

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Learning Lagniappe: Educator Extras

Hargrove (Ralph) Photograph Collection

PI/2010.0005

http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/series/hargrove

The Ralph Hargrove Photograph Collection consists of one-hundred-thirty-six black-and-white photographs of Jackson, Mississippi, from 1927 until 1984. Most of the images were taken during Hargrove's forty-year career with the Jackson Police Department. Subjects include city government buildings, police department activities, and state and national politicians. The collection features images of the rifle found at the crime scene after the murder of Mississippi civil rights leader Medgar Evers, Jackson's first African American policeman, U.S. Senator John C. Stennis, Mississippi lieutenant governor Charles Sullivan, Alabama governor George Wallace, and a Jackson city vehicle known as "Thompson's Tank."

Subjects that can be addressed within this Digital Archive:

Civil rights, Medgar Evers, city operations, government, environmental issues, and urban housing.

Suggested Classroom Activities:

The Ralph Hargrove photograph collection is used in the *Mississippi History on Loan* film activity packet for the film *Ghosts of Mississippi*. In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was murdered in his driveway. His wife, Myrlie Evers, worked to convict Byron de la Beckwith, the white supremacist who murdered her husband. After thirty years, Evers's killer was finally convicted. Produced by Time Warner Entertainment Company, 1996. 130 min., color, grades eight—twelve.

This film can be borrowed free of charge from the Mississippi History on Loan Collection. Visit <http://mdah.state.ms.us/new/learn/classroom-materials/mississippi-history-on-loan-film-collection/> or contact the Outreach Programs Coordinator at 601-576-6997 for more information. An accompanying online activity packet can be downloaded at <http://mdah.state.ms.us/new/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/MHOL-Ghosts-of-Mississippi.pdf>.

For more lessons and activities based on the Digital Archives and other collections visit the Classroom Materials page on our website at

<http://mdah.state.ms.us/new/learn/classroom-materials/lesson-plans-and-teaching-units/>

Teacher Discussion Guide

Use images from the MDAH Digital Archive entitled “Hargrove (Ralph) Photograph Collection PI/2010.0005” (found at http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/series/hargrove/) to lead your class in a discussion analyzing and interpreting the following images:

1. Type “finger” in the “search for keyword” box. What is the significance of these two images?

The first image is directly related to the investigation into the assassination of Mississippi civil rights leader Medgar Evers, who was murdered outside his Jackson home on the evening of June 12, 1963. Note the different dates at the bottom of both images. The image with the rifle is dated “6-13-63,” the day after Evers’s death, while the fingerprint image is dated “1-6-66.” Although the second image was taken later, both images can be used together to discuss the investigation of the assassination, the latent fingerprints (or fingerprints that were left on the murder weapon by the murderer), and the number of trials it took to convict Evers’s murderer, Byron de la Beckwith.

2. Type “tank” in the “search for keyword” box. Images of the Thompson Tank will appear. This vehicle was named after Jackson mayor Allen Thompson and used by the Jackson Police Department from the mid-1950s into the 1970s. What role do you think this “tank” played in Jackson’s history and social movements? Why do you think the city purchased such an extreme vehicle?

The Thompson Tank was used as a riot control vehicle. This “tank” was built and purchased at the beginning of the civil rights movement in Mississippi. It was used during “disturbances” in Jackson, including the 1961 Freedom Rides, various protests and marches, and the 1970s “riots” at Jackson State University.

3. Type “fogging” in the “search for keyword” box. What are these trucks and machines used for? Why would this be something that the city would like to document?

These were used for mosquito control. Just like today the effort to control insects is important to halt the spread of diseases. The city may have wanted to document the machines because they might have wanted to document the latest technology, for public relations, and health and public service announcements.

4. Type “unit” in the “search for keyword” box.

- a. What would be another name for the images titled “Multiple unit residential building?”

A more common name for these units today is an apartment complex.

- b. Find the images with people in them. What can you learn me about the population of these units?

After World War II, there was an upswing in the construction of homes for families in urban areas where land was not as readily available. These units were affordable and served as an alternative housing option for those who could not afford a house or land in the city. The majority of people in the images are African American children, thus the buildings were probably for housing primarily (if not exclusively) African American families.

- c. Why do you think this is significant?

African Americans in Jackson may not have had the opportunity to earn or borrow enough money in the workplace to afford their own home, forcing them to find/rent homes in these multiple unit residential buildings instead of purchasing their own property.