminate revolution.”<sup>65</sup> The openly hostile tone of this article followed by a cartoon of a KKK character with a whip must have further alienated white students from the civil rights cause.

According to *The Chronicle*, the newspaper found itself in the middle of heated student debate and disagreement over covering national issues in the paper. Ed Jackson’s editorial,

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<sup>63</sup> Doug Smith. “*Black Power; the end of the line.*” NC Chronicle 22 September 1967.

<sup>64</sup> Tim Collier. “*Reflection of Summer ’67.*” NC Chronicle 22 September 1967.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*

run on October 27, 1967, explained that the College newspaper would not print national news or reactions to it, but would stick to local issues that “pertain to the campus and student affairs.”<sup>66</sup> Jackson stated, “There are too many people who wish to express their views or cause trouble, to be able to print the news. Many people are probably quite confused or shocked by now. If so, I am sorry.”<sup>67</sup> Jackson also explained that the editorial staff would decide what to print. “If we feel an article or subject is not appropriate for a particular issue, it is our prerogative not to print that article. This is especially true if demands are made or threats issued to us.”<sup>68</sup>

Polarization of the campus on civil rights issues forced the editorial staff of *The Chronicle* to stop covering student viewpoints.

The strife evident in *The Chronicle* between black and white students did not destroy interracial student involvement in the civil rights movement altogether. In February 1968, a group of North Central College students challenged Naperville to pass open housing legislation. Led by Tim Collier, this organization had substantial representation from the white student community and *The Chronicle*. Rev. Gene Kreves’ of the DuPage Unitarian Church remarked, “College students at

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<sup>66</sup> Ed Jackson. “*News or Views.*” NC Chronicle 27 October 1967.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*

North Central College have a legitimate interest in bettering human relations. I would attribute it to several factors. Many white students have non-Caucasian friends and are hurt when the rights of these friends are trod upon.”<sup>69</sup> A second article ran on March 1, 1968 describing Naperville’s resistance to open housing. Reporters interviewed town commissioners on their lack of support for an ordinance to establish a human relations commission in Naperville. A reporter from *The Chronicle* also interviewed Naperville residents, finding views that supported the ordinance and others that rejected it. North Central College students of the Direct Action Committee of the Human Relations Council threatened to march against Naperville realtors. Fearing the violence that characterized Chicago housing demonstrations, the threat of direct action forced Naperville to adopt an open housing ordinance.<sup>70</sup>

The death of Martin Luther King, Jr. caused violent rioting in Chicago and other cities in the United States. Militants believed that the murder of Dr. King marked the death of the nonviolent civil rights movement. Harry Hampton and Steve Fayer included in *Voices of Freedom* an interview with SNCC veteran, Kathleen Neal Cleaver, who explained that King’s death “changed the whole dynamic of the

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<sup>69</sup> “City Commissioners ‘Discuss’ Local Discrimination” NC Chronicle 23 February 1968.

<sup>70</sup> “March Halted; Council Calls for Housing Measure,” NC Chronicle April 5, 1968.

country... (and) ended any public commitment to nonviolent change.”<sup>71</sup> King’s death also divided the NCC student body.

In an obituary

that ran in the April 5 issue of *The Chronicle*, Ted Nagengast



stated, “All white America killed Dr. King, and consequently share the killer’s guilt. By our bigotry and hypocrisy we made it impossible for a man like Dr. King to live in peace.”<sup>72</sup> Don Strauch and Craig Marek disagreed with Nagengast and explained that while the white community bears some responsibility, the black community carries an equal burden. They wrote, “Proportionately there are just as many Negroes as whites who

disregarded and abused what Dr. King stood for.”<sup>73</sup> Bob Schultz explained that the reaction of North Central College to the death of Dr. King mirrored the reaction of the nation. He stated, “Among ‘moderate’ whites there was a definite sorrow and a ‘what will we do now?’ attitude. Radical whites saw the need for sweeping changes now. They looked with hopeless understanding on the rioting in the cities. Militant blacks challenged whites to accept the guilt of racism and make

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<sup>71</sup> Hampton and Fayer, 514

<sup>72</sup> Ted Nagengast, *NC Chronicle* 5 April 1968.

<sup>73</sup> Craig Marek and Don Strauch “*Letter to the Editor*” *NC Chronicle* 19 April 1968.

immediate amends for the murder of Dr. King. They saw King's violent murder yet another of nonviolence's dying gasps."<sup>74</sup> North Central College students donated "clothing, money and time to riot relief in the city."<sup>75</sup> Thirty-five North Central College students traveled into Chicago on the day of



King's funeral to show their support and to aid riot victims. Gene Arnould headed one of the groups that canvassed neighborhoods, looking for homes for riot stricken blacks and distributing food and clothing at a relief center.<sup>76</sup>

Polarization of the North Central College Campus climaxed after King's death. In an editorial, Lynda Morstadt and Ed Jackson claimed that Black Power extremism had hit North Central College. They charged that the Congress of Human Liberation, a black student organization, received special treatment at the expense of other North Central College organizations because members of the Student Senate were afraid to "speak out against it."<sup>77</sup> The debate focused on the

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<sup>74</sup> Bob Schultz, "*Campus and Nation React to Dr. King's Murder*," NC Chronicle 19 April 1968, 4

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Pat Luecke, Rich Moyer and Lynda Morstadt, "*April 5: The Night Chicago Exploded*," NC Chronicle 19 April 1968, 5

<sup>77</sup> Lynda Morstadt and Ed Jackson. "*And for an Encore*," NC Chronicle May 10, 1968

demands by black students that the black student community should be guaranteed a seat in the student senate. This debate continued into the next school year. Black students argued that the student senate could not represent their issues unless they were guaranteed representation. Previously, every student organization had a seat on the Senate until the Student Senate revised the constitution changing representation requirements. The new constitution required that each organization submit “their constitution and reasons for seeking a vote to the Senate.”<sup>78</sup> The Senate would then vote on admission of the organization to the senate. Morstadt and Jackson charged that the Congress of Human Liberation bypassed the procedure outlined for all student organizations, forcing the Senate to guarantee them representation.<sup>79</sup>

During the 68-69 school-year, the division between black and white students drove the black students to form their own club. North Central College’s African-American students formed the Black Students Association and made several demands of the College, including a dormitory of their own, separate from the white students; special consideration concerning financial aid; increased recruitment of African-American students and a request to hire an African-American

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<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*

professor to teach African history.<sup>80</sup> According to the dean's file concerning the Black Student Association, the College administration had to be careful dealing with black student demands.<sup>81</sup> The administration could not grant a segregated dorm and could not offer black students treatment that it could not offer all minority students. A memo sent from a leading member of the Student Senate to a North Central College administrator explains that the "black students are in no mood to compromise."<sup>82</sup>

The experience of North Central College students with the civil rights movement mirrors the national struggle. Though the number of black students attending the College during the years between 1965 and 1968 is very small (only 20 according to the records), the national character of the movement and North Central College's proximity to Chicago may have given those students the support they needed to develop their voice in the campus newspaper.<sup>83</sup> White student involvement in the movement can be summarized by studying the articles submitted by Gene Arnould. Arnould's first article

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<sup>80</sup> "*Black Student Association Proposal*," Black Student Association Deans Office File, North Central College Archives, 20 September 1968.

<sup>81</sup> Black Student Association File, Dean of Students Office, North Central College Archives. 1 December 1968.

Memo written by a member of the Student Senate to a North Central College administrator. The names have been withheld to protect the privacy of the parties.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

concerning the movement appeared in the December 10 1965 issue of *The Chronicle*, and his articles continued through 1968. Arnould participated in various programs in Chicago, including the canvassing of neighborhoods to test children for lead paint exposure and involvement in the Jenner school boycott. Arnould's articles illustrate white confusion with the new direction of the civil rights movement and the trust many whites placed in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Articles that illustrate the polarization of the campus also reflect the larger national crisis caused by King's murder. *The Chronicle's* documentation of the civil rights movement illustrates similarities between North Central College students and the larger national movement.

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