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Successful Communication in a Social Movement: A Case Study of the Montgomery Bus Boycott

A Dissertation Presented for
the Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Felicia McGhee-Hilt
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ABSTRACT

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a social movement. It is often referred to as the first defining movement within the broader context of the Civil Rights Movement. Planned communication can be critical to the success of a social movement. This historical case study analyzed the communication that occurred during the 1955-1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott, a 381-day protest of the segregated bus system in Montgomery. The overall research questions addressed were: How was communication used during the boycott to inform and mobilize the participants? How did news organizations mediate and frame communication? How was the information about the boycott communicated among and between the participants, churches and other networks?

Qualitative methods (interviewing, frame analysis and archival analysis) were used to address these questions. Interviews were conducted with former participants to determine how they received their information about the boycott and how they stayed informed during the course of the protest. Content analysis was conducted on *Montgomery Advertiser* stories published about the boycott between Dec. 1, 1955 (the day Rosa Parks was arrested) and Dec. 21,1956 (the day the first court-ordered integrated buses operated in Montgomery) to determine the frames projected by the newspaper's coverage. Archival analysis was used to determine the role of churches and networks such as the Montgomery Improvement Association, a group formed specifically during the boycott to help spread information to participants.

This study reveals that boycott participants were skeptical of local newspaper coverage, and instead relied heavily on the Montgomery Improvement Association, area churches and other participants for their primary information regarding the boycott. This is important in the study of social movements because it shows how critical communication networks are to a movement's success.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

> All I felt was tired. Tired of being pushed around. Tired of seeing the bad treatment and disrespect of children, women, and men just because of the color of their skin. Tired of the Jim Crow laws. Tired of being oppressed. I was just plain tired.[1]

That's how Rosa Parks said she felt on Dec. 1, 1955. The colored section of the city bus was full. She had just left her job as a seamstress at the Montgomery Fair Department Store. She boarded the bus downtown and planned to take it to the Cleveland Avenue stop and walk home. She never made it, at least not via that route. The 42-year-old Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus to a white man. Her action violated the city's bus segregation laws and she subsequently was arrested for disorderly conduct.[2] Blacks were outraged by the arrest of another black woman on a city bus. Claudette Colvin and Mary Louise Smith were arrested for similar actions months earlier.[3] On that day, Dec. 1, 1955, black residents in Montgomery, Alabama, began a journey that would change history. After Parks' arrest, blacks initiated a 381-day boycott of the bus system that ended on Nov.13, 1955 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the city's segregated bus system was unconstitutional.[4]

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[1] R. Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation* (Grand Rapids: Zordervan, 1994), 17.
[2] "Negro Jailed Here for 'Overlooking' Bus Segregation," *Montgomery Advertiser*, December 2, 1955.
[3] K. Hare, *They Walked to Freedom* (Champaign: Spotlight Press LLC, 2005).
[4] *Browder v. Gayle,* 142 F. Supp. 707 (1956).

This was a historic decision, as the practice of segregation had been the law for many years.

BACKGROUND: SEGREGATION AND YEARS THE BEFORE THE BOYCOTT

On Jan. 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. For four million African Americans, the "Day of Jubilee" had arrived – "the promised time when God would set his people free."[5] The new 13th Amendment to the Constitution outlawed slavery. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 granted citizenship to all people born in the United States, including slaves.[6] In 1867, a Republican majority in Congress passed the Reconstruction Act, which allowed the federal government to impose military rule on those southern states that had been in rebellion, until they were readmitted to the Union. During Reconstruction, blacks were elected to public office, organized constitutional conventions in every southern state, and formed Union Clubs, which helped build schools and churches. In 1868, Congress passed the 14th Amendment. The amendment was aimed toward freed slaves and gave them equal protection under the law:

> All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction therefore, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life,

[5] R. Wormser, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), 2.
[6] U.S. Congress. *The Civil Rights Act of 1866*. 39th Cong., 1866, 14 Stat. 27.

> liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.[7]

Then, in 1869, Congress passed the 15th Amendment, which prohibited federal and state governments from depriving a citizen the right to vote based on race. Six years later, the 1875 Civil Rights Act passed and in it Congress said:

> That all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement; subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law, and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude."[8]

By the early 1870's, blacks had won hundreds of political offices and were serving as justices of the peace, sheriffs, councilmen, and school board members, but the progress of the former slaves was short lived. In 1870, Democrats won control of Congress and began taking over states such as Tennessee, Georgia, Texas and Virginia. Using threats of violence, stuffing the ballot box and murdering blacks at the polls, the Democratic Party regained control in Mississippi.[9] In 1877, Republicans agreed to officially end Reconstruction after the election of Republican Rutherford B. Hayes as president. Sentiment against gains and provisions for blacks was growing. In order to receive southern support Hayes promised to end Reconstruction.[10] The South accepted Hayes' election with the agreement that the federal government

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[7] U.S. Const. amend. XIV
[8] U.S. Congress. *The Civil Rights Act of 1875. 42nd* Cong., 18 Stat. 335.
[9] Wormser, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*.
[10] Ibid.

pull its troops from the region.[11] By 1883, The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the provisions provided in the Civil Rights Act of 1875 were unconstitutional and that Congress did not have the authority to outlaw racial discrimination by private individuals or organizations. In the 1890s, poll taxes and literacy tests were used to disenfranchise blacks in southern states. "North Carolina followed the lead of Mississippi, which in 1890 had become the first of the former Confederate states to call a constitutional convention for the purpose of eliminating black suffrage."[12] South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, Virginia and Georgia followed by also amending their constitutions. Suddenly a growing optimism among blacks during Reconstruction was replaced with a sense of despair. That despair only deepened with the development of segregation and Jim Crow laws.

In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that segregation of the races was legal as long as the separate facilities were equal.[13] In 1892, the plaintiff in the case, Homer Plessy, bought a first class train ticket from New Orleans, Louisiana to Covington, Louisiana. Plessy was seven-eighths white and one-eighth black. Plessy sat in the section of the train car that was occupied by white passengers, until he was told by the conductor to relinquish his seat and move to the colored section of the train. Plessy refused and was forceibly removed by a police officer and placed in jail. He argued that his 14th Amendment rights were

[11]D. Brown and C. Webb, *Race in the American South: From Slavery to Civil Rights.* (Gainsville: The University Press of Florida, 2007).
[12] Ibid., 187.
[13] *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *163 U.S. 537* (1896).

violated. According to court documents, the railway, East Louisana Railway "was incorporated by the laws of Louisiana as a common carrier and was not authorized to distinguish between citizens according to their race…"[14] The court upheld an 1890 law passed by the state of Louisiana that provided for separate railway cars for black and white patrons.[15] The law also said that train officers had the authority to assign passengers based on race. The *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling declared that it was legal to separate the races, on the basis that equal faclities were provided for each race.

By the late 1880s a complex system of racial laws meant to separate the races became known as Jim Crow. Blacks were deprived politically, economically and financially, in addition to having their constitutional rights violated.[16] In the South, blacks were controlled politically because they were barred from the voting process. The Jim Crow laws put in place a system that forced a segment of society to feel inferior.[17]

> Moreover, the fact that Blacks had to use separate toilets, attend separate schools, sit at the back of the buses and trains, address whites with respect while being addressed disrespectfully, be sworn in on different bibles in the courtroom, purchase clothes without first trying them on and pass by "white only" lunch counter seats after purchasing food, and travel without sleep because hotels would not

[14] Ibid.
[15] State of Louisiana, ed. State of Louisiana (1890).
[16] A. Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks," *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1999).
[17] Ibid.

accommodate them–all these-resulted in serious psychological damage. [18]

Jim Crow laws were used to re-enforce the white power structure. Jim Crow transcended class and provided unification for whites.[19] Race subsumed all other aspects of African-American identity in the minds of southern whites. African Americans were perceived as being inherently incapable of claiming the full rights of citizenship.[20] If blacks did try to stand up for their beliefs, there was always the fear of groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and White Camelia. These groups "used intimidation, force, ostracism in business and society, bribery at the polls, arson and even murder to accomplish their deeds."[21]

However, despite the threats of violence, blacks still fought for equality. There were efforts to fight for equal treatment on transportation before the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In 1900, Montgomery city officials enacted an ordinance requiring segregation on "public conveyances," which resulted in a boycott of Montgomery street cars.[22] Between 1900 and 1906 blacks in Montgomery, Birmingham and Tallahassee boycotted streetcars to avoid segregation.[23] After five weeks of blacks not riding Montgomery street cars, the

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[18] Ibid., 518.
[19] Brown and Webb, *Race in the American South: From Slavery to Civil Rights.*
[20] Ibid.
[21] J. Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American Negroes* (New York: Knopf, 1967), 327.
[22] W. Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), 36.
[23] A. Meier and E. Rudwick, "The Boycott Movement Against Jim Crow Streetcars in the South, 1900-1906," *The Journal of American History* 55 (1969).

trolley company lost 25 percent of its business.[24] Eventually the company ended segregation on its streetcars but this was short lived because of the enactment of Jim Crow laws. The streetcar companies opposed enactment of the Jim Crow laws because they feared losing black customers but eventually bowed to white public pressure. However, almost 50 years later, a bus boycott against segregation laws happened again, and this time it was successful.

In the year prior to the1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, two events changed public opinion regarding segregation. The first was the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954) Supreme Court decision, and the second was the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in Money, Mississippi.[25] In *Brown v. Board of Education*, NAACP lawyers showed the disparity between black and white schools and proved that southern and border states had not lived up to the legal standard of providing 'separate but equal' facilities. They argued that the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) decision was unconstitutional.[26] On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that "separate but equal" educational facilities were not equal.[27] The justices concluded that the doctrine of separate but equal had no place in the field of public education.

A year after the Supreme Court decision, during the summer of 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till from Chicago was visiting relatives in Money, Mississippi when he was brutally murdered. Newspaper accounts said Till whistled at a white

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[24] Ibid.
[25] *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
[26] "Plessy v. Ferguson," P. Levy, *The Civil Rights Movement* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).
[27] *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

woman, Carolyn Bryant, in a store.[28] However, author William Bradford Huie of Look magazine reported that Till squeezed a white woman's hand and asked "How about a date, baby?"[29] Whatever version occurred, three days later after Till's encounter with Bryant, the woman's husband, Roy Bryant, and his brother–in-law, J.W. Milam, went to the home where Till was staying and abducted him.[30] Milam later admitted to Huie that they beat Till, shot him, tied a 74-pound cotton gin to his neck with barbed wire and rolled him into the Tallahatchie River. Days later his mutilated body was found. His mother, Mamie Till Bradley Mobley, insisted that the whole world see what had happened to her son and Till's open casket was displayed at his funeral. The picture of Till's body was published in Jet magazine and the white mainstream press began to cover the story and ensuing trial. Both men were acquitted but later admitted in the Look magazine article to committing the murder.[31]

Americans were upset about the racially motivated murder of a 14-year-old, and his mother's insistence that the casket be open provided white America with graphic evidence of the violence against blacks. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision affirmed the belief of blacks who felt they should receive real educational equality. The Emmett Till murder brought the injustices and violence aimed at blacks to the forefront and within the mainstream press. The murder

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[28] S. Whitfield, *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till* (New York: Free Press, 1988).
[29] W. Huie, "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi," *Look*, January 24, 1956.
[30] Whitfield, *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till*.
[31] Huie, "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi."

and court decision resounded within the black community. These events, along with years of mistreatment and segregation, helped bring about the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Montgomery Bus Boycott is often referred to as the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. Books and articles have been written about the movement which started with the boycott and moved into other areas of civil disobedience, such as sit-ins and marches.[32] Historical material exists that examines the bus boycott and the people who were influential in the protest such as Dr. Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks.[33] Both have written autobiographical books about their experiences during the boycott.[34] Autobiographical books have also been written by other known boycott figures such as Fred Gray, U.J. Fields,

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[32] See, for example, S. Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1997); J. Button, *Blacks and Social Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); T. Davis, *Weary Feet, Rested Souls* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998); D. Garrow, ed., The Origins of the Montgomery Bus Boycott., in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956* (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1985); T. Gilliam, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1968).

[33] See, for example, M. Frady, *Martin Luther King Jr.* (New York: Penguin Group 2002); T. Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); H. Kohl, *She Would Not Be Moved: How We Tell the Story of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (New York: New Press, 2005); D. Brinkley, *Rosa Parks* (New York: Penguin Group, 2000).

[34] M. King and C. Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1998); M. King, *Stride toward Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1958); R. Parks, *Rosa Parks: My Story* (New York: Dial Books, 1992); Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation*.

JoAnn Robinson and the Rev. Robert Graetz.[35] However, just two studies have examined the bus boycott in regards to media coverage. The first compared media coverage of the boycott to media coverage of the Emmitt Till murder trial.[36] The next study, a master's thesis, examined the impact that the local mainstream media had in the success of the boycott.[37] No studies have looked at the overall communication within the movement, particularly how information was disseminated to the boycotters and amongst each other. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the history of the Montgomery Bus Boycott is incomplete without information that examines the communication within the movement. This topic has been neglected in scholarly articles. This study attempts to analyze the communication used in the movement, therefore providing a more complete picture of the boycott.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS GUIDING THE STUDY

A social movement is a systematic effort used to stimulate change.[38] Communication during social movements is critical to a movement's success.

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[35] F. Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice* (Montgomery: New South Books, 1995), U. Fields, *Inside the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Baltimore: American House: Book Publishers, 2002); J. Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1987); R. Graetz, *A White Preacher's Memoir: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chicago: Augsburg Fortress, 1991).

[36] C. Flourney, "Reporting the Movement in Black and White: The Emmett Till Lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott." (PhD diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 2003).

[37] M. Thomas, "The Impact of the Local White Media in the Success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott" (master's thesis, Auburn University, 1998).

[38] C. King, *Social Movements in the United States* (New York: Random House, 1956).

Movement activists must be aware of the goals of the movement, as well as the activities needed to promote those goals. Therefore, communication can encompass interpersonal, organizational and mass communications. This project analyzes communication during the boycott and provides a more complete picture of the links that helped make the Montgomery Bus Boycott a success. The overall research questions were: How was communication used during the boycott to inform and mobilize the participants? How was communication mediated by news organizations? What did those organizations report about the boycott? How was the boycott communicated by the participants, churches and other networks?

STUDY PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

This study will examine the boycott through the theoretical lens of social movement theory. As such the Montgomery Bus Boycott was a social movement.[39] Social movements are collective actions for the purpose of promoting or resisting change.[40] For the purpose of this study, the collective communication techniques of the Montgomery Bus Boycott will be discussed to determine how the social movement promoted or resisted change.

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[39] S. Millner, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott: A Case Study in the Emergence and Career of a Social Movement," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1981); P. Valien, "The Montgomery Bus Protest as a Social Movement," in *Race Relations*, ed. J. Masuoka and P. Valien (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961).

[40] D. McAdam and D. Snow, eds., *Social Movements: Readings on Their Emergence, Mobilization and Dynamic* (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 1997).

For thousands of Montgomery residents to come together and protest for more than a year the city's segregation laws, they not only needed determination, but they also needed an effective communication network to keep themselves informed. Understanding this process enriches the history of the boycott as a social movement and may help scholars better understand the role communication plays in other social movements. This research assumes that the communication needed to continually mobilize movement participants is crucial to a social movement's success.[41] Understanding how they communicated during the boycott will make salient the importance of the boycott as a social movement. This research could prove helpful in the organization of future social movements, as it provides insight into the tools used in a successful movement such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Lastly, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge about this historical period in Montgomery, Alabama, and the Civil Rights era in general.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this study the term African-American and Black are used interchangeably to refer to people of African ancestry.[42] Prior terms such as colored and Negro were used frequently during the time period of the study. The researcher will use these terms in quoted material during the boycott, but for discussion and analysis, the researcher will use either the term African-American

[41] R. Benford and D. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000).
[42] *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language,* ed. Editors of the American Heritage Dictionaries (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

or black. Also, the Civil Rights Movement is defined as beginning with the bus boycott in 1955 and ending with the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Act, signed by President Lyndon Johnson outlawed racial segregation in schools, public places and employment.[43]

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Because this study analyzes how communication was used to propel the Montgomery Bus Boycott, three qualitative methods were used: interviews, frame analysis, and archival analysis of historical data. Interviews with former participants were conducted to determine their use of media and how they communicated. A participant was defined as a person who actively did not ride buses for the sole purpose of supporting the boycott and its goals. The interviews in this case, "can help collect information that balances the existing record."[44]

Because the participants discussed their media usage, it was determined that frame analysis should be conducted to understand the newspaper coverage during the boycott. Prior to the 1960s, the white mainstream press rarely covered events in the black community. "Until the 1960s, most general circulation newspapers ignored news from black communities."[45] The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the first time that the local newspaper began consistently covering stories from the black community. Therefore, using content analysis, frames

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[43] U.S. Congress. *The Civil Rights Act of 1964*. 88th Congr., 2nd Sess., 78, Stat. 241.
[44] B. Sommer and M. Quinlan, *Oral History Manual* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2002), 3.
[45] D. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 26.

were derived from the data to analyze this coverage. In news framing, journalists choose the aspects of the story to focus on.[46] The framing method will be used to determine how the local print media framed stories of the boycott. The researcher conducted content analysis of more than 300 newspaper articles from the local newspaper, *The Montgomery Advertiser*.

Lastly, in addition to the information gathered from news framing and interviews, archival data from the Montgomery Improvement Association, the group that spearheaded the boycott, was also analyzed. Archives provide rich data to historians.[47] Through archival research, a clearer picture can be made about the phenomenon of interest. For this research, the material from the Montgomery Improvement Association included church programs from mass meetings, meeting minutes and other correspondence. The use of these three methods (framing, interviews and historical archives) helped to obtain a deeper understanding into the communication sources used during the bus boycott.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study analyzes the 1955-1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott. It has been more than fifty years since the end of the boycott and many of the original participants are deceased. The memory of the surviving participants may have faded. The oldest participant in the study was 101 years old and the youngest was 78. The passage of time may have affected the memory of some of the

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[46] T. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
[47] J. Startt and D. Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* (Northport: Vision Press, 2003).

participants. Therefore, newspaper articles, organization and church notes were used as primary sources to corroborate the stories of the participants. Interviews, when supplemented with documents and other records, can provide reliable data for analysis.[48]

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter includes a summary of the background of segregation which was the crux of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Chapter 1 explains the inception and rapid implementation of segregation. This chapter also explains the purpose, significance of the study, methodology and research questions guiding this dissertation.

Chapter 2: The Montgomery Bus Boycott

This chapter contains a historical background of the bus boycott. A description of the city of Montgomery is provided, as well as statistical information about life in 1955 Montgomery. This chapter details how the boycott began and how both civil disobedience and legal proceedings worked together to provide the eventual success of the 381-day boycott.

Chapter 3: Definition, Theoretical Perspective and Literature Review

This chapter offers definitions and theoretical perspectives of a social movement. First, it explains what a social movement is, along with the characteristics and development of the movement. A literature review of early

[48] Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*.

social movement theories and subsequent later theories provide the background for understanding the Montgomery Bus Boycott as a social movement. Chapter 3 also examines the literature regarding news framing. This chapter discusses how news frames are developed and the effect they have on viewers.

Chapter 4: Research Methods

This chapter focuses on the research questions used in the study. It explains the methodology, data collection and procedures for analyzing the data. Because three methods of analysis (framing, interviews and archival data) are used, this chapter discusses each in detail.

Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis

This chapter includes findings and analysis. It is divided into three sections: communication among participants, communication in news organizations and communication through networks. Communication among participants provides an explanation of how participants communicated amongst each other about their roles in the boycott. Communication in news organizations shows how the local newspaper portrayed the bus boycott and the message it presented to its readers. Communication through networks provides analysis into the communication used by the Montgomery Improvement Association and churches as they provided continuous information about the boycott.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the research, conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

> Right here in Montgomery, when the history books are written in the future, somebody will have to say, 'There lived a race of people, fleecy locks and black complexion, a people who had the moral courage to stand up for their rights.'[49]

Those were the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, spoken on the first day of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The city of Montgomery, nicknamed the "Cradle of the Confederacy," eventually became the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement. The city with its humble beginnings has a rich history.

Montgomery is located on the Alabama River in Central Alabama. The area was first inhabited by Indians, until the first white settler arrived in 1716.[50] The city was named after Richard Montgomery, a major general in the Continental Army who died during the American Revolution. It was chartered in 1819 and became the state capital in 1847. In 1861, delegates from six southern states voted to secede from the Union and become the newly created, "Confederate States of America." They chose Montgomery as the provisional capital of the new Confederate states. The city served as the capital for only four months, but earned the nickname "The Cradle of the Confederacy".[51] The eleven

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[49] M. King, "Mass Meeting of the Montgomery Improvement Association," in *The Papers of Martin Luther King Jr.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955).
[50] W. Remington, *The Metropolitan Montgomery Statistical Atlas and Data Abstract* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1994).
[51] W. Greenhaw, *Montgomery: The River City* (Montgomery: River City Publishing, 2002).

southern states that seceded from the Union eventually lost the war, and Reconstruction began. After Reconstruction, Jim Crow black codes were passed in Montgomery. Under these codes, blacks could not own land within the city limits, vote in city elections, and a gathering of more than two blacks constituted a mob."[52]

The city of Montgomery experienced significant growth between 1920 and 1950. In 1920, the total population was 43,464, which included 19,827 blacks and 23,631 whites.[53] By 1950, the city population grew to 106,525, which included 42,538 blacks and 63,114 whites (a small percentage of the population was not classified as either black or white).[54] There were 32,315 dwelling units in the city and nearly 40% lacked running water, private toilets or bath facilities. Sixty percent of the homes were rented and not owner occupied. [55] A large portion of the black population was poor and excluded from equal educational opportunities. As a result, most blacks were employed at jobs requiring unskilled physical labor.[56] "It should be noted that unlike many industrial sector jobs offered at the steel mills in Birmingham or the unskilled labor jobs on the docks in Mobile, Montgomery's service-oriented jobs for blacks usually required far more

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[52] Ibid., 97.
[53] U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census of Population: 1950: A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952).
[54] Ibid.
[55] R. Abernathy, "The Natural History of a Social Movement: The Montgomery Improvement Association," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc, 1989).
[56] Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*.

frequent doses of demeaning face-to face encounters with whites."[57] The city had only three black physicians, one black dentist, two black lawyers and one black pharmacist.[58] Sixty-three percent of employed black women served as domestics.[59] In 1954, the median income for whites was $1,730 compared to $970 for blacks, and a little less than two thousand blacks were registered voters.[60] No blacks held political office, and only two black policemen served in black neighborhoods.[61] The city was segregated from the cradles of the city hospitals to the headstones in separate graveyards.[62]

Bus service was a core method of transportation for Montgomery's black residents. About half of the city's black residents regularly rode the bus.[63] The Montgomery City Bus lines derived 70 percent of its revenue from black patrons.[64] The Montgomery City Lines was owned by parent company, National City Lines in Chicago. The company was operating under a city franchise and had been providing bus transportation for city residents since 1935.[65] Typically, black patrons were required to pay their fare at the front of the bus, exit, and then re-enter through the side or rear doors. Often, there were reports that drivers

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[57] Millner, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott: A Case Study in the Emergence and Career of a Social Movement."
[58] King, *Stride toward Freedom.*
[59] Valien, "The Montgomery Bus Protest as a Social Movement."
[60] Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*.
[61] Davis, *Weary Feet, Rested Souls*.
[62] Ibid., 22.
[63] W. Pretzer, "The Power of 2857: Fifty Years Ago This December, Rosa Parks Refused to Move to the Back of the Bus She Was Riding. Because She Wouldn't the Whole Country Has Changed. But What Happened to the Bus?" *American Heritage* 56 (2005).
[64] Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*.
[65] *Bus Boycott Transcript*, 1956.

would pull off before the black patron was able to re-enter.[66] Black patrons also complained of name calling and rudeness on the part of the bus drivers.

Under Alabama code, all transportation companies were forced to provide equal but separate accommodations on their vehicles for blacks and whites. The agent in charge of the vehicle had the authority to assign passenger seating based on the race of the passenger.[67] The company operated some 14 routes throughout the city and several were either in all-black or all-white neighborhoods.[68] However, there were some routes where both blacks and whites rode the buses, and on those routes patrons were supposed to adhere to the city's segregation ordinances. On the city's segregated buses, the first ten front seats were reserved for white patrons, the last ten seats were for blacks, and the middle 16 seats could be occupied by either black or white riders. However, a white person was never asked to sit next to or behind a black.[69] If no whites were occupying the first 10 seats on the bus, then those seats remained empty. The bus drivers were given authority to maintain segregation on the buses, but that authority was about to be tested.

In the year before Rosa Parks' arrest, in separate incidents, two local teenagers were arrested for violating the city's segregation laws. Fifteen-year-old

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[66] Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation*.
[67] "Browder v. Gayle: The Women before Rosa Parks," www.tolerance.org/teaching/activity.
[68] Gilliam, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956."
[69] Pretzer, "The Power of 2857: Fifty Years Ago This December, Rosa Parks Refused to Move to the Back of the Bus She Was Riding. Because She Wouldn't the Whole Country Has Changed. But What Happened to the Bus?"

Claudette Colvin was arrested March 2, 1955, for violating the bus segregation laws, and on Oct. 21, 1955, 18-year-old Mary Louise Smith was arrested for disobeying an order to move.[70] After refusing to give up her seat to a white man, Colvin was handcuffed and forcibly removed from the bus.[71] Colvin was charged with violating the state segregation law, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. She was convicted and placed on indefinite probation.[72] Black leaders were going to use Colvin's case to stage a boycott, but declined after civil rights activist E.D. Nixon discovered that Colvin was pregnant.[73] A few months later, Mary Louise Smith was arrested.[74] Smith did not violate the segregation laws because she was sitting in the "colored" section but refused to move when asked by the bus driver so a white woman could sit down. Smith was charged with failing to obey an officer and fined nine dollars.[75] Both Smith and Colvin were teenagers at the time of their refusals.

However, when Rosa Parks was arrested on Dec. 1, 1955, she was 42-years-old and serving as secretary of the NAACP.[76] Parks had just gotten off work from her job as a seamstress at Montgomery Fair, the city's largest

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[70] Hare, *They Walked to Freedom*, K. Wilson, "Interpreting the Discursive Field of the Montgomery Bus Boycott: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Holt Street Address," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8, no. 2 (2005).
[71] "Segregation Case Reset for March 18," *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 10, 1955.
[72] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*.
[73] Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*.
[74] Hare, *They Walked to Freedom*.
[75] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*.
[76] Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*.

department store.[77] When Parks boarded the bus 12 white passengers and 26 black passengers were on board.[78] Only one empty seat remained and it was inside the section of the bus labeled "colored." She was sitting next to a black man and across from two black women in the middle of the bus.[79] When more whites entered the bus, the bus driver asked the black man sitting next to Parks and the two black women sitting across from her to stand. They moved, but Parks refused. Even though they were sitting in the colored section, blacks often were asked to move when the white section became filled. Parks recalled, "The driver saw me still sitting there, and he asked was I going to stand up. I said, 'No.' He said, 'Well, I'm going to have you arrested.' Then I said, 'You may do that'. These were the only words we said to each other."[80] Parks said she didn't plan that day to get arrested. She just wanted to go home. In explaining why she didn't move, Parks said, "my feet were not tired but I was tired – tired of unfair treatment."[81]

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[77] Greenhaw, *Montgomery: The River City*.
[78] W. Rogers et al., *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1994).
[79] Greenhaw, *Montgomery: The River City*.
[80] R. Parks, "Tired of Giving In": The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," in *Sisters in the Struggle: African-American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*, ed. B. Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 61.
[81] Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation*, 25.

ROSA PARKS

According to her memoirs, Rosa McCauley, later Rosa Parks, was born on Feb. 4, 1913 in Tuskegee, Alabama.[82] She was raised in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Her father, James McCauley, was a carpenter and stonemason, and her mother, Leona Edwards McCauley, was a former schoolteacher in Pine Level, Alabama. When Rosa was 11, her mother enrolled her as a student at the Montgomery Industrial School for Girls. The school was made up of mostly blacks focused on learning how to cook, sew and do other domestic work. All the school's teachers were white, but Parks recalled they never talked about color or segregation. At the age of 15, Rosa Parks began attending Booker T. Washington Junior High School and later attended the Laboratory School at Alabama State Teachers College for Negroes during her 10th and 11th grade years. However, she was forced to drop out of high school to care for her ailing grandmother and mother. Rosa McCauley married Raymond Parks, a local barber, who was involved with the Montgomery chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

In 1941, Rosa Parks was employed at Maxwell Field, the home of Maxwell Air Force Base. On base she could ride on an integrated trolley, but once she left base, she had to ride on segregated buses. It was this experience that motivated her to join the NAACP.[83] The NAACP's mission was to ensure "the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to

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[82] Ibid.
[83] Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*.

eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination."[84] Parks was secretary of the local chapter as early as 1943 and tried to vote three times before she eventually became a registered voter. As secretary of the NAACP, she balanced the ledgers, recorded reports of racial discrimination, and did field research.

In November 1943, Parks had a run-in with bus driver James F. Blake. After paying her money, Parks attempted to board through the front door of the bus because the back of the bus was filled. Blake told her to exit the bus and enter through the back. Parks responded: "I told him I was already on the bus and didn't see the need of getting off and getting back on when people were standing in the stairwell, and how was I going to squeeze in, anyway?"[85] Parks said she didn't move. A dozen years later this same driver was driving the bus on which Parks refused to leave her seat.

Six months prior to the boycott, Parks attended a training workshop at the Highlander Folk School titled "Radical Desegregation: Implementing the Supreme Court Decision." The Highlander Folk School was established in 1932 near Monteagle, Tennessee. Still in existence (but not in Monteagle), its original goals were to "educate industrial and agricultural laborers to exert greater control over their jobs and to build a new society embodying the ideas of democracy, brotherhood, and justice".[86] At its inception the Highlander School primarily focused on the southern labor movements, but during the 1950's the school

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[84] "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People," www.naacp.org.
[85] ———, *Rosa Parks*, 58.
[86] J. Glen, *Highlander: No Ordinary School, 1932-1962* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1988), 20.

changed its focus to school desegregation. By 1953, school leaders were in support of full racial integration and provided students training in strategies to integrate society. It did this by educating students about collective action change techniques. "It was a place where nontraditional students participated in a nontraditional setting to learn how to challenge the traditional problems of the South such as segregation, discrimination, racism and ignorance."[87] The students developed ways to fight for equal treatment through political action. For two weeks, Parks learned new strategies for activism. While attending Highlander, Parks lived for the first time in an interracial setting where she didn't feel hostility toward whites.[88] She said after her time spent at Highlander, discrimination was much harder to endure when she returned to Montgomery. Ironically, it was during this first visit to the school that Parks first voiced doubt that Montgomery's blacks would ever unite behind a major challenge to segregation.[89]

Parks describes the day of her arrest as one of the worst days of her life.[90] She says she knew several people on the bus, but none came to her defense. She explains that during her arrest and trip to jail she felt very much alone, but when she made the decision she knew, "I had the strength of my ancestors with

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[87] C. Hughes, "A New Agenda for the South: The Role and Influence of the Highlander Folk School, " *Phylon* 46, no. 3 (1985): 243.
[88] Glen, *Highlander: No Ordinary School, 1932-1962*.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation*.

me."[91] Parks was found guilty of violating the city's segregation laws. She was fined $10 plus four dollars in court costs.[92] In 1956, during a return visit to the Highlander School, and while the bus boycott was underway, Highlander Founder Myles Horton asked Parks what was on her mind that day she refused to give up her seat. Parks replied that the time had come to stand up for her rights.

Montgomery's black leaders and the black press insisted that Park was a devout Christian, "mild-mannered and soft-spoken, retiring and perfectly poised. She was "a lady who adhered to the best ideals of middle-class respectability."[93] Therefore, Montgomery's black leaders felt using Parks to challenge segregation would be more effective than if they used Colvin and Smith, who were teenagers.[94] After her arrest, Parks agreed to let her case be a test case against segregation.

Alabama State College instructor JoAnn Robinson and the Women's Political Council (WPC) had been hearing and recording complaints about the treatment of blacks on the city's buses.[95] Robinson herself had a traumatic experience on a city bus in 1949, when she mistakenly sat at the front of a nearly empty bus. She ran off the bus when the driver screamed at her for sitting in the

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[91] Brinkley, *Rosa Parks*, 107.
[92] Parks, "Tired of Giving In": The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott."
[93] Wilson, "Interpreting the Discursive Field of the Montgomery Bus Boycott: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Holt Street Address," 301.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.

white section.[96] In 1954, after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and one year before the boycott, the WPC met with Montgomery city leaders to discuss the mistreatment of black passengers but no improvements were made.[97] As a result, after Parks' arrest and on the day she was set to go to trial on Dec. 5, Robinson informed Edgar Daniel Nixon, a local black activist, that the time was right for a boycott. With the help of an Alabama State colleague and two students, they created the following handbill:

> This is for Monday, December 5, 1955. Another Negro woman has been arrested and thrown into jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus and give it to a white person. It is the second time since the Claudette Colvin case that a Negro woman has been arrested for the same thing. This has to be stopped. Negroes have rights, too, for if Negroes did not ride the buses, they could not operate. Three-fourths of the riders are Negroes, yet we are arrested or have to stand over empty seats. If we do not do something to stop these arrests, they will continue. The next time it may be you, or your daughter, or mother. This woman's case will come up on Monday. We are therefore, asking every Negro to stay off the buses Monday in protest of the arrest and trial. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday. You can afford to stay out of school for one day. If you work take a cab, or walk. But please, children and grown-ups, don't ride the bus at all on Monday. Please stay off all buses on Monday.[98]

They distributed 35,000 handbills to members of Montgomery's black community for the one-day boycott.[99] A black maid, who couldn't read very well,

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[96] Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Parks, "Tired of Giving In": The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," 65-66.
[99] B. Barnett, "Invisible Southern Black Women Leaders in the Civil Rights Movement: The Triple Constraints of Gender, Race, and Class " *Gender and Society* 7, no. 2 (1993).

asked her employer to read the flier. Her employer gave the document to a representative of the Montgomery Advertiser, the local newspaper.[100] On Sunday, Dec. 4, a potential black boycott of the buses was the front page story in the Montgomery Advertiser, and blacks who were unaware of the impending boycott were now informed.[101] The morning after Parks' arrest, Nixon contacted three black preachers and asked if they would support a full-scale boycott of the bus system. One of the ministers he called was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Dr. King, native of Atlanta, grew into his activist role naturally. His maternal grandfather, A.D. Williams, was a charter member of the NAACP and successfully fought against a school bond issue that did not include construction of black schools.[102] King's father, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., the son of a sharecropper, experienced the harsh realities of segregation.[103] When King Jr. was a young boy shopping for shoes with his father, a store clerk asked them to move to the back of the store. The elder King refused and quickly left the store. He told his son that although the Jim Crow system was in place, he would never accept it. As pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, the elder King was also instrumental in the demise of Jim Crow elevators in the courthouse and fought to equalize teacher salaries in Atlanta. "With this heritage, it is not surprising that I

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[100] King, *Stride toward Freedom.*
[101] Ibid.
[102] T. Brooks, *Walls Come Tumbling Down* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974).
[103] King, *Stride toward Freedom.*

had also learned to abhor segregation, considering it both rationally inexplicable and morally unjustifiable," said Dr. King.[104]

King completed his undergraduate education at Atlanta's Morehouse College. It was there that he first read Henry David Thoreau's work on civil disobedience and the philosophy of non-violence. King entered Crozer Theological Seminary in 1948. There he studied the teachings of Karl Marx, Reinhold Niebuhr and Mahatma Gandhi, but it was Gandhi's teachings that resonated with him. He was particularly fascinated by Gandhi's campaigns of non-violent resistance and numerous fasts. It was within Gandhi's nonviolent resistance philosophy that King said he "came to feel that this was the only morally and practically sound method open to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom." [105] King said that "while the nonviolent resister is passive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent, his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade his opponent that he is wrong. The method is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually."[106] In May 1954, Dr. King accepted the pastoral call from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. His philosophy of non-violence was solidified during the boycott.

[104] Ibid., 20.
[105] Ibid., 97.
[106] Ibid., 102.

On Dec. 5, the first day of the boycott, the bus company lost about 70 percent of its patrons.[107] The one-day boycott was deemed successful by Montgomery's black community. That day, a group of local ministers met and developed the Montgomery Improvement Association. Dr. King, a newcomer to the Montgomery area, was elected its spokesperson.[108] The group's sole purpose was to improve the quality of life for Montgomery's black residents.[109] At a mass meeting that night at the Holt Street Baptist Church, thousands voted to continue to the boycott.[110] The Montgomery Improvement Association "decided that one day protest was insufficient; the boycott, which due to a 1921 state law had to be called a protest, should continue until the oppressive situation on the city buses was resolved".[111] E.D. Nixon, one of the leaders in the boycott, said this at that first Montgomery Improvement Association Mass meeting:

> You who are afraid, you better get your hat and coat and go home. This going to be a long-drawn out affair. I wanted to tell you something: For years and years I've been talking about how I didn't want the children who came along behind me to suffer the indignities that I suffered all these years. Well, I've changed my mind – I want to enjoy some of that freedom myself.[112]

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[107] Pretzer, "The Power of 2857: Fifty Years Ago This December, Rosa Parks Refused to Move to the Back of the Bus She Was Riding. Because She Wouldn't the Whole Country Has Changed. But What Happened to the Bus?"
[108] Greenhaw, *Montgomery: The River City*.
[109] Hare, *They Walked to Freedom*.
[110] Joe Azbell, "5000 at Meeting Outline Boycott; Bullet Clips Bus " *The Montgomery Advertiser*, Dec. 6, 1955.
[111] Wilson, "Interpreting the Discursive Field of the Montgomery Bus Boycott: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Holt Street Address," 309.
[112] Parks, *Quiet Strength: The Faith, the Hope and the Heart of a Woman Who Changed a Nation*, 70.

Nixon was not alone in his sentiments, as thousands agreed that the boycott should continue. At that first meeting at the church, Montgomery Improvement Association leaders read a list of demands. Ironically, they didn't ask for integrated buses, but instead said they would not ride the buses again unless: "(1) courteous treatment by the bus operators was guaranteed; (2) passengers were seated on a first-come, first-served basis-Negroes seating from the back of the bus toward the front while whites seated from the front toward the back; (3) Negro bus operators were employed on predominantly Negro routes."[113] With these modest demands, MIA officials met with city and bus officials, but bus company officials claimed they could not adhere to first come-first-served seating because it would violate the city's ordinance. Despite numerous meetings, a compromise was never reached.

Dr. King said that 50,000 blacks participated in the boycott.[114] For a little more than one year, blacks walked, carpooled, or took taxis to work. Time magazine said that 95% of Montgomery's black community was united around the boycott.[115] The Montgomery Improvement Association was instrumental in assisting people with rides to work. "About 30,000 people were transported to and from work every day," and the services would run from 5:30 a.m. until 12:30 a.m.[116] Their elaborate transportation consisted of 32 pick-up and transfer sites

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[113] King, *Stride toward Freedom,* 64.
[114] Ibid.
[115] "New Sounds in a Courthouse," *Time*, April 2, 1956.
[116] Parks, "Tired of Giving In": The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, 72.

with the use of 20 private cars and 14 station wagons.[117] Black churches bought the station wagons to assist with transportation. King said boycotters walked as much as 12 miles a day to and from work, instead of submitting to the humiliation of segregation.

The boycott was a crisis for both business and commerce in Montgomery.[118] The Montgomery City bus system was losing money, along with downtown shops and businesses.[119] The bus company, National City Lines, lost $600 a day.[120] "Not only did the company stand to lose approximately $3,000 a day in revenues, but the city of Montgomery would lose a portion of its $20,000 a year in taxes on the bus lines…. "[121] The city, which normally received 2 percent of the bus company's revenues, admitted that it had lost $15,000 during the boycott.

There was extreme white resistance to the boycott. White Citizens Council groups, whose sole purpose was to preserve segregation, developed in Mississippi and quickly spread throughout the South. "Some of the segregationists' tactics included undermining the boycotters' car and taxi pools, threatening participants with loss of their jobs and bombing the churches and

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[117] Ibid.
[118] Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks."
[119] J. Stewart, *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About African American History* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1996).
[120] Rogers et al., *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State*.
[121] Brooks, *Walls Come Tumbling Down*, 110.

homes of boycott leaders."[122] On Jan. 30, 1956, while Dr. King was attending a mass meeting, a bomb went off at his home. His wife, young daughter and a family friend were at the home at the time. No one was injured but an angry crowd of blacks gathered outside the King home. "The Negroes had had enough. They were ready to meet violence with violence," King said.[123] Mayor W.A. Gayle and Police Commissioner Clyde Sellers tried to talk to those in the crowd, but they refused to listen. Dr. King calmed the crowd and encouraged people to return to their homes. Two days later, another bomb went off, this time at the home of E.D. Nixon.

Despite the violence to boycott leaders' homes and churches, the boycotters remained steadfast, even with the threat of legal repercussions. In February, some 90 boycotters and participants were indicted and arrested for breaking an Alabama law that "made it a misdemeanor to conspire without a just cause or legal excuse to hinder any company in its conduct of business".[124] However, Dr. King was the only boycotter who actually stood trial. He was convicted and given a fine of $500 and court costs.[125]

It was during the indictments and arrests that the national mainstream media started covering the story. The New York Times provided little coverage of the boycott in its early stages. In December, it published four stories about the boycott, and all were produced by the Associated Press or United Press. None

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[122] L. Hon, "To Redeem the Soul of America": Public Relations and the Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 9, no. 3 (1997): 170.
[123] King, *Stride toward Freedom,* 138.
[124] "New Sounds in a Courthouse."
[125] ———, *Stride toward Freedom.*

of the stories appeared on the paper's front page.[126] It wasn't until the day after the boycotters were indicted that an Associated Press story appeared on the Times front page. Other news organizations such as Time, Jet Life, Ebony, Nation, New York Journal, New York Post, New York Herald-Tribune, Minneapolis Star & Tribune, Manchester Guardian, London Observer, London Times, Pravda, Tass, CBS, NBC, Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, and Reuters began actively covering the events in Montgomery.[127] The trial and conviction of Dr. King made the boycott a national story and Dr. King a national figure.[128] Between December 1955 and December 1956, the Times published sixty-seven stories about the boycott, with eight stories published before the indictments and fifty-nine stories published after the indictments.[129] The first Times story with a staff reporter's byline didn't occur until February 24, 1956, two months after the boycott started.[130] In the course of one year, the Times had sixteen stories with reporter bylines. Eleven of those stories appeared between Feb. 24, 1956 and April 27, 1956, the other five appeared after the Nov. 13th Supreme Court decision.[131]

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[126] Flourney, "Reporting the Movement in Black and White: The Emmett Till Lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott."
[127] D. Cumming, "Building Resentment: How the Alabama Press Prepared the Ground for New York Times V. Sullivan," *American Journalism* 22, no. 3 (2005).
[128] H. Hampton and S. Fayer, *Voices of Freedom* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990).
[129] Flourney, "Reporting the Movement in Black and White: The Emmett Till Lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott."
[130] W. Phillips, "Negroes Pledge to Keep Boycott," *The New York Times*, February 24, 1956.
[131] Flourney, "Reporting the Movement in Black and White: The Emmett Till Lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott."

In January, a group of blacks asked the City Commission for permission to create the Montgomery Transit Lines, a jitney service for blacks. On two occasions the commission refused the request.[132] During the course of failed negotiations with city leaders, the Montgomery Improvement Association realized that city leaders would not meet their request, therefore, the organization changed its demands from first-come first served in a typically segregated fashion (blacks filling the bus from back to front and whites filling from front to back) to full integration on the city's buses.[133] Boycott attorneys felt that legal means were their only recourse to end the "separate but equal" laws. Attorneys filed a lawsuit on Feb. 1, 1956 in U.S. District Court, challenging the constitutionality of bus segregation. The case was filed on behalf of Aurelia Browder, Susie McDonald, Claudette Colvin and Mary Louise Smith. Colvin and Smith had been arrested the previous year for not giving up their seats when asked while on Montgomery buses. Browder and McDonald both claimed that they had been asked to vacate their seats to let white patrons sit down. The plaintiffs were required at one time or another, to have complied with the city's transportation segregation laws.[134] Parks was not listed as a defendant because boycott attorney Fred Gray didn't want the court to get distracted with her criminal prosecution.

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[132] N. Walton, "The Walking City: A History of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1989).
[133] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*.
[134] *Browder v. Gayle*, 142 F. Supp. 707 (1956).

> I did not include Rosa Parks as a plaintiff in this case because I feared a question would arise in the federal suit about whether we were trying to circumvent and enjoin the criminal prosecution of Mrs. Parks. Including her would have given the opposition an opportunity to introduce a side issue. I wanted the court to have only one issue to decide-the constitutionality of the laws requiring segregation on the buses in the city of Montgomery.[135]

In May, a hearing before a three-judge panel took place in U.S. Federal District Court. Boycott leaders felt they had a better chance of winning in federal court. After deliberating for three weeks, two of the three judges ruled that the city's segregation laws were unconstitutional. The three-judge panel ruled that the segregation codes in Montgomery "deny and deprive plaintiffs and other Negro citizens similarly situated of the equal protection of the laws and due process of law secured by the Fourteenth Amendment."[136] One judge wrote a dissent stating that the Plessy v. Ferguson case was still a good law and that the courts could not legislate interstate transportation, but only intrastate transportation. However, the majority decision prevailed and it required the city to immediately cease enforcing the segregation ordinances. The city had ten days to appeal the decision, and it did. The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

As the case was making its way to the court, city officials had filed a lawsuit to cease operation of the MIA carpool. The city claimed it lost $15,000 as a result of the carpool. It also claimed the carpool was a public nuisance and was operating as a private enterprise without city approval. During the Nov. 13

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[135] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 69
[136] *Browder v. Gayle*, 142 F. Supp. 707

hearing the judge ruled that the carpool must immediately cease. The city won its temporary injunction to halt the carpool.[137] On the same day, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation on Montgomery buses illegal. The high court affirmed the decision of the lower court in Montgomery. However, the high court's mandate would not be effective for at least 30 days when the decision formally reached the lower court. Black attorneys tried to speed up the order but their request was denied. In the meantime, boycotters were under a court order not to operate their transportation system. "The transportation system was no longer operating-the car pool was broken up, but the Negroes pledged to share a ride for a few more days until the mandate reached Montgomery."[138] On Dec. 20 the order reached Montgomery and blacks voted to end the boycott.[139] On Dec. 21, the first integrated buses rolled through the city of Montgomery.

LITERATURE REVIEW ABOUT THE BOYCOTT

There is substantial literature about the bus boycott. The first works published about the boycott occurred while the boycott was still in full swing. In 1956, L.D. Reddick, a professor at Alabama State University, wrote an article about the boycott. As both an author and participant in the boycott, his article provides a brief summary of events of the boycott and along with the initial reasons for the protest.[140] The Rev. Thomas Thrasher's article, also written before the culmination of the boycott, is a conciliatory call to arms. Thrasher, a

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[137] Walton, "The Walking City: A History of the Montgomery Bus Boycott."
[138] Ibid., 36.
[139] Court, "Browder v. Gayle."
[140] L. Reddick, "The Bus Boycott in Montgomery," *Dissent* 3 (1956).

member of the Alabama Council on Human Relations, an interracial group focused on racial harmony, provided a brief summary of the boycott that was taking place in Montgomery.[141] The article is conciliatory in nature as it urges both blacks and whites to come to an agreement. "The question before us is not intermarriage but simple human rights for a vast section of the human family."[142] He calls for more interracial communication, cooperation and understanding. He laments about the situation in Montgomery and the lack of communication among the two races. "White and black stand on opposite sides of an invisible line, and there seems no possible way of communicating across the barrier, a barrier which is there and isn't there, which in a sense both have made and of which we both are victims."[143] However, it was Walton's article that first provided an in-depth look into the boycott.[144] Originally published in a series of five issues in the Negro History Bulletin in 1955 and 1956, the first issue describes the feel of Montgomery. "Montgomery is one of the sore spots of race relations in the world. One can almost feel the undercurrent of tension in the air as he travels upon its streets.[145] He explains the segregationist codes in Montgomery, the arrest of Rosa Parks, and the mass arrest of the boycotters. Walton mostly uses newspaper articles from the Montgomery Advertiser and the Alabama Journal to tell the story of the boycott.

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[141] T. Thrasher, "Alabama's Bus Boycott," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1989).
[142] Ibid., 67.
[143] Ibid., 66.
[144] Walton, "The Walking City: A History of the Montgomery Bus Boycott."
[145] Ibid., 3.

The first comprehensive book about the movement was written by Dr. Martin Luther King in 1958.[146] In this book, Dr. King provides a unique look at the boycott as the boycott's spokesperson. He explains how he was originally attracted to the non-violent philosophy and how he believes this philosophy could be applied to the boycott. "I began to think about Thoreau's Essay on Civil Disobedience. I remembered how, as a college student, I had been moved when I first read this work. I became convinced that what we were preparing to do in Montgomery was related to what Thoreau had expressed." He painstakingly details the events of the boycott and explains how he had to combine the actions of the boycotters with biblical principles. King explains how he faced the dilemma of encouraging people to action while keeping within the Christian bounds.[147] In his autobiography, King laments, "how could I make a speech that would be militant enough to keep my people aroused to positive action and yet moderate enough to keep this fervor within controllable and Christian bounds? "[148] Other autobiographies about King detail his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and the role of the church. The church was the one place blacks were free of the laws that oppressed them.[149] "As a preacher in his own right, free from entanglements with his father, King learned to appreciate the southern Negro church as never before. Here in their church-the only place that was truly their

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[146] King, *Stride toward Freedom.*
[147] C. Carson, ed., *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1998).
[148] Ibid., 59.
[149] S. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1982); D. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1986), Brooks, *Walls Come Tumbling Down*.

own-black people could feel free of the white man, free of Jim Crow, free of everything.[150] As the leader of the boycott, Capeci, Jr. explains how King preached a social gospel. He was dedicated to more than feeding parishioners souls, but to helping them to live in society. Years after his death, Coretta Scott King provided insight into the movement within her autobiography.[151] She says that Dr. King preached a social gospel. His sermons "usually had a social message as well as a religious one, because of my husband's belief that a minister should also be a leader of social progress."[152]

Two early articles examined the boycott in the context of a social movement. In 1958, while working on his master's thesis, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy wrote about the bus boycott in the context of a social movement. [153] He compared it to Blumer's five mechanisms of a social movement: (1) leadership (2) espirit de corps, (3) morale, (4) ideology (5) operating tactics. He thoroughly explains the conditions before the boycott, along with the life cycle of the movement, the means in which the movement grew, and the predictable future of the movement. Along with Abernathy's thesis, Valien applied the bus boycott as a social movement by explaining the incidents that occurred before the boycott.[154] Valien explains how the movement developed its ideology and

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[150] Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr,* 57.
[151] C. King, *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1969).
[152] Ibid., 103.
[153] Abernathy, "The Natural History of a Social Movement: The Montgomery Improvement Association."
[154] Walton, "The Walking City: A History of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," Valien, "The Montgomery Bus Protest as a Social Movement."

how a social movement passes through several stages: initial protest, collective organization, negotiation (including litigation) and institutionalization. In later scholarly works about the boycott, Mills provides a thorough description of the political climate in Montgomery, in particularly, how the three city commissioners obtained their political seats.[155] Millner then provides an explanation of the emergence of the boycott through interviews with primary players.

Besides Dr. King there are several autobiographical works from key players in the boycott. In her memoirs, former Women's Political Council president Jo Ann Robinson explains the role the group had in the boycott and specifically, how they were waiting for the right time to initiate the boycott.[156] In his autography Montgomery Improvement Association attorney, Fred Gray, describes the legal aspect of the boycott and the decision to take the case to federal court.[157] Meanwhile, in his biographical memoirs, the Rev. Robert Graetz focuses on the violence associated with his involvement. As the only white preacher who openly supported the boycott, Graetz and his family were often the target of threats because they spoke out against segregation.[158] The most recent book published about the boycott comes from Kenneth Hare, the editorial page

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[155] J. Thornton III, "Challenge and Response in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956*, ed. D.J. Garrow (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1980).
[156] Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*.
[157] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*.
[158] Ibid, Graetz, *A White Preacher's Memoir: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*; D. Williams and W. Greenhaw, *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People Who Broke the Back of Jim Crow* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2006).

editor of the Montgomery Advertiser. Again, this book explains the boycott and provides a profile of some of the key players.[159]

According to Aldon Morris, the year-long Montgomery Bus Boycott "revealed that a large number of Blacks – indeed the entire community could be mobilized to protest racial segregation."[160] Morris stated that it was the boycott method that shifted power to the black masses and their non-violent philosophy was crucial to their success. The non-violent action "robbed the white power structure of the ability to openly crush the movement without serious repercussions."[161] Coleman, Nee & Rubinowitz attributed the success to the synergy of the boycott itself and litigation.[162] They said the two strategies complemented each other. One without the other would not have succeeded. On Dec. 20, 1956, the Montgomery Bus Boycott ended but the Civil Rights Movement had just begun.

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[159] Hare, *They Walked to Freedom*.
[160] Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks," 524.
[161] Ibid., 525.
[162] C. Coleman, L. Nee, and L. Rubinowitz, "Social Movements and Social Change-Litigation: Synergy in the Montgomery Bus Protest.," *Law and Social Inquiry* 30, no. 4 (2005).

CHAPTER III

Theoretical framework

> A social movement occurs when a fairly large number of people band together in order to alter or supplant some portion of the existing culture or social order[163]

Social movement theory will provide the theoretical framework for this research. Framing will be used as a method to analyze the data. Therefore, for the purpose of this project, it is important to explore the literature on both social movement and framing.

WHAT IS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT?

King defined a social movement as a "collective ready for action by which some kind of change is to be achieved, some innovation to be made, or some previous condition to be restored and as a collective enterprise to establish a new order of life."[164] Extending beyond a single event or a local community, social movements involve a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in behavior, thought and social relationships. The term social movement combines two ideas: "a processual component that refers to mobilization of groups outside institutional channels, and a substantive component indicating that the mobilized lack routine access and are willing to challenge the status quo."[165] Gusfield defined social

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[163] W. Cameron, *Modern Social Movements: A Sociological Outline* (New York: Random House, 1966), 7.
[164] King, *Social Movements in the United States,* 27.
[165] D. Strang and D. Jung, "Organizational Change as an Orchestrated Social Movement: Recruitment to a Corporate Quality Initiative " in *Social Movements*

movements as “socially shared demands for change in some aspect of the social order. It has the character of an explicit and conscious indictment of whole or part of the social order with a conscious demand for change”.[166] Charles Tilly defined a social movement as a series of interactions between power holders and people who lack formal representation, successfully claiming to seek a change in policy.[167] In his seminal work, Herbert Blumer suggested that social movements begin with a condition of unrest.[168] Viewing them as “collective enterprises to establish a new order of life,” he characterized social movements as generally slow but persistent.[169] From this condition they begin to gain power, with the ultimate goal of establishing a new order of life. McCarthy and Zald defined a social movement as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population representing preferences for changing some elements of the social structure or reward distribution, or both of a society.”[170] Plotke defined the term as “concerned with changes in ways of life, in norms – posing objectives that not only go beyond routine political reforms but also may be impossible to achieve

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and Organization Theory ed. G. Davis, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 2005), 281.

[166] J. Gusfield, "The Study of Social Movements," in *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Crowell, Collier and Macmillan, 1968), 445.

[167] C. Tilly, "Social Movements and National Politics " in *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory* ed. C. Bright and S. Harding (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984), 306.

[168] H. Blumer, "Social Movement," in *Social Movement: Critiques, Concepts, Case Studies*, ed. S. Lyman (New York: University Press, 1939).

[169] Ibid., 255.

[170] J. McCarthy and M. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977): 20.

through conventional political channels."[171] McAdam and Snow defined social movements as "a collective action with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional channels for the purpose of promoting or resisting change in the groups, society or world order in which it is a part."[172] It is through social movements that social change occurs and cultural change is produced.[173] A social movement begins with social unrest. According to Clarence King, "To say that social unrest is conducive to the appearance of social movements is to say, in a sense, that large numbers of people are seeking answers they do not have, reassurance that the answers they do have are right, or ways of implementing the answer of whose rightness they are convinced."[174] Social movements commonly are associated with social unrest, and this unrest is the product of individual discontent and frustration with one's present situation. A successful social movement changes public consciousness.[175]

Clarence King specified two types of social movements: revolutionary and reform. Revolutionary aims to alter the social order completely, while reform movements "tend to stress existing ethics and therefore considered more or less

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[171] D. Plotke, "What's So New About New Social Movements?," in *Social Movement: Critiques, Concepts, Case Studies* ed. S. Lyman (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 115.
[172] McAdam and Snow, eds., *Social Movements: Readings on Their Emergence, Mobilization and Dynamic*, p. xviii.
[173] L. Killian, "Social Movements," in *Handbook of Modern Sociology*, ed. R. Faris (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965).
[174] King, *Social Movements in the United States,* 17.
[175] M. Zald, C. Morrill, and H. Rao, "The Impact of Social Movements on Organizations: Environment and Responses " in *Social Movements and Organization Theory*, ed. G. Davis, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

respectable."[176] Cothran stated that a movement is revolutionary if its intent is to overthrow society's basic value system.[177] Blumer said a reform movement seeks to change a specific aspect of the social order while a revolutionary movement seeks to reconstruct the whole social order.[178] Cameron added reactionary and conservative movements as types of movements. A reactionary movement aims to advance views that were once held by the general society but have since been laid aside, while a conservative movement simply seeks to maintain the status quo.[179] Meanwhile, Smelser divided the types of major social movements into general, specific and expressive.[180] The difference between a general and specific movement is the breadth of the objectives involved, while an expressive movement does not try to change the social order. McCarthy and Wolfson divided social movements into conflict and consensus. Conflict movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement, are "typically supported by minorities or slim majorities of populations and confront fundamental, organized opposition in attempting to bring about social change."[181] In a consensus

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[176] King, *Social Movements in the United States,* 28.
[177] T. Cothran, "The Negro Protest against Segregation in the South," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 357 (1965); King, *Social Movements in the United States*; P. D'Angelo, "News Framing as a Multiparadigmatic Research Program: A Response to Entman," *Journal of Communication* 52, no. 4 (2002).
[178] Blumer, "Social Movement."
[179] Cameron, *Modern Social Movements: A Sociological Outline*.
[180] N. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1963).
[181] J. McCarthy and M. Wolfson, "Consensus Movements, Conflict Movements, and the Cooptation of Civil and State Infrastructures," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 274.

movement, there is widespread support for the movement's goals, with little opposition.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT DEVELOPMENT

According to Tarrow, a social protest is more likely to happen if there is a favorable political opportunity.[182] According to Goldstone successful social movements occur during periods of crisis.[183] Gamson said many factors such as tactics, the use of violence and organizational structure determine whether the movement is successful.[184] In an analysis of Gamson's strategy of protest, researchers concluded that periods of crisis and organizational factors predict a group's protest success.[185]

A social movement begins with a social conflict. Weber defined conflict as action oriented "intentionally to carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties."[186] Coser defined social conflict as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflict groups are not only to gain the desired values, but also to

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[182] S. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[183] J. Goldstone, "The Weakness of Organization: A New Look at Gamson's Strategy of Social Protest " *American Journal of Sociology* 85 (1980).
[184] W. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1975).
[185] S. Frey, T. Dietz, and L. Kalof, "Characteristics of Successful American Protest Groups: Another Look at Gamson's Strategy of Social Protest.," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 368-387 (1992).
[186] M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1947), 132.

neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals."[187] According to Oberschall, social conflict arises from the structured arrangement of individuals and groups in a social system. Change and conflict are intimately linked.[188] The rise of social movements is evidence of discontent with the existing social order.[189] In order for a social movement to develop, Cameron said several factors must be in place. People must be able recognize their dissatisfaction, they must believe in their ability to change the course of their lives, and they must live under conditions in which banding together is possible.[190] A social movement goes through three stages: emergence, the development of the formal social movement organization and movement decline.[191] At its inception a social movement is poorly organized, but as it develops it acquires organization and forms, "a body of customs and traditions, established leadership, an enduring division of labor, social rules and social values –in short a culture, a social organization and a new scheme of life."[192]

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[187] L. Coser, *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 232.
[188] A. Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973).
[189] R. Herberle, "Social Movements and Social Order," in *Social Movements: Critiques, Concepts, Case Studies*, ed. S. Lyman (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1951).
[190] Cameron, *Modern Social Movements: A Sociological Outline*.
[191] D. Friedman and D. McAdam, "Collective Identity and Activism: Networks, Choices, and the Life of a Social Movement," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[192] Blumer, "Social Movement," 60.

Many elements make up a social movement such as goals, ideology, group cohesion, and organization and status system and tactics.[193] Movement goals should be specific. A movement without specific goals may find that it's hard to garner participants' enthusiasm, not to mention distinguishing itself from similar movements.[194] Ideology contains the justification for the movement. It is the movement's values and ideas. McClowsky defined ideology as "a system of belief that is elaborate, integrated, more or less coherent, which justifies the exercise of power, explains and judges historical events, identifies political right and wrong and furnishes guides for action.[195] Oberschall explained further that an ideology consists of four parts:

> the interpretation of the process that has led to the present undesirable state of affairs and the blame can be fixed on certain individuals, groups or institutions, the ideology provides a blueprint of a desirable state of affairs that can be obtained if only the resistance of certain groups is overcome, the ideology will have a set of moral ideas associated with it, and the ideology may provide a novel interpretation of the historical process…. If the protest group has been negatively privileged, low status collectivity, as so often happens a new sense of identity is fostered.[196]

Group cohesion is necessary to develop a sense of loyalty amongst the participants. Organization and status is the distinction between the leaders and followers and their specific roles. Tactics are the activities geared toward the outside world. A movement goes through five stages: "agitation; development of esprit de corps; development of morale; the formation of an ideology; and the

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[193] King, *Social Movements in the United States*
[194] Ibid.
[195] H. McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics," *American Political Science Review* 58 (1964): 363.
[196] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*, 181.

development of operating tactics."[197] During agitation, an arousal of interest occurs and people must be jarred from their customary way of thinking. In the development of esprit de corps stage, the participants develop a sense of belonging and identifying with a common bond. The development of morale is the determination of the movement, and ideology serves "as the mechanism essential to the persistency and development of a movement."[198] The morale is the collective feeling that gives life to the movement and provides the mechanism needed to develop the movement. Lastly, operating tactics serve as the cultural background of the movement and the methods used to gain the public's attention.

As the social movement itself progresses, social movement organizations develop. The movements are then represented by a formal organization.[199] A social movement organization (SMO) is a "complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a counter movement and attempts to implement those goals."[200] The distinguishing features of a social movement organization are: the goal, the use of organizations as a way to facilitate change, and the geographical scope of the movement.[201] The goal of the SMO is to produce change. Clarence King said

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[197] Blumer, "Social Movement," 65.
[198] Ibid., 72.
[199] G. Davis and M. Zald, "Social Change, Social Theory, and the Convergence of Movements and Organizations," in *Social Movements and Organization Theory,* ed. G. Davis, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[200] McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," 1218.
[201] King, *Social Movements in the United States,* 25.

the movement does this by the use of its formal organization. This formal organization distinguishes the movement from what occurs in a crowd or a mob scenario because the SMO provides structure. Lastly, the geographical scope is a distinguishing feature because a movement may begin in one location but grow to be a regional, national or international movement that transcends the local community. As the movement grows, the SMO becomes more structured and professionally oriented.[202] It serves as the command post for the movement. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald said a professional social movement is characterized by its full-time leadership, its small membership base, its attempts to impart the image of speaking for a constituency and by its attempts to influence policy.[203]

Within the SMO are several social mechanisms: environmental, cognitive, and relational.[204] Environmental mechanisms are external factors that affect people involved in the social movement. Cognitive mechanism involves how the participants perceive their identities, interest and possibility for change, and relational mechanism is the connection between the participants and their networks. Zald, Morrill and Rao said a movement's mechanisms first bring attention to a societal problem. Second, they attempt to persuade those in

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[202] S. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* 2nd edition ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[203] D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. Zald, "Social Movements," in *Handbook of Sociology,* ed. N. Smelser (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988).
[204] J. Campbell, "Where Do We Stand? Common Mechanisms in Organizations and Social Movements Research," in *Social Movements and Organization Theory,* ed. G. Davis, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

authority to change their policies. Third, they attempt to change laws and establish government agencies to enforce the changes.[205]

The members of a social movement organization are vital to its success. Members join social movement organizations for different reasons. The typical characteristics of membership are age, sex, occupation, economic class, education, racial or ethnic background, religion, political, faith, geographical location or language.[206] Cameron said they join because the movement fosters their interest, provides congeniality and fellowship, raises their status by them being identified with the movement or provides a personal springboard to become a more valued person in the community.[207] Lofland developed a model that explains four separate mechanisms that lead to participation in political protest movements:

> 1) social affinity – people who enter a movement for one of two reasons; because their own values have an affinity with the espoused purposes of a political movement, or because their friends or other associates are themselves drawn into the political movement, 2) deprivation (the relative deprived are generally those who have experienced some setbacks in their lives and believe that their situation does not, or even will not meet their goals or expectations) 3) political effectuals – people who feel they can affect the political system, largely because they have affected it in the past through a variety of channels, particularly through their involvement in political and quasi political organizations 4) the periodically unengaged.[208]

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[205] Zald, Morrill, and Rao, "The Impact of Social Movements on Organizations: Environment and Responses."
[206] Cameron, *Modern Social Movements: A Sociological Outline*.
[207] Ibid.
[208] J. Lofland, "Collective Behavior: The Elementary Forms," in *Collective Behavior and Social Movements*, ed. R. Curtis and B. Aguirre (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1993).

Lofland said that it is the periodically unengaged which are so important to a movement's success because they are the unemployed, students, the old and the young, and can use substantial amounts of time for the movement.[209] The people involved "must place themselves in learning situations where they can be taught to act creatively."[210] In order to do this, Wilson said the participants must move into acts of bravery.[211] "Animated by the injustices, sufferings, and anxieties they see around them, men and women in social movements reach beyond the customary resources of the social order to launch their own crusade against the evils of society." [212] Wood and Jackson said that social movements are only successful if the participants calculate their chances of victory.[213]

SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORIES

The term "social movement" was originally developed by sociologist Lorenzo Von Stein in 1846 .[214] Early social movement theory attempted to explain mass society, mass behavior and collective behavior, which emphasized the irrationality of movement participants. These classical models were all based

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[209] Ibid.
[210] Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks," 523.
[211] J. Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1973).
[212] Ibid., 5.
[213] J. Wood and M. Jackson, *Social Movement* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1982).
[214] K. Mengelberg, "Lorenzo Von Stein: The History of Social Movements in France, 1789-1850," *The American Journal of Sociology* 71, no. 6 (1996).

on the premise that structural strain and a disruptive psychological state resulted in a social movement.[215]

The classical models

The United States has typically been referred to as a mass society.[216] A mass society is heterogeneous. Kornhauser described "mass society is a social system in which elites are readily accessible to influence by non-elites and non-elites are readily available for mobilization by elites."[217] Mass society is a social structure where there is access to governing groups. This is different from a communal society that requires inaccessible elites, and it differs from a pluralist view in which the U.S. political system is seen as relatively open. In the pluralist view, U.S. political power is widely distributed between a host of competing groups rather than concentrated in a particular segment of society.[218]

A mass society is characterized by an abundance of mass movements. According to Kornhauser, "Mass movements depend for their success on the weakness of existing institutions and on the intensive support of large numbers of people. The weakness of organizations in mass society allows them to be penetrated by mass movements."[219] Within a mass society a high rate of mass

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[215] D. McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).
[216] King, *Social Movements in the United States.*
[217] W. Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1959), 39.
[218] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*.
[219] Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society,* 177.

behavior can occur.[220] According to McAdam, the term "mass society" refers to the absence of an extensive structure of intermediate groups through which people can be integrated into society's political and social life.[221] Mass society is also characterized by the isolation of personal relations. This social isolation then becomes the prerequisite for social protest. Within mass society theory, social isolation and alienation then results in extreme behavior. Kornhauser said "mass movements appeal to the unemployed on psychological…grounds, as ways of overcoming feelings of anxiety and futility, and of finding new solidarity and forms of activity."[222]

Mass behavior theory is characterized by a focus of attention on objects that are remote from personal experience and daily life.[223] Mass behavior is a form of collective behavior and exhibits the following characteristics:

> a) the focus of attention is remote from personal experience and daily life b) the mode of response to remote objects is direct c) mass behavior also tends to be highly unstable, readily shifting its focus of attention and intensity of response d) when mass behavior becomes organized around a program and acquires a certain continuity in purpose and effort, it takes on the character of a mass movement[224]

Mass behavior is unstable and it is only when mass behavior becomes organized that it then takes on the character of a mass movement.[225]

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[220] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*.
[221] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*.
[222] Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society,* 67.
[223] Ibid.
[224] H. Blumer, "Collective Behavior," in *New Outlines of the Principles of Sociology*, ed. A.M. Lee (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1946), 185.
[225] Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society.*

Scholars have since changed the term “social movement” to interchangeable terms such as “collection action” and “collective behavior.”[226] Social movements are collective action.[227] Social movements are based on collective actions.[228] According to Smelser, social strain, grievances, and dissatisfaction have to be made meaningful to the potential participants in collective action.[229] The term “collective behavior” was originally developed by sociologist Robert Park. Park, of the Chicago School, was influenced by the French studies of crowd behavior.[230] In those studies researchers emphasized the irrationality and abnormality of the crowd.[231] Park said collective behavior is the action of a group.[232] It is through collective behavior that social movement groups try to change public opinion and policy. However, Park said that social changes begin with slow, cumulative shifts in public opinion, and collective behavior marks the beginning of those changes.[233] Herbert Blumer, Park’s student, further developed the theory. He said collective behavior refers to the

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[226] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*; R. Turner and L. Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs: Princeton Hall Inc., 1957).
[227] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*.
[228] T. Jordan, "The Unity of Social Movements," *Sociology Review* 43, no. 4 (1995).
[229] Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior*.
[230] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, "Social Movements."
[231] R. Turner and L. Killian, "The Field of Collective Behavior " in *Collective Behavior and Social Movements* (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1993).
[232] R. Park and E. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924).
[233] Ibid.

actions of groups and not to a type of individual behavior.[234] "Collective behavior may be defined as those forms of social behavior in which usual conventions cease to guide social action and people collectively transcend, bypass or subvert established institutional patterns and structures."[235] Smelser said collective behavior is a way of attacking problems created by strain and the more severe the strain, the more likely that an episode of collective behavior will occur.[236] Collective behavior is not institutionalized behavior, but behavior that is formed to meet unstructured situations.[237] Once collective behavior becomes institutionalized, it is no longer considered collective behavior. Smelser defined collective behavior as the behavior of two or more individuals who are acting together or collectively. Collective behavior occurs when people are mobilized for action on the basis of a common belief. "Episodes of collective behavior often constitute an early stage of social change; they occur when conditions of strain have arisen, but before social resources have been mobilized for specific and possibly effective attack on the sources of strain." [238]

Within collective behavior theory, movements generally have the following characteristics: their objectives are remote and extreme; they favor activist modes of intervention in the social order; they mobilize uprooted and atomized

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[234] H. Blumer, ed., *Collective Behavior* Principles of Sociology (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1953).
[235] Turner and Killian, "The Field of Collective Behavior," 8.
[236] N. Smelser, "The Nature of Collective Behavior," in *Collective Behavior and Social Movement*, ed. R. Curtis and B. Aguirre (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1993).
[237] Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior*.
[238] ———, "The Nature of Collective Behavior," 24.

sections of the population; they lack an internal structure of independent groups.[239] In classical collective behavior theory, according to Morris, social movements are said to be relatively spontaneous and unstructured.[240] "Movement participants are often portrayed as nonrational actors functioning outside or normative constraints and propelled by high levels of strain."[241] In the collective behavior model, it begins with system strain, then normative ambiguity which results in social movements. However, by the time of the Civil Rights Movement, scholars concluded that social movements were "spontaneous, non-rational, and unstructured."[242]

McAdam claimed that there are many problems with these classic social movement theories:

> First social movements are seen as a collective reaction to some form of disruptive system strain. Second, despite the emphasis on system strain, the classical model is more directly concerned with the psychological effect that the strain has on individuals and lastly, in all three models, the motivation for movement participation is held to be based not so much on desire to attain political goals as on the need to manage the psychological tensions of a stressful social situation[243]

He said it is unrealistic to believe that social strain is the sole cause of a movement, without taking into consideration the political context in which the movement occurred. He said strain is an insufficient cause of a social

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[239] Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society,* 47.
[240] A. Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization" *American Sociological Review* 46 (1981).
[241] Ibid., 745.
[242] Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks."
[243] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*, 9.

movement. He also pointed to flaws in which the classical models indicate that the movement participants are different from the average person because of some abnormal psychological profile. He explained that isolated people do not band together and form movement groups. Instead movements develop through interactional networks. Networks are imperative in a social movement, particularly the formal and informal networks that serve to connect individuals and organizations. [244] Tilly explained that networks are social structures that help shape and constrain people's behavior. "This suggests that one of the ways that social movements generate social change is by producing local organizations and networks."[245]

The movements of the 1960s helped debunk the classical models. The 1970s critics condemned the notion that participants in protest movements are irrational, disturbed, or alienated.[246] The critics sought to uphold political protestors as reasonable, sociable citizens, which lead to the development of new theories. Oberschall argued that protestors deciding to commit themselves to a movement are actually comparable to ordinary people making economic decisions about working or spending money.[247] "The events of the 1960s provided a catalyst for social movement theory in several ways. For one, issues

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[244] C. Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978).
[245] K. Andrews, "The Impacts of Social Movements on the Political Process: The Civil Rights Movement and Black Electoral Politics in Mississippi," *American Sociological Review* 62, no. 5 (1997): 813.
[246] C. Lo, "Communities of Challengers in Social Movement Theory," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[247] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*.

of power, conflict and the variable distribution of political resources came to center stage ”and the resource mobilization perspective began to emerge in the late 1960s.[248] Social movement scholars began to view social movements not as singular actors but as a field made up of many actors, in part because of the civil rights movement.[249] Scholars also began to study a social movement within its macro and micro conditions. Macro focuses on the movement emergence while micro focuses on the individual.[250]

New theories emerge

The resource mobilization approach began with the premise that the same general model of human behavior could be used to analyze both protests and conventional politics. This model is supposed to alleviate the problems associated with the classical models. Developed by McCarthy and Zald, mobilization refers to the process of forming crowds, groups, association, and organizations for the pursuit of collective goals. Social movements are no longer seen as a psychological phenomena but a political one. Two central assertions of resource mobilization are that social movement activities are not disorganized and spontaneous, and that social movement participants are not irrational. Participants are now seen as rational actors. Social movements are viewed as “a collection of political actors dedicated to the advancement of their stated

[248] M. Zald, "Looking Backward to Look Forward: Reflections on the Past and Future of the Resource Mobilization Research Program " in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* ed. C. Morrill and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 331.
[249] Davis and Zald, "Social Change, Social Theory, and the Convergence of Movements and Organizations."
[250] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, "Social Movements."

substantive goals." [251] McAdam, McCarthy and Zald said resource mobilization includes members, a communication network and leaders. The more involved a person is in the aggrieved community, the more likely he or she can be mobilized to participate in protest activities. The communication network initially informs the community and provides continued communication during the course of the movement. The role of leaders in resource mobilization theory is to lend their "prestige and organizing skills to the incipient movement."[252]

The resource mobilization approach emphasizes both societal support and constraint of the social movement phenomena.[253] Mobilization theory is concerned with how people with little individual power collectively resist or challenge established and organized groups that have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo."[254] Resource mobilization theorists tend to emphasize the constancy of discontent and variability of resources in accounting for emergency and the development of an insurgency.[255] Within the resource mobilization model social movements are not forms of irrational behavior but instead a tactical response to a closed political system.[256] This collective action within resource mobilization "is rooted in organizational structure and carried out

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[251] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*, 20.
[252] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, "Social Movements," 716.
[253] J. McCarthy and M. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory " in *Collective Behavior and Social Movements*, ed. R. Curtis and B. Aguirre (Needman Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1993).
[254] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*, 102.
[255] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, "Social Movements."
[256] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*.

by rational actors attempting to realize their ends."[257] McAdam claimed that there were still problems with the resource mobilization theory, chiefly because the concept of resources is never defined. The theory does not take into account the processes through which people attribute meaning to events and interpret situations.[258]

Also developed after the1960s movement was rational choice theory. The rational choice theory of collective action proceeds from the assumption that individuals have given goals and wants, and based upon their wants they choose their involvement in a social movement. Rational choice theory is about making decisions and the incentives that work to overcome free riding (receiving the benefits without active involvement).[259] However, the theory does not take into account personal history and instead treats people as abstractions.[260] According to the theory all participation decisions are based on incentives or extrinsic rewards.

Political Process Model

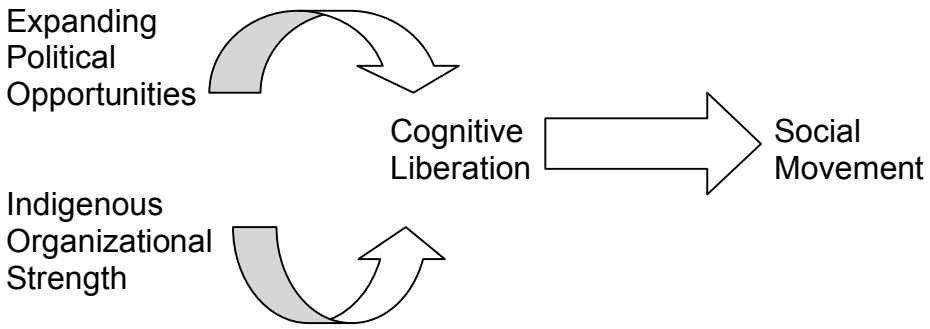
The political process model, developed by McAdam, provides an alternative to the classical and resource mobilization models. The term political

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[257] Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization": 745.
[258] B. Klandermans, "The Social Construction of Protest and Multiorganizational Fields," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[259] Friedman and McAdam, "Collective Identity and Activism: Networks, Choices, and the Life of a Social Movement."
[260] M. Feree, "The Political Context of Rationality: Rational Choice Theory and Resource Mobilization," in *Frontiers in Social Movement,* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

process was initially developed by Rule and Tilly.[261] This model claims that a social movement is more of a political phenomenon rather a psychological one. It stresses that political opportunities and external focuses on the political environment, along with a grassroots setting, facilitate collective action.[262] Within the political process theory there are several factors that are crucial to the development of a social movement; expanding political opportunities, indigenous organizational strength and cognitive liberation.

Figure 1: Contributing Factors to the Political Process Model



Political opportunities refer to the challenge and obstacles that groups face in advancing their interests. These groups have weak political bargaining power and are typically excluded from the decision making process. Indigenous organizational strength is the ability of the aggrieved organization to transform itself into an organized campaign of social protest by using its members, leaders, solidarity and communication network. The members are people integrated in

[261] J. Rule and C. Tilly, "Political Process in Revolutionary France: 1830-1832," in *1830 in France*, ed. J. Merriman (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975).
[262] D. McAdam and R. Scott, "Organizations and Movements," in *Social Movements and Organization Theory,* ed. G. Davis, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

the minority community. The more integrated in the community, the "more readily he/she can be mobilized for participation in protest activities."[263] The leaders must provide prestige and organizational skills to the movement, while solidarity is the interpersonal reward that goes along with participating in the movement. The communication network is the strength of the movement. A lackluster communication network can result in a movement never getting off the ground. McAdam says a communicative network is needed to initially mobilize the participants. Lastly, cognitive liberation is the meaning between opportunity and action, particularly within a political system. It is this shared cognition within a minority community that helps facilitate movement emergence. McAdam described cognitive liberation as a change in consciousness. It changes consciousness in three ways; first, the system loses legitimacy, second, people begin to demand change and third, the participants develop a new sense of political efficacy.

The civil rights movement as a social movement

Well before the Montgomery Bus Boycott, blacks were moving to northern states and achieving political voting power.[264] With the United States becoming a superpower, according to Morris, "wide-scale black protest, therefore, stood a good chance of exposing the contradiction between racism and democracy."[265] This contributed to the favorable political opportunity to invoke change, and in

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[263] McAdam, 44.
[264] McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*.
[265] Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks," 522.

essence began a social movement. According to Goldstone successful social movements occur during periods of crisis.[266] In regards to the Civil Rights Movement, it took more than the active participants to make the movement a success, they also needed sympathetic supporters. The movement grew with the help of outside support. Oberschall explained that conciliation was difficult in the Civil Rights Movement to desegregate the South because "the existing machinery of conflict regulation and conflict resolution was inadequate to serve as the framework within which major changes in race relations could be realistically expected, the peculiar nature of the segregation institutions themselves, and the absence of a strong, legitimate, superordinate authority that might either impose a solution from above or be able to compel the two sides to negotiate."[267]

As mentioned earlier, the ideology of a social movement is a system of belief that identifies right and wrong and provides a guide for action.[268] The ideology of the Civil Rights Movement consisted of opposition to the mistreatment of blacks. It sought to end segregation and focus on America as a melting pot. The movement emphasized black pride with slogans such as "black is beautiful."[269] The bus boycott was a typical instance of conflict between a southern municipal administration and the black population seeking to eliminate segregation.[270] In

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[266] Goldstone, "The Weakness of Organization: A New Look at Gamson's Strategy of Social Protest."
[267] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*, 268.
[268] McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics."
[269] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*.
[270] Ibid.

Montgomery there was a "simple and understandable goal, a religiously sanctioned philosophy, a strategy of action, a charismatic leader, and a new-found sense of the power of mass action."[271] The movement soon took on the institutional form of the Montgomery Improvement Association. As a nonbureaucratic, church-based organization, MIA's organizational affairs were conducted like church services rather than by rigid bureaucratic rules.

Obserschall said that the greater the number and variety of organizations in a community, the higher member participation in a movement. [272] He said there is more likely to be bloc recruitment as opposed to individual recruitment. For example, Oberschall said that when Dr. King first arrived at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, he organized several activities, and expanded the political and civic functions of the church. The activities included a social service committee, a social and political action committee. His congregation grew. Oberschall said that by increasing the activities in the church, "these organizing activities stimulated by King increased the density of associations and participation among the previously divided and unorganized Montgomery blacks."[273] Therefore, Montgomery's black population was becoming a more cohesive unit even before the boycott, but the boycott proved to be the catalyst in organized participation.

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[271] J. Laue, *Direct Action and Desegregation, 1960-1962* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1989).
[272] Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements*.
[273] Ibid., 127.

During the boycott black churches provided technical resources for mobilization. They served as the communication hub of the boycott. The churches provided the meeting places and rallying shelters, the printing facilities for handbills and leaflets, lists of addresses and telephone numbers, and eventually a car pool to provide alternative transportation.[274] The churches were the institutional base of the boycott. “Regular church meetings were transformed into mass meetings where blacks joined committees to guide protest, offered up collections to the movement, and acquired reliable information of the movement, which local radio and television stations refused to broadcast.”[275]

Once a successful instance of protest has occurred, it affects collective action by providing those activists who participated directly with an understanding of how it happened and why it worked.[276] Morris explains that the boycott revealed that through mass protests, the black community could facilitate change and that mass protests could be successfully organized and initiated through indigenous resources and institutions.”[277]

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[274] Ibid.
[275] Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization": 366.
[276] A. Morris, "Political Consciousness and Collective Action," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[277] Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization.”

FRAMING

Mass communications help proliferate social movements.[278] Movements need media, but often find it difficult to obtain that media attention. According to McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, "in most cases, movements cannot count on routine access to the media, nor editorial sympathy when coverage is forthcoming. Instead, they must exploit the normal procedures of these media in order to gain unpaid access as a means of relaying their message to a mass public."[279] How the media frame their issues affects public opinion, therefore, media coverage is imperative to the success of a social movement.

Early theorist Walter Lippman discussed how journalists shape public opinion because the public must rely on the press for its information.[280] Years later Ervin Goffman developed framing, which further explained the influence of the various organs of mass communication, which were becoming known as the media.[281] He said that people use frames based on their past experiences to define current social situations. He defined frames as schemata of interpretation. It is through these schemata that people reduce issues of sociocultural complexity not only to further their understanding but also to lay the groundwork for their response.[282] "Frames allow individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label events within their life space or the world at large."[283] Although Goffman

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[278] King, *Social Movements in the United States.*
[279] McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, "Social Movements."
[280] W. Lippman, *Public Opinion* (New York: Macmillan, 1922).
[281] E. Goffman, *Frame Analysis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid., 21.

was a sociologist, the concept of framing was applied to other disciplines, particularly the area of communication and the news media.

Tuchman said that by framing an event, the news media define and give meaning to the events.[284] "When journalists choose content and frame it, they are constructing reality for their audiences."[285] The frame is the issue. It tells viewers what the story is about. In her definition of media frames, Tuchman said the news frame is instrumental in organizing everyday reality. She called it an essential feature of the news. Frames are used to bring structure to a story. Entman said framing is a process in which a reporter emphasizes a particular aspect of a story, while downplaying other aspects.[286] Gitlin said the news frames that influence audiences are developed over time by the continuous coverage of an issue through persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation.[287] Gitlin said "frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely: to recognize it as information, to assign it to cognitive categories and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences."[288] He said the frames create meaning for the audience and they come out naturally, while covering the story. The frames determine how the information is decoded and eventually placed within the news story.

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[284] G. Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978).
[285] Ibid., 147.
[286] R. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm " *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (1993).
[287] Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching*.
[288] Ibid., 7.

In essence, a frame is a central organizing idea in news stories that gives the stories context for the reader. Framing suggests that the media have influence in the stories they choose to cover and the ways that they are covered. Entman said framing provides reality and clarity to the public.[289]

> Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in the communicating text, in such a way to provide a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, morale evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. [290]

Entman distinguished between media and individual frames. Entman defined individual frames as "information-processing schemata", while media frames are "attributes of the news itself."[291] An individual frame examines how an individual processes the information. Entman defined individual frames as "mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information."[292] According to Gamson and Mogdiliani, a media frame is "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events."[293] A media frame begins as a journalistic frame. [294] Journalists use frames to make sense of information as it is disseminated to the public. Journalistic framing consists of the process of being developed at a level of

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[289] Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm."
[290] Ibid., 55.
[291] R. Entman, "Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the Kal and Iran Air Incidents," *Journal of Communication* 41, no. 4 (1991): 7.
[292] Ibid., 53.
[293] W. Gamson and A. Modigliani, eds., *The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action*, 3rd ed., Research in Political Sociology (Greenwich: JAI, 1987), 143.
[294] B. Scheufele, "Framing-Effects Approach: A Theoretical and Methodological Critique " *The European Journal of Communication Research* 29 (2004).

cognition within the journalist and then moves to an area of discourse in a newsroom.[295] Next, it exchanges with other discourses and finally ends with its influence on news coverage. They provide information to the public, and the public then gains understanding about an issue or topic.

Iyengar posited two types of framing: episodic and thematic . Episodic framing focuses on a particular event or issue, while in thematic framing an overall issue is being addressed.[296] "When framing thematically, the media discusses an issue in more abstract terms…. In the case of episodic framing, the singular person is made responsible for a problem or its solution, whereas for thematic framing, society is made responsible."[297] Another example is Rhee's description of strategic and thematic frames.[298] He described a strategic frame as focusing on a candidate's strategies while a thematic frame focuses on the issues. D'Angelo described the purpose of news framing research as identifying the thematic framing units, investigating the conditions that produced the frames, examining how the frames interact with individuals, and determining how the frames contribute to public opinion.[299]

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[295] Ibid.
[296] S. Iyengar, *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[297] Scheufele, "Framing-Effects Approach: A Theoretical and Methodological Critique."
[298] J.W. Rhee, "Strategy and Issue Frames in Election Coverage: A Social Cognitive Account of Framing Effects," *Journal of Communication* 47, no. 3 (1997).
[299] D'Angelo, "News Framing as a Multiparadigmatic Research Program: A Response to Entman."

Entman said frames have at least four locations in the communication process: "the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture."[300] The *communicator* deals with the content of the frames and the frames are themes within news stories. *Text* is the vehicle that provides the framing. The *receiver* implies that the frame interacts with cognitive and social behavior and the *culture* indicates that frames affect public political thought. Entman defined frames on the basis of how issues or events are portrayed by the framing devices, and claimed that the framing devices define problems. He said that framing has strong implications for political communications. "Frames call attention to some aspects of reality while obscuring other elements, which might lead audiences to have different reactions…."[301] Barnett said "communication scholars have suggested that framing is a technique employed by journalists and other communication professionals to collect and organize disparate acts into a coherent story."[302] Reese defined framing as "the way events and issues are organized and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences."[303] In essence, Baylor said that framing provides the news consumer the answer to the question, "what does this mean to me?"[304]

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[300] Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm": 52.
[301] Ibid., 55.
[302] B. Barnett, "Feminists Shaping News: A Framing Analysis of News Releases from the National Organization for Women," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 17, no. 4 (2005): 342.
[303] S. Reese, O. Grandy Jr, and A. Grant, eds., *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001), 7.
[304] T Baylor, "Media Framing of Movement Protest: The Case of American Indian Protest," *Social Science Journal* 33, no. 3 (1996).

D'Angelo said researchers agree that journalists and news outlets select what information is included in a frame and what information is omitted.[305] Pan and Kosicki said that the framing decisions of journalists have a strong impact on the audience.[306] They claim that journalists "hold great power in setting the context for debate defining issues under consideration, summoning a variety of mental representations and providing the basic tools to discuss the issues at hand."[307] A journalist's word choice and language help to produce a news frame. [308] In summarizing, the news media define what is news and the stories they will cover, and it is through this news frame that viewers learn about themselves and others.

Framing and Social Movement

Framing has helped advance the field of social movement theory. Klandermans argued that frames help to assert a social movement. "Social movements frame–that is, assign meaning to and interpret-relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, garner bystander support and demobilize antagonists."[309] Benford and Snow concluded that social movement activists rarely control the stories that the media chooses to cover or how the media chooses to represent the

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[305] D'Angelo, "News Framing as a Multiparadigmatic Research Program: A Response to Entman."
[306] Z Pan and G. Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse," *Political Communication* 10 (1993).
[307] Ibid., 70.
[308] Goffman, *Frame Analysis*.
[309] Klandermans, "The Social Construction of Protest and Multiorganizational Fields," 80.

activists.[310] Instead the frames portrayed by the media render events as meaningful. The two determinants of effective framing of a social movement are the nature of the belief system held by potential participants and the extent to which the framing effort resonates within that participant's life.[311]

Benford and Snow developed what they called "collective action frames." These frames are "emergent action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns."[312] Collective action frames single out an aspect of life as unjust and requires corrective action. There are two characteristics of these frames. First, they either underscore the seriousness and injustice of a social condition or redefine as unjust what was previously seen as tolerable and secondly, it serves as a mode of attribution by making diagnostic and prognostic attributions.[313] In a diagnostic attribution, the concern is problem identification, while prognostic attribution focuses on problem resolution.

Media and social movements are interdependent. Social activists need media to communicate their goals, while media need news to sell to

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[310] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment."
[311] D. Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micro-Mobilization and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986).
[312] D. Snow and R. Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," in *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research across Cultures* ed. B. Klandermans, H. Kriesi, and S. Tarrow (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1988).
[313] R. Benford and D. Snow, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* ed. A. Morris and C. Mueller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

audiences.[314] Social movement leaders attempt to modify and revise frames to gain more potential supporters and reach a wider audience.[315] Social movement organizations can have an impact on media discourse.[316] This impact can be found in how they frame the issues, define the grievance and stage collective actions to attract the mass media. In order to be successful, activists must frame their issues in ways that resonate with the ideologies and cultural understanding of supporters and potential supporters.[317] Therefore, framing becomes a cognitive mechanism of social change because it affects how movement participants perceive their interest, identities, and possibilities for change. Leaders engage in both diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing.[318] Diagnostic framing involves convincing potential supporters that change is desirable, while prognostic framing convinces supporters that change is actually possible. Prognostic framing includes the strategies or plan of attack.[319] Motivational framing involves convincing supporters that their participation is required in order to produce change. Benford and Snow call motivational framing "a call to arms."[320] Motivational framing provides the rationale for engaging in

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[314] Baylor, "Media Framing of Movement Protest: The Case of American Indian Protest."
[315] R. McVeigh, D. Myers, and D. Sikkink, "Corn, Klansmen and Coolidge: Structure and Framing in Social Movements," *Social Forces* 83, no. 2 (2004).
[316] Klandermans, "The Social Construction of Protest and Multiorganizational Fields."
[317] Campbell, "Where Do We Stand? Common Mechanisms in Organizations and Social Movements Research."
[318] W. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[319] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment."
[320] Ibid., 617.

collective action, but in order to project these frames to an audience, they must be covered in the media. However, Gitlin reminds us that a movement's message is not transmitted without media bias.

Framing and the Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement provides an important example of the role of media in a social movement. Prior to the mid 1950s, news coverage of blacks was done sparingly in the South. In neighboring Mississippi, where blacks actually outnumbered whites, positive news regarding blacks was never reported in the newspaper. However, if a black committed a crime, that could make the front page.[321]

> A captured black fugitive even got his picture in the paper- standing in cuffs and leg irons between two grinning deputies, with a bored bloodhound lolling at his feet. A Negro would get a paragraph or two for almost any kind of infraction. If a story was about a Negro in trouble, the editors said so. [322]

Weill concluded that in a study of Mississippi newspapers between the years 1946-1968, that the papers advocated white supremacy and a suppression of equal rights for blacks. In his book, "*An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem in Modern Democracy*," Myrdal's examined the nation's race issue. Myrdal, originally from Sweden, said that besides the black press and a handful of southern liberal editors, the mainstream press didn't recognize racism as a

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[321] I. Harkey, "Foreward " in *In a Madhouse's Din: Civil Rights Coverage by Mississippi's Daily Press, 1948-1968*, ed. S. Weill (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002).
[322] Ibid., xi.

story in America.[323] "The segregation of the Negro in America, by law in the South and by neighborhood and social and economic stratification in the North, had engulfed the press as well as America's citizen. The mainstream press wrote about whites but seldom about Negro Americans or discrimination against them; that was left to the Negro press."[324] Myrdal concluded that getting publicity about their plight would be imperative for blacks. Roberts and Klibanoff remarked that Myrdal saw how important the press would be in solving the Negro problem. "That the black press was at the center of a developing Negro protest in the United States. But if the protest were to succeed, the mainstream press – the white press – would have to discover racial discrimination and write about it so candidly and so repeatedly that white Americans outside the South could no longer look the other way."[325] The presence of the media would be imperative to the Civil Rights Movement. The framing used in the Civil Rights Movement focused on equal rights, according to Campbell, "because it resonated with traditional American political rhetoric."[326] That is how civil rights leaders framed the movement because this rhetoric was shared not only by blacks, but by white sympathizers as well.

Previous studies have examined news framing in the broader context of the Civil Rights Movement, particularly among the print media. Broussard

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[323] M. Gunner, *An American Dilemma* (New York Harper, 1944).
[324] G. Roberts and H. Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006), 5.
[325] Ibid., 10.
[326] Campbell, "Where Do We Stand? Common Mechanisms in Organizations and Social Movements Research," 49.

examined black press coverage of civil rights workers in Mississippi during Freedom Summer 1964.[327] His analysis of the *Jackson Advocate*, the *Mississippi Enterprise* and *Mississippi Free Press* found that only one paper, the *Mississippi Free Press*, "championed equality and social justice for African-Americans."[328] Of the other two papers, the *Mississippi Enterprise*, virtually ignored the Civil Rights Movement, while the *Jackson Advocate* promoted the status quo of race relations. Broussard stated that the *Jackson Advocate* framed Freedom Summer in a negative context by "consistently providing unflattering characterizations of the freedom workers. The Advocate either minimized the effects of violence against blacks or blamed them for the disorder."[329] The *Mississippi Free Press* provided favorable coverage of the freedom workers and the Civil Rights Movement, while the *Mississippi Enterprise* simply served as a bulletin board regarding church, education and social activities, and did not actively cover Freedom Summer stories. Broussard said the reason for the coverage difference is unclear but suggested that advertising dollars and fear of retribution may have been a factor.

Walton examined how two Mississippi newspapers, the weekly *Neshoba Democrat* and the daily *Meridian Star*, covered the disappearance and eventual

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[327] J. Broussard, "Saviors or Scalawags: The Mississippi Black Press's Contrasting Coverage of Civil Rights Workers and Freedom Summer, June-August 1964," *American Journalism* 19, no. 3 (2002).
[328] Ibid., 63.
[329] Ibid., paragraph 14.

discovery of three murdered civil rights workers.[330] James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were last seen on June 21, 1964. The three were leaving Neshoba County heading back to Meridian, just 40 miles away, but they never made it. After a 44-day search they were found shot to death and their bodies buried in a dam. Walton showed how the two papers framed the stories of their disappearance. In an analysis of 75 *Meridian Star* articles, 12 *Neshoba Democrat* articles and interviews with three journalists, she found that both papers in their coverage contributed to the community's belief that the disappearance was a hoax. Interviews with the Neshoba County sheriff, who suggested the hoax theory without any other plausible theories, led the Neshoba residents to accept the explanation. "The reporters helped silence potentially dissenting voices by making them seem to be in the minority."[331] Even after the search for bodies continued for more than a month, the newspapers still did not acknowledge that the men could have met with foul play. Walton concluded that the reporters violated journalistic standards by not reporting "all they know, downplayed or ignored undisputable evidence, and failed to investigate more thoroughly their own intuition that foul play occurred", and as a result provided readers with unbalanced accounts of the disappearance and eventual discovery.[332]

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[330] L. Walton, "In Their Own Backyard: Local Press Coverage of the Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner Murders," *American Journalism* 23, no. 3 (2006).
[331] Ibid., 36.
[332] Ibid., 45.

News coverage of the Civil Rights Movement in southern newspapers often appeared to be lacking. During the 1963 protests in Birmingham, Alabama, both city newspapers, the *Birmingham Post Herald* and the *Birmingham News*, reflected the decision of its editors not to provide a forum for the demonstrators.[333] Photographs of demonstrators being attacked by police dogs or horses were not published and "news policies of the Birmingham papers appear to be almost as segregated as has been the city itself."[334] Vincent Townsend, editor of the *Birmingham News*, banned the subject of race relations in his paper. "The newspaper's position was that desegregation should not be pushed too hard since most Southerners were unhappy with the idea."[335]

Framing and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

There are academic studies about the Montgomery Bus Boycott,[336] but just one doctoral study and one master's thesis have examined news framing.[337] In his research, Flourney compared reporting of the Emmett Till lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Flournoy analyzed news stories and photographs in *The New York Times*, *Life* and *Look* magazines with stories from two

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[333] J. Boylan, "Birmingham: Newspapers in a Crisis," *Columbia Journalism Review* 40, no. 4 (2001).
[334] Ibid.: paragraph 7.
[335] Cumming, "Building Resentment: How the Alabama Press Prepared the Ground for New York Times V. Sullivan," paragraph 28.
[336] See, for example, Gilliam, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956"; Thornton III, "Challenge and Response in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956"; Millner, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott: A Case Study in the Emergence and Career of a Social Movement.", Garrow, ed., *The Origins of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.*
[337] Flourney, "Reporting the Movement in Black and White: The Emmett Till Lynching and the Montgomery Bus Boycott."

predominately black publications (*Jet* and *Birmingham World*). [338] He was unable to find an analysis of media coverage of the bus boycott prior to conducting his research. Flourney found that "black-oriented publications produced the most accomplished journalistic coverage by providing a greater range of sources, broader context, more depth and a clear statement of the central problem while following accepted journalistic routines such as attribution and balance."[339] Flourney stated that the specifically black publications had more sources and diverse perspectives of the stories, while the white mainstream organizations often quoted white sources and relied on government officials, rarely providing an alternative view.

Thomas examined the role of the white mainstream media in the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. She found that the local newspaper, the *Montgomery Advertiser*, read by both blacks and whites framed the movement.[340] Prior to the boycott, the local newspaper rarely covered news in the black community. A section was devoted to blacks, but it typically focused on community news such as school programs, weddings, etc. However, the *Montgomery Advertiser* aggressively covered the boycott, despite the pleas from some white citizens who claimed the boycott would die down if it wasn't covered in the paper. In addition to the news stories, letters to the editor and editorials were written about the boycott. In a city so racially divided, suddenly there was

[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.,153.
[340] Thomas, "The Impact of the Local White Media in the Success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott."

coverage and discussion about Montgomery's black citizens and their protest. This initial coverage led to coverage in other media outlets, and the protest grew to become a national story. And while the coverage grew, the bus boycott was on its way to becoming a successful social movement.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott is often referred to as the first successful collective activity of the modern Civil Rights Movement. It was during this 381-day boycott that Montgomery blacks came together for a common cause—fighting mistreatment on area buses. But in order for the boycott to be successful, not only did there need to be willing participants, but a communication system to keep those participants informed. News coverage helps propel the goals of a social movement, but what about the communication from the social movement organization and among its participants? Therefore, the overall research question for this study was: how was communication used during the Montgomery Bus Boycott to inform and mobilize participants? Other research questions included: how was the communication mediated by news organizations, and how was the boycott communicated by the participants, churches and other networks? This study utilized several methods: interviews with former participants, frame analysis of media coverage along with analysis of archival material to provide a clearer picture of the use of communication during this historic period.

RQ1: How was communication used during the Montgomery Bus Boycott to inform and mobilize the participants?

RQ2: How was communication mediated and framed by the news media?

RQ3: How was the boycott communicated by the participants, churches and other networks?

CHAPTER IV

Methodology and Data Collection

> The instability of the administration has penetrated into the habits of the people; it even appears to suit the general taste, and no one cares for what happened before his time. No methodological system is pursued; no archives are formed and no documents are brought together when it would be easy to do so. [341]
>
> Alexis de Tocqueville

Tocqueville was referring to the use of archival material and its importance in the recording of history. In this chapter, archival material was used for data analysis. But first, a description of frame analysis is necessary to explain how the news articles were analyzed.

FRAME ANALYSIS

The concept of media framing is important because it helps us undertstand mass communication effects.[342] Framing recognizes the ability of a text to define a situation or issues, and frame analysis is used to analyze how people understand those events. Frame analysis is inherently qualitative in nature. It is conducted through the use of qualitative techniques. It is more than sorting the media text based upon size and frequency, framing captures the meaning embedded in the texts. [343] Frame analysis has typically relied on a

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[341] A. de Tocquevelle, *Democracy in America* (New York: The Colonial Press, 1835), 557.
[342] J. Tankard, "The Empirical Approach to the Study of Media Framing," in *Framing Public Life*, ed. S. Reese, Jr. Gandy, O., and A. Grant (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2001).
[343] S. Reese, "Framing Public Life: A Bridging Model for Media Research," in *Framing Public Life*, ed. S. Reese, Jr. Gandy, and A. Grant (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2001).

qualitative, textual analysis approach, with a researcher working to identify the frames.[344]

Qualitative textual analysis incorporates the use of textual analysis, which is an analysis of the words used and the meaning of those words. Although difficult, Shoemaker stated that this type of qualitative research provides a more revealing look at the data.[345] Textual analysis gives the researcher the ability to look deeper as compared to a quantitative methods. "A common goal of a number of textual analysis methods, including the analysis of qualitative interviews, social text analysis, discourse analysis, and conversation analysis, is to discover how participants construct and make sense of their social worlds by identifying the patterns and features of naturally occurring talk".[346] Deacon, Picking, Golding and Murdock stated that a textual analysis will determine how language, image, sounds are organized and presented.[347] The researchers said that because textual analysis is so detail-oriented and filled with thick description, it is typically applied on a small body of work as opposed to large samples that are commonly used in content analysis studies.[348]

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[344] Tankard, "The Empirical Approach to the Study of Media Framing."
[345] P. Shoemaker and S. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1991).
[346] D. Noce, "Experiencing the Analytic Value of Transcription: An Exercise for Qualitative Research Methods," *Communication Teacher* 20, no. 1 (2006): 6.
[347] D. Deacon et al., *Researching Communication* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
[348] Ibid.

Qualitative analysis applied to framing research is a form of identifying language use in texts.[349] "A qualitative researcher investigates frames in a variety of manifestations, including figures, of speech, pictures, and catch phrases."[350] According to Pan and Kosicki, "The basic idea is to view news texts as a system of organized signifying elements that both indicate the advocacy of certain ideas and provide devices to encourage certain kinds of audience process in the text."[351] Entman says the major task of determining textual meaning should be through the identification of frames.[352] Previous studies have used qualitative textual analysis methods to define frames in the data.[353]

In preparation of frame analysis, the researcher must read a wide array of divergent sources. This is important as it makes the researcher aware of potential frames for the topic of study.[354] The first step in frame analysis is to identify the central concepts that make up the frames.[355] Next, as the researcher

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[349] J. Hertog and D. McLeod, "A Multiperspectival Approach to Framing Analysis: A Field Guide," in *Framing Public Life* (Mahwah, New Jersey Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2001).
[350] M. Miller and B. Riechert, "The Spiral of Opportunity and Frame Resonance: Mapping the Issue Cycle in News and Public Discourse," in *Framing Public Life*, ed. S. Reese, Jr. Gandy, O., and A. Grant (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2001), 114.
[351] Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse," 55.
[352] Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm ".
[353] M. Curkan-Flanagan, "The Contemporary Militia: Network News Framing of a Social Movement" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee-Knoxville, 2000); E. Atwood-Gailey, "Constructing A "Good Death": News Media Framing of the the Euthanasia Debate from 1975-1997" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee-Knoxville, 1999); Barnett, "Feminists Shaping News: A Framing Analysis of News Releases from the National Organization for Women."
[354] Hertog and McLeod, "A Multiperspectival Approach to Framing Analysis: A Field Guide."
[355] Ibid.

reads the text, notes must be made about about the data. "Notes in the margins and ongoing note taking guide a dialogue with yourself that should provide insights in confronting frames…"[356] Gamson and Modigliani provide a practical guide in conducting frame analysis with their media package technique.[357] In their approach, they focus on keywords and common language that help to identify a particular frame. Hertog and McLeod also suggest counting other categories such as sources and how often the sources are quoted. They indicate this practice can be helpful in "ascertaining the frames employed and the rhetoric applied."[358] After the frames are developed, rich description and anecdotes from the text should be provided to substantiate the frames.[359]

Data Collection

Using frame analysis, the researcher examined articles from the *Montgomery Advertiser* published from Dec. 1, 1955 and Dec. 21, 1956. The researcher used content analysis to determine the frames of the articles. Newspapers provide historical evidence and are frequently used in historical research. "Historians have become more adept at using newspapers as

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[356] Ibid.
[357] W. Gamson and A. Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach " *American Journal of Sociology* 95 (1989).
[358] Hertog and McLeod, "A Multiperspectival Approach to Framing Analysis: A Field Guide," 52.
[359] Z. Pan and G. Kosicki, "Framing as a Strategic Action in Public Deliberation," in *Framing Public Life*, ed. S. Reese, O. Gandy Jr, and A. Grant (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 2001).

evidence and have learned how to discount journalistic bias and inaccuracy."[360] Burnette claimed that newspapers don't generally cover the full spectrum of an event, but instead tend to provide full coverage only in a period of crisis. However, he affirmed that newspapers are the first drafts of history. It was therefore deemed appropriate to examine the Montgomery newspapers. During the boycott, there were two daily newspapers, the *Montgomery Advertiser* and the *Alabama Journal.* The *Montgomery Advertiser* was published every morning and had a daily circulation of 57,843 and a Sunday circulation of 72,948.[361] The *Alabama Journal* was published evenings, with the exception of Sundays, and had a circulation of 20,335.[362] The *Montgomery Advertiser*, began publishing in 1829 was originally known as the *Planter's Gazette*.[363] It became the *Montgomery Advertiser* in 1833. From 1889 and 1993, there were two commercial newspapers in Montgomery, the morning *Montgomery Advertiser* and the afternoon *Alabama Journal*. R.F Hudson, a reporter who joined the *Montgomery Advertiser* in 1903 and eventually became its owner, bought the *Alabama Journal* and in 1993 the two papers merged.[364] The data will consist of stories from the *Montgomery Advertiser*. The *Montgomery Advertiser* was chosen because it had the largest circulation at the time of the boycott.

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[360] O. Burnette Jr., *Beneath the Footnote* (Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1969), 266.
[361] "Alabama Official and Statistical Register," ed. State of Alabama (State of Alabama, Department of Archives and History, 1955).
[362] Ibid.
[363] "History of the Montgomery Advertiser," www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/customerservice/history.htm.
[364] Ibid.

News stories from the *Montgomery Advertiser* were obtained from the Alabama Department of Archives and from a commemorative website established by the Montgomery Advertiser.[365] As a result, news stories from Dec. 1, 1955 (the day Rosa Parks was arrested) through Dec. 21, 1956 (the first day of legally integrated bus usage) were analyzed.

Based upon the overall research questions, sources and themes served as the categories. Sources refers to direct quotes in the articles, and if boycott supporters or opposers were quoted most often. A preliminary line-by-line analysis of the material helped to develop the primary themes for coding and descriptive data.

Data Analysis

To analyze the articles, first the researcher read the article in its entirety. At the end of the article handwritten notes were placed at the bottom. These notes then identified potential frames. For example, this article appeared on Dec. 2, 1955, one day after Park's arrest.

> **City Charge Faced by Negro Bus Rider**
> Preliminary hearing for a Negro women charged with violating segregation laws by refusing to accept the seat assigned to her by a Montgomery City Lines bus driver has [sic] set for Monday in Recorder's Court. Rosa Parks, 634 Cleveland Ct., an employee at a downtown department store, was jailed on the charge last night and later released under $100 bond.
> Bus Operator J.F. Blake, 27 N. Lewis, St., told investigation Patrolmen F.B. Day and D.W. Mixon the woman refused to move to the rear of the bus after he had requested her to do so. Officers reported the woman was still in her original seat when they made the arrest.

[365] "The People, the Community, the Movement That Changed the World," Montgomery Advertiser, www.montgomeryboycott.com.

> Rosa Parks was charge [sic] with violating Chapter 6, Section II of the City Code of Montgomery, a section giving bus operators "police powers" in assigning seats according to "race."
>
> (Dec. 2, 1955)

After reading this article, the researcher wrote the notes, "Parks arrest," "Negro breaking the law." Another example is this story:

> **37 Held in Mass Arrests on Boycott Indictments**
>
> By 1:30p.m., five more Negroes, including Rosa Parks, had been arrested, bringing the total to 37. The other four were: Jimmie Gamble, Arthur Murphy, August McHaney, an insurance executive, and his wife Corva McHaney. Nine Negro ministers and a former state president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People were among the first defendants arrested today for taking part in the racial boycott against Montgomery city buses.
>
> They were indicted yesterday along with 105 other persons after a Montgomery County grand jury concluded an eight-day investigation of the mass protest against bus segregation.
>
> (Feb. 22, 1956)

After reading this article, the researcher made the following notes: "mass arrest of boycotters," and "breaking the anti-boycott law." After each article was read the researcher developed frames that would describe the initial notes made about the stories. The frame, "Blacks as Unlawful" was then used to describe the two aforementioned stories. After the categories were developed, the researcher developed the coding sheet (see Appendix B) Next, each article was reread and coded. The date of the article was noted, along with page placement and story source. Next, the researcher paid close attention to the direct sources used in the article. The presence of direct and indirect quotes was noted, along with a word count for each direct quote. The process continued for the 311 articles, which provided the statistical data.

INTERVIEWS

The next aspect of research involved 18 participant interviews. In order to examine communication among the boycott participants, qualitative methods were used. In-depth long interviews were conducted with people who actively participated in the boycott. The long interview allowed the researcher to "step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do."[366]

Data Collection

To identify participants, contact was made with Margie Lee, wife of former Alabama State University President Dr. Joe Lee, and Thomas McGhee, a native of Montgomery. Both agreed to provide the researcher with contact names and information. The researcher's family is from Montgomery and family members assisted in locating former bus boycotters. Initial contact was made to determine if the individual fits the definition of active participant. For the purpose of this study, an active participant is a person who purposely did not ride the buses during the boycott in an effort to support the boycott. An effort was made to include participants who have not been the subjects of previous studies. The researcher traveled to Montgomery to conduct the interviews in a natural setting, so the data would flow freely.[367] Participants were assured that their views were respected and accurately recorded. Each was advised that he or she was the

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[366] G. McCracken, *The Long Interview* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1988), 9.

[367] N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds., *The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research*, Handbook of Qualitative Research (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 2000).

expert, so they would speak candidly. According to Taylor, conducting qualitative interviews in a natural setting is important because the researcher is attempting to "understand the meaning that things have in varying contexts, qualitative researchers conduct their investigations in natural setting such as homes, lounges, club meetings, offices, bars, libraries, theaters, video arcades, street corners, neighborhood markets – in short, wherever the behavior being studied occurs naturally."[368] There is evidence in other research that interviews conducted in a natural setting elicit rich data from the participants. In Treise, Taylor and Wells' study of recovering alcoholics, the researchers gave participants the option of being interviewed at their treatment program sites or at a university conference room to ensure that the participants were comfortable with the setting.[369]

The researcher created a data collection instrument (discussion guide) containing open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The instrument was developed based on interview questions in Millner's study, to give it a semi-structured design.[370] Other questions were added in order to address the research question and it was modified as needed.[371] According to McCracken, the discussion guide "protects the larger structure" but also gives the interviewer

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[368] R. Taylor, "Qualitative Research," in *Mass Communication Research: Contemporary Methods and Applications*, ed. Singletary (New York: Longman, 1994), 267.
[369] D. Triese, R. Taylor, and L. Wells, "How Recovering Alcoholics Interpret Alcoholic-Beverage Advertising," *Health Marketing Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1994).
[370] Millner, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott: A Case Study in the Emergence and Career of a Social Movement."
[371] McCracken, *The Long Interview*.

flexibility.[372] "Within each of the questions, the opportunity for exploratory, unstructured responses remains."[373] Qualitative research uses different standards to evaluate its studies. As opposed to quantitative research where reliability and validity are used as standards in evaluating studies, qualitative research relies on interviewee trustworthiness and redundancy. Trustworthiness is a way to ensure that the comments provided by the participant are accurate. "One check on the accuracy of a researcher's interpretations is to present them to the research participants to see if they agree."[374] To ensure trustworthiness each interview was tape recorded and transcribed. The participants were provided copies of their transcribed interviews to ensure that their thoughts were correctly recorded. Redundancy is the point when clear patterns emerge from the interviews and no new information comes out of the interviews.[375] This is significant because when similar themes begin to emerge, this indicates that the participants have shared experiences with the phenomena of study. When this occurred the researcher began analyzing the data.

The researcher used an emic analysis by looking for themes and labels using the participants' words to generate an understanding from within. Using the participants' words, also helped ensure trustworthiness in the project. Using analytic induction and comparison analysis, the researcher read each interview transcript line-by-line looking for themes. Patton described inductive analysis as

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[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid., 25.
[374] Taylor, "Qualitative Research," 268.
[375] Ibid.

a method of developing the patterns, themes and categories that come out of the data.[376] "Analytic induction and comparative analysis involve reading the data line-by-line for themes and categories, developing a working schema from examination of initial cases, then modifying and refining the schema, based on subsequent cases."[377] The units of analysis were the categories and themes that emerged from the data. Again, interviews continued until they reached a point of redundancy.[378] Haley and Cunningham stated that redundancy refers to the point when "constructions of a phenomenon are repeated."[379] An emergent design was utilized to generate theory from the interview data.[380] By emergent design, the theory is derived from the data. "In discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept."[381] This research project involves people explaining their experiences of participating in the boycott with thick description and rich detail. For example, here are transcript excerpts from two interviews.

> Ethel Robinson Interview
> A: Segregation in 55, yeah. We all, when uh, Rosa Parks didn't get off that bus for the white man to sit down, we all was in it. We

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[376] M. Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002).
[377] E. Haley and A. Cunningham, "Readers' Perspectives on Advertising's Influence in Women's Magazines: Thoughts on Two Practices," *Mass Communication and Society* 6, no. 2 (2003): 178.
[378] McCracken, *The Long Interview*.
[379] Haley and Cunningham, "Readers' Perspectives on Advertising's Influence in Women's Magazines: Thoughts on Two Practices," 178.
[380] B. Glaser and A. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1967).
[381] Ibid., 23.

all, everybody that was in Montgomery was, most of us participated in that because they didn't was already wasn't allowed to do a lot of things, you go to ride the bus, you had to give the man your money here and go back here in and get on the bus, you know what I mean?

Q: Hmm.

A: And all that, you couldn't drink out of fountains, if you go to places get something you had to wait at a window to get it, and all like that. You know, I didn't come up a slave but I come up in segregation times, you know.

In analyzing this section of the transcript, the researcher made the following notes: "participating in the boycott" and "adhering to segregation laws." After notes were made throughout the interviews, the researcher then looked for categories to combine the notes. The themes that developed from the section of the aforementioned interview were "*Experiencing Segregation"* and *"Boycotting the Buses."*

ARCHIVAL DATA

The third aspect of the research encompassed an analysis of archival materials from the Montgomery Improvement Association also known as the MIA.[382] Historical records provide crucial information in understanding past trends, in addition to predicting future developments.[383] History is a narrative of the actions of human beings in connection with a topic of research.[384] Historical research is more than just facts, it is questions asked by the historian, along with

[382] R. Cox, *American Archival Analysis* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1990).
[383] Ibid, Burnette Jr., *Beneath the Footnote*.
[384] J. Vincent, *Aids to Historical Research* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1934).

the relied theory and the interpretation of the historical data.[385] "Historians begin their research with a question, usually a simple one such as, What happened? Followed by more complex questions such as, why did it happen? Or what was the experience or meaning of what happened to a specific group of people?"[386] The purpose of studying history is to search findings from the past, which then have importance today.[387]

In the analysis of historical sources the data fall into two categories; primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources are the raw material of history.[388] They can include letters, speeches, newspaper articles, photographs, etc.[389] Secondary sources are often the interpretation of primary sources. The most common secondary sources are books written by previous historians. During the research analysis for this study, the researcher examined primary sources, such as documents from the MIA and papers from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. collection. Desmond said that historical researchers are remissed if they do take into account the role of the media.[390] He said how people communicated is just as important as the history itself. That is why he says historians must understand the purpose of the newspaper as historical

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[385] K. deMarrais and S. Lapan, eds., *Foundations for Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004).
[386] Ibid.
[387] Startt and Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*.
[388] Ibid.
[389] deMarrais and Lapan, eds., *Foundations for Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*.
[390] R. Desmond, *The Information Process: World News Reporting to the Twentieth Century* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1978).

significance. The newspaper adds to the study of the phenomenon. Historical studies go beyond the mere chronicle of dates. Instead the historian looks for a "relationship between the events and explains that connection with a theory."[391]

Local history and its documentation have a rich history, particularly in Montgomery, which is often referred to as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement. The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was created on the first day of the protest and the same day of Parks' trial. As they were leaving her trial, Ralph Abernathy, E.D. Nixon and E.N. French discussed the need for an organization to serve as a guide for the protest.[392] Just hours before the first mass media, the newly formed organization developed a resolution, which outlined their goals for the boycott. The organization was instrumental in coordinating the transportation needs of the protestors. The MIA still exists and bus boycott activist Johnny Carr served as president from 1967 until her death in 2008. A Montgomery Improvement Association collection exists at Alabama State University. The library's archives and special collections area contains more than 6000 multimedia items including a collection of the Montgomery Improvement Association.[393] Within this collection are papers and artifacts of the MIA such as meeting minutes, agendas, and newsletters. Also, the papers of Martin Luther King Jr., provided a wealth of material. The papers chronicled the bus boycott from Dec. 5, 1955 and through Dec. 27, 1956. It included

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[391] deMarrais and Lapan, eds., *Foundations for Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*, 43.
[392] King, *Stride toward Freedom.*
[393] "National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African-American Culture," in *Archives and Special Collections.*

correspondence to and from Dr. King, boycott trial transcripts and transcripts from MIA meetings. The researcher analyzed both for communication aspects used by the MIA.

Upon careful analysis of archival material, news articles and interviews with former participants, the researcher looked at how communication affected the initial message and continual information of the boycott. The communication networks that developed during the boycott were studied. Because the phenomena of interest occurred more than 50 years ago, a limitation to the study could be the memory of the former boycott participants. To address the possibility of inaccurate memories, news reports from the period of study were used to corroborate interview information. Because this is a historical study using qualitative methods, the researcher cannot predict the findings. Instead, the researcher used the data to provide an analysis of communication usage during the boycott. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was an integral part of civil rights history and this study elucidated the ways that communication contributed to making the boycott a successful social movement.

CHAPTER V

Findings and Analysis

According to social movement theory, a movement is the collective action of a group of individuals. Social protests occur when groups feel that they are unfairly treated and this was consistent with the current findings. Segregation was the fuel that ignited boycott activism. After word spread of Rosa Parks' arrest, the news of a potential one-day protest began to spread as well. That one day boycott turned into 381 days, but the participants said they felt they were called to actively get involved in the boycott for the purpose of making it better for the next generation.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott aligns well with the political process model. The model indicates that movements develop from expanding political opportunities, indigenous organizational strength and cognitive liberation. The timing of the boycott was crucial. One year before the bus boycott, the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* lawsuit was decided, requiring schools to integrate. Parts of the nation resisted school integration. A 1955 Gallup Poll asked Americans if they approved of the U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing racial segregation in public schools. Fifty-six percent of the respondents said they approved, compared to 38% who said they did not approve, and 6% who had no opinion.[394] The timing was right for this type of protest, as it provided the necessary political opportunity. The model says that movements are not

[394] G. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971* (New York: 1972).

spontaneous and neither was the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The arrest of Rosa Parks sparked the boycott, but plans had actually been in the works for years.[395] JoAnn Robinson was an English professor at Alabama State and the president of the Women's Political Council. The council had been examining incidents that occurred on city buses. In 1954, representatives from the Women's Political Council met with Montgomery Mayor W.A. Gayle and threatened a boycott, if the treatment on the buses was not improved.[396] Before Parks' arrest, two other women were arrested on Montgomery buses, Claudette Colvin and Mary Louise Smith. The boycott was a response to a closed political system. Within the political process model, a movement is more a political phenomenon than a psychological one. The political opportunity came in the form of the Women's Political Council.

The cognitive liberation was in the belief that by boycotting the buses, more fair treatment would be gained. Originally, the boycotters were not asking for the elimination of the segregation, but a first-come, first-served seating with blacks filling the bus from back to front and whites from front to back. City and bus officials refused their request. For the boycotters, the seating system had lost its legitimacy, the people wanted a change. They developed a sense of political efficacy and believed that their actions would foster that change.

Within the political process model, the indigenous group was Montgomery's black population. The majority of the city's blacks supported the

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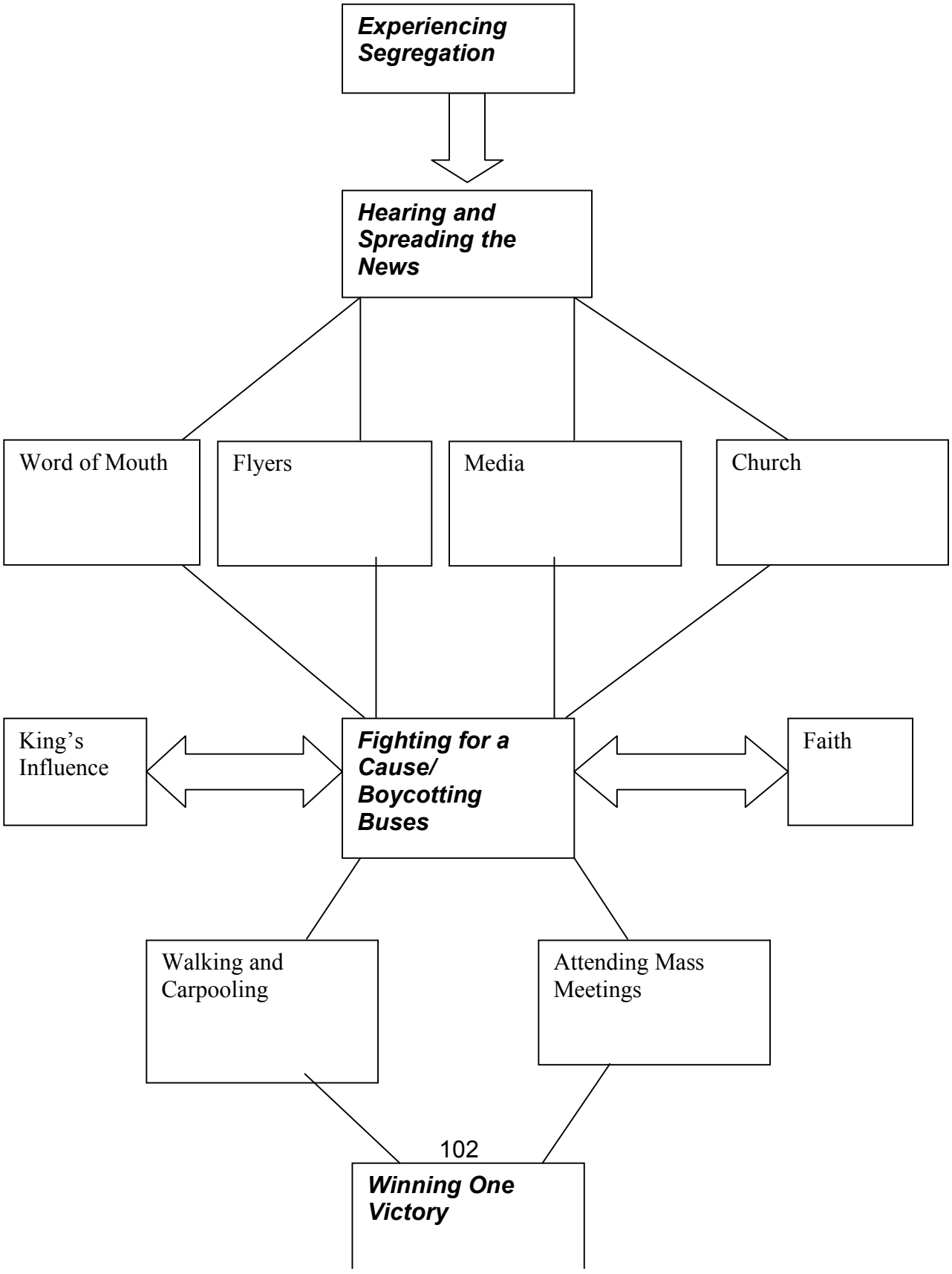
[395] Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*.
[396] Ibid.

boycott.[397] To gain understanding of the indigenous organizational strength, particularly the communication networks within the boycott, interviews with 18 participants proved helpful. It is estimated that 50,000 blacks participated in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Analyzing the themes that emerged from the participant interviews helps to understand how the boycott fits with the political process model. The following chart illustrates the themes and subthemes that emerged from the interviews. The broad themes of commonality were: Experiencing Segregation; Hearing the News; Fighting for a Cause; and Winning One Victory.

COMMUNICATION AMONG PARTICIPANTS

[397] King, *Stride toward Freedom*

Figure 2: Themes Among Participants



As the participants described life in the Jim Crow South, experiencing segregation was one commonality. Whether they grew up in Montgomery, Alabama, or other nearby southern communities, segregation was the norm. Blacks were treated differently in every aspect of life from shopping to medical attention. Charles Varner explained that during that time it was impossible to forget segregation because it was so ubiquitous.

> It was a time when every day, when you woke up, no matter what your plans for the day were, they could be altered by any white person walking the street in the city of Montgomery or any other similar city.
>
> Charles Varner

Experiencing segregation for the first time and segregation in general were moments the participants remembered vividly.

> I just headed to the door and a man said, the white owner I assume he was, he said 'you can't use that restroom.' And I was very demanding. I said, 'why not, I got to go to the restroom.' And he said, 'you can't use it' and the other little girl punched me in the back and she says 'come on, come on, let's go.' That was the first time I experienced it. It was actually being away from home.
>
> Annie Lovett

> Well, I remember going to downtown Montgomery…. with my father as a youngster and to HL Greens…I guess I would compare it to something like a Family Dollar, something like that now anyway. I remember seeing the signs said colored and white.
>
> Anthony Dumas

> We used to have to go to the back, what was it, like businesses that sell food? We had to go to the window, you know, we couldn't go on the inside.
>
> Mary Rollins

Participants said the effects of segregation made them feel inferior and they resented the law.

> Well, it made us feel that us, that they was, well, like was a…little less than, not as, not as important, not as privileged because a lot of things that they had that we didn't have, we weren't cherished to have and we were made to feel inferior to those people because of the way that we was brought up.
>
> Earnest Luckie

> They saw your skin was black, that you were nasty, you was unfit to be with them, unfit to sit down, but you could work in the house and cook for them and cook the food, take care of the children and everything.
>
> Ethel Robinson

However, in addition to segregation, the participants claimed there was the overall mistreatment of blacks in the South, particularly by the police.

> If the cops caught you walking in a white neighborhood, they would call you to the car and they rolled the window down and say 'you, stick your head in the window,' and they rolled the glass up around your neck. They would ask 'do you like white women?' You'd say no. They would hit you across the head with their batons. They'd say 'why you don't like white women?' You know, if you said yeah you like white women, they'd hit you across the head cause you liked them. And then sometimes they would drive off slowly until you're dancing by your head out the car window.
>
> Anthony Dumas

Blacks were mistreated often and the Montgomery City Bus Lines was no exception. The majority of the Montgomery City Lines bus passengers were black, but the city's segregation laws deemed that the races be separated. The custom was for blacks to pay their money in the front of the bus and then exit the bus and re-enter in the rear of the bus.

> You go to ride the bus, you had to give the man your money here and go back here in and get on the bus, you know what I mean? And all that, you couldn't drink out of fountains, if you go to places get something you had to wait at a window to get it, and all like that. You know I didn't come up a slave but I come up in segregation times, you know.
>
> Ethel Robinson

> I would ride the bus, I would get on the bus and pay your money, walk up to the front pay your money come back off and walk around to that back door and go in. If you were in a predominate black neighborhood you paid your money and walked straight through the bus. But if there was a single white person sitting up there, you walked up there paid your money, got off and walked back and in the back door.
>
> Fred Dickerson

Dickerson said there were times when the bus driver would pull off before the black patron was able to board the bus. Also, if the bus was crowded, blacks were not allowed to stand over white passengers. Instead the driver would bypass bus stops if allowing a black passenger to enter would require them to stand over a white patron. Charles Varner said if the bus was traveling in a predominately black neighborhood that black patrons were able to sit more freely throughout the bus, while keeping the front seats empty, but once the bus began traveling through the white neighborhood, the bus driver would change the segregated seating sign to allow for the white passengers.

> If you were on the bus when it made that transition once it, got around into the Cloverdale community then everyone would just, they would just start shifting. If they were sitting in the wrong place they would start moving back….it was one of these ingrained things, after living with it for so long you didn't stop to think about it… they just knew.
>
> Charles Varner

But on Dec. 1, Rosa Parks refused to abide by the segregation laws. The news of Parks' arrest spread quickly through the city and particularly among the city's black residents. The news made its way through three different channels: word of mouth, media and church. Charles Varner, a teenager at the time, was employed at a local restaurant on the weekends. Parks was arrested on Thursday, but by Saturday, all of the kitchen employees had heard about the arrest.

> You know, everybody knew Ms. Rosa Parks. It was a whispering campaign, you know, everybody, 'have you heard Ms. Rosa Parks got arrested.'
>
> Charles Varner

The next morning, Varner saw the flier in the yard that urged Montgomery's black residents not to ride the buses on Monday. He said by the time he got to work on Sunday, fellow employees were talking about the fliers. On Sunday, Varner's father discussed the one-day protest at dinner. His father doubted that the one-day protest would result in anything significant, but that Monday Varner's father gave all of his children rides to school. The conversation at the Varner's dinner table was repeated in other black households.

> We all lived in the same neighborhood so, you know, anything happens and we all knew cause we talked to each other, we shared it. We weren't spread out like we are are now.
>
> Anthony Dumas

> I promise you word of mouth, word of mouth, they put her in jail, I mean people were talking, cab drivers talking, people just talking, people talking at church. 'Oh they shouldn't have done that….It was almost like every house had a beacon…I mean there was not a single house in your neighborhood that was black in this whole city of Montgomery that did not know what had happened.
>
> Fred Dickerson

> They had signs in Montgomery, they had fliers and they had a lot of communication on telephone, they had some telephone communication and other than that people got in their cars and went and told the news…. It spread like cancer.
>
> Susie Harris

The city's only black radio station, WRMA, heavily covered the arrest and ensuing boycott.

> Because basically we had a radio, and you could hear about it, and you could hear the people in the neighborhood were talking about it. They were saying, 'nobody gets on the bus.'
>
> Thomas McGhee

> So there were on-site interviews that would be done by WRMA personnel, so if there was an incident occurring somebody stopped, somebody being arrested on the bus or anything happening like that you had on-the-scene reporting by WRMA….WRMA came in at just the right time, a black oriented station, which had the personalities, the people who knew the black community. They knew the ministers, they knew the leadership folk in the community.
>
> Charles Varner

The final information about Parks' arrest came in the newspaper. A small article was in the Saturday newspaper, "Negro Jailed Here for 'Overlooking' Bus Segregation." In addition to reporting on Park's arrest, the *Montgomery Advertiser* spread the news about the one-day protest. An *Advertiser* reporter had received word that blacks were going to conduct a one day boycott of the buses. The next day, Sunday, Dec. 4, the proposed boycott was on the front page of the paper, so for those blacks who didn't know about the protest, they were now informed.

> But on this Sunday that information was printed on the front page, which meant that everybody got it. So now not only do the black citizens have it, the white citizens had it too. So everybody has the

> information. So inadvertently, the Advertiser without knowing it, they helped to promote the boycott and so now rather than just a handful of people had the information, everybody has it.
>
> Charles Varner

Attorney Fred Gray served as the legal counsel for the Montgomery Improvement Association and filed the lawsuit challenging segregation on the city buses. He said the black leadership didn't necessarily want the news of the potential boycott to leak out but when it did, it proved to be vital.

> It was helpful in the sense that the story came out in the paper on December 4…and we had not anticipated or particularly wanted any publicity. It served a useful purpose in helping many people who would not otherwise have known about it….
>
> Fred Gray

Then finally that Sunday, the information was reiterated from the church pulpit. Ministers reminded their parishioners about the next day's protest.

> I mean it circulated in churches by word of mouth, on the news services, newspapers and everything and so that that the whole bus boycott was news at the time and information was published about it, and advertised, and people knew about it because announcements were made in churches about it.
>
> Henry Spears

The one-day protest proved so successful that at a mass meeting that evening, the blacks voted to continue it.

> And the pastors said there is going to be a mass meeting at Holt Street and you couldn't get in. And they cheered and say, 'hey we going to stop riding the buses, not going to ride them no more' and then…churches were the real mainstay of all communication and word of mouth… and I stopped riding the bus then and I never rode the bus again, to this day.
>
> Fred Dickerson

> Once the bus boycott started we was involved, everybody was getting involved a little, some a little more than others because of their own participation in it everybody got involved, every black got involved.
>
> Earnest Luckie

> That first day especially was thrilling to see people walking, not just walking but heads held high and just striding along and moving down the street and a lot of people like me were just out randomly picking up people and taking them where they need to go….it was just exciting.
>
> The Rev. Robert Graetz

> You know, it was a fun experience because everybody felt that they were participating in something that was a history-making thing. I mean, you know, like never before in this history of this country had African-Americans come together on the one issue and stuck together like that because there were so many people who, oh, they're not going to, you know…maybe ten people or ten percent or twenty percent of the people might not ride but boy when that bus, when those buses were rolling out on Monday and nobody was on it, I tell you.
>
> Charles Varner

Varner explained that he believed there was such wide support because segregation affected every black family.

> There was not a single family that had not had a relative or a close friend who had been adversely affected by something that happened on a bus. If it was not, it was not a family member, it was a church member or a school member or someone because almost every day and this is not an exaggeration, almost every day somewhere on that city bus line some black person was negatively affected.
>
> Charles Varner

For more than a year, the boycotters did not ride the city buses. Not riding the buses put a transportation strain on the boycotters. They still had to reach their places of employment, which meant either walking to work or catching a

ride. Most blacks worked for white employers and some white employers gave rides to their black employees. Mr. Arthur Hartwell's mother worked as a domestic at the time. She rode the bus prior to the boycott but after the boycott started, either her employer and or employer's neighbors would provide her transportation.

> If you got on one street about five or six maids coming to clean the house the wife would come and pick-up maybe four that day and the next day the others would come up. That way you saved gas….
>
> Arthur Hartwell

The Montgomery Improvement Association developed a carpooling system and often boycotters would wait for rides. For those blacks who owned cars, they were asked to give people rides, and eventually the black area churches purchased vans and station wagons for the boycott. The Montgomery Improvement Association instituted a transportation committee that developed a list of pick-up stations throughout the city.

> But at every bus stop, if you sat there long enough, there was going to be a station wagon with drivers to pick you up and give you a ride, and then the cabs would participate too, they picked you up and give you a ride.
>
> Thomas McGhee

> The next thing I knew they had gotten the thing organized so and had carpools and what. No buses running, it was really a sad situation. You didn't see no buses running, people walking together, walking together. It was something else, I'm telling you and people tried to stop them from picking up people, hauling people, they had the carpool going, carpool going and it last, it really lasted.
>
> Susie Harris

Ms. Robinson and Ms. Rollins, who both worked as domestics, said the boycott meant walking miles or receiving rides through the Montgomery Improvement Association's elaborate carpooling system.

> Whole lot of times I would ride with some people, they would come down and we'll wait down at the end of the street and people go down there and they would, a lot of cars, people volunteering and bus and everything they would drive you to work, so a lot of times when it was raining or bad I would wait, you know, and any other times I just walk because I was young then and had a lot of pep.
>
> Ethel Robinson

> Yeah, I was walking because we didn't have any cars, you know, so we had to walk for miles….and they had the Ku Klux Klan riding their horses, you know, when people were walking and stuff like that.
>
> Mary Rollins

Anthony Dumas had just returned home from the military when the boycott was in full swing. He immediately purchased an automobile and became part of the boycott. He wasn't a part of the structured Montgomery Improvement Association carpool but he would frequently give rides to those who were walking.

> I would pick up many people who I saw walking and the Montgomery Police Department at the time, as I said we all lived in the same neighborhood, and if they recognized you as one of the people, from your car, for picking up people they would give you a ticket. They would give you three tickets and take your driver's license. That happened to me four times.
>
> Anthony Dumas

Ms. Thelma Glass, who worked at Alabama State College, said she and her husband shared a car but she would often give rides**.**

> I didn't know who anybody was because you'd ride anybody that you could in your schedule, see, because I was working all the time

but I would pick up early, I'd pick up on my way home….

Thelma Glass

The Rev. Robert Graetz was the only white minister who openly supported the boycott. He was the minister at Trinity Lutheran Church, an all black congregation, and he became a part of the Montgomery Improvement Association's transportation pool.

> My first involvement was simply being a volunteer driver and going to that first mass meeting, in fact I went to all of the mass meetings and within, my recollection, within a week or two a phone call giving me my assignment driving six to nine each morning….
>
> The Rev. Robert Graetz

Like the Rev. Graetz, attending the mass meetings became a ritual for the boycotters. Dec. 5. was the first mass meeting at the Holt Street Baptist Church. Reports say 5,000 people showed up for that meeting. That night they overwhelming voted to extend the boycott. Mass meetings were then held at least once a week. The purpose of the mass meeting was to inform the black community of the status of the boycott, but, most importantly, it encouraged the boycotters to continue their fight for equality. Boycotters would attend the meetings and then bring the information back to their respective neighborhoods. These meetings, always held at churches, became the information hub during the boycott.

> Dr. King, Ralph Abernathy, E.D. Nixon, some of those people would be there to give speeches and give, uh, let you know what was up, what was happening and what the plans was for the boycott to continue but more than that it was motivational speeches that they gave so people be able to continue with the benefits of the marches and stuff….It motivated you to become a better person, strive to be more, strive to let you know that you're God's people just as well,

and we supposed and your right is the same as everybody else's rights.

Earnest Luckie

Once they decided that they were going to support the movement then you had an organization….they had these regular mass meetings and that was the source of your information.

Thelma Glass

The mass meeting was the basic means of communicating and the churches....leaflet circulations in churches, pastors announcing it in churches, the mass meetings that were held, weekly or more often, that was how communication was carried out.

Fred Dickerson

The real down-to-earth system of communication was through the churches and through word of mouth. Ninety percent of it was through the churches and that was the real gist of it. You see, on the night prior to the first mass meeting being called on that Saturday and Sunday, the ministers all met and got together and decided they would take this up as an issue, they would take it up as a cause and they sat at Sixth Avenue Baptist Church and tried to devise a plan for disseminating information. How are we going to disseminate this out for the people, how are we going to keep them informed and that kind of thing, and it was decided that the churches would be the vehicle for distributing the official information about what was going on in the bus boycott....so whatever decision was made in the Montgomery Improvement Association the ministers communicated that information to the church congregations and the church congregations distributed it to the community.

Charles Varner

The mass meetings were the major source of information… we were having two mass meetings a week, Monday and Thursday, and dropped down to Mondays after a while. People would come out and we would say this is what has happened this past week and recognize the people who had been arrested or who had been harassed especially and say okay now, here is what we are going to do….

The Rev. Robert Graetz

One participant who attended a mass meeting held in Lowndes County, Alabama (outside of Montgomery) said the purpose was to pray and support Montgomery's black community.

> And they would sing songs, like religious songs and one they used to sing so much is "We Shall Overcome." I said 'Lord whatever it means, will we ever overcome', because I heard it constantly, constantly heard that song. And they prayed a lot, I mean, it went around. Not just one person would say a prayer, it was several who prayed for a very long time….that would give you inner strength.
>
> Annie Lovett

These prayers would encourage the participants to continue to trust God and believe that through their faith, God would bring them through the boycott. Their faith made them courageous.

> Black people stood…knowing that they were standing up for their rights and during that time standing up for their rights was, was actually a big thing, it was a scary thing because so many people had their lives taken for trying to stand up….or how people during that time you would hear about black people getting lynched, black people just getting murdered down because they are trying to stand up for their rights.
>
> Earnest Luckie

> Well you had a whole lot of singing and a whole lot of clapping. And they would sing those songs, old spirituals and 'Free at Last, Free at Last,' any other spiritual that they could get.
>
> Dorothy Sanders

> Faith was very important because, and that's what King's speeches and Abernathy's speeches and other ministers were speaking. And their whole thing was based around, like when they'd say 'you have to believe,' that's faith. You have to believe, okay, you're going to make it through this. If you did not have the faith that you could make it through this danger, then you wouldn't do it.
>
> Thomas McGhee

Ms. Robinson admitted that there were many times during the boycott that she was afraid, but said her faith gave her courage.

> I've been afraid a lot of times, but I just ask God to go before me, as a lead lamb, behind his protective angels that's all you go to do cause God is going to do it. With you and him and he and you and you going to do what he say he do, he's going take care of you.
>
> Ethel Robinson

Dr. Martin Luther King's influence also affected the participants during the boycott. They described King as a highly educated man and a charismatic leader.

> Dr. King I would say if my father had to say it, he was highly intelligent and he would always think before he spoke. When you see him on television he was so, looked like, high you know he just, but actually he was a man of thought. He was a man of dignity. He was a man of pride. He was just a great person, I'll never forget him.
>
> Annie Lovett

At one point during the boycott, Montgomery city leaders announced that a resolution had been reached regarding the boycott, and that it was approved by the Montgomery Improvement Association. However, no one on the association board approved the resolution and the ministers who did attend a meeting with the city were not the leaders of the association.[398] Minneapolis reporter Carl T. Rowan saw the story on the Associated Press wires and called Dr. King to verify it. Dr. King informed Rowan that the story was inaccurate and an agreement had not been reached. The story was going to be in the next day's paper, Sunday, Jan. 22. Because he wanted the boycotters to know that a resolution had not

[398] Ibid.

been reached, Dr. King along with Ralph Abernathy went to the area night clubs to make the announcement.

> I mean it was really going and Jivo (the d.j.) said, 'Dr. King is in the house,' I mean it was just like God just stepped down.…There was nobody saying a word, Dr. King and Dr. Abernathy came in together….I mean the man was, it was like magical, I mean you wouldn't believe that one man could have that much respect….it's as if lightening had come down and struck the Ten Commandments, it's hard to put into words what happened to those people, they were transfixed…. This was a night club and…all of the sudden the whole atmosphere was transfixed. People stopped being frivolous and all that and started packing up and getting ready to go home. 'Oh I'm going home to get ready' and all those people came to church the next morning. I mean in fifteen minutes that nightclub was empty.
>
> Charles Varner

After the boycott of the buses continued for 381 days, Supreme Court ruled segregation on Montgomery City buses unconstitutional. One participant said she heard the news on the radio and the next weekend she experienced riding on an integrated bus.

> My daddy said, 'I want you all to have first-hand experience, I'm going to take you, so you can ride the bus and be able to sit anywhere.'
>
> Annie Lovett

> That boycott was a change in the humanity, it was a change in everybody's lives because it got people to see that we're all children of God, and that boycott gave black people strength, gave people the courage to go on and live productive lives.
>
> Earnest Luckie

> I remember going parking, standing on the streets me and several other blacks and the jubilation we felt when we saw blacks sitting in front of the bus. I had a car, I didn't have a need to ride the bus you know, but it's just jubilation…jubilation seeing other blacks you know ride the bus and sit up in front….
>
> Anthony Dumas

The success of the Montgomery Bus boycott encouraged blacks to fight for other rights, such as the right to vote and equal employment opportunities. Young participants of the boycott, such as Thomas McGhee, later became very active in the struggle for voting rights, but still operated under King's non-violent philosophy.

> I was going out to the rallies, when I was a teenager, then I had an idea what's going on. When they finished, King finished talking and Abernathy and all the people who gathered there. When the sermon and all that was over, they'd say, 'okay now we're going to march from Madison Street over to Hudson Street and when we'd get to Hudson Street, this is over.' Now to get from Madison Street to Hudson Street, there are going to be some encounters because they didn't have a permit to march, they were not going to give them a permit to march, so when you're marching over there, the police are going to have the dogs and the horses and they're going to try to break it up. And that's when they're teaching you to cover up the young ladies, how to protect them and how to do this and the other.
>
> Thomas McGhee

From the shared themes that developed among the participant interviews, it is evident that the boycott was indeed a social movement that aligns with the political process model. *Experiencing Segregation* produced the aggrieved population, since blacks as whole were the victims of segregation. *Hearing and the Spreading the News* was the communication network that provided the initial information about the protest and any ongoing information about the boycott. *Fighting for a Cause* was developed based on Dr. King's influence and the spiritual

component of the movement. *Winning One Victory* provided the cognitive liberation and shared belief that change is possible.

Utilizing the non-violent philosophy, blacks and sympathizers of the moment continued to use these methods to capture the attention of the media. The dramatic pictures were shown on television and in the front pages of newspapers. The stories of the bus boycott were just the beginning of civil rights coverage. However, some participants were extremely skeptical of the mainstream local media, particularly the *Montgomery Advertiser*. The *Montgomery Advertiser* had two versions of its paper. A one page spread, called "News of the Colored People" was delivered to the homes of black customers. This section typically only covered arrests and society news. There are no old copies available, as they were not archived. Typically, blacks were skeptical of stories in the *Montgomery Advertiser*.

> The Advertiser was a prejudiced paper, so anything they could publish that would probably sustain the status quo of segregation, because that was the law then, they promoted it.
>
> Henry Spears

This sentiment may have contributed to the reliance of television as a news source. At the time, television as a medium was young and WSFA was the only station in town with a local newscast. WSFA signed on the air Dec. 25, 1954. Frank McGee served as News Director and Anchor.

> And they had this new young reporter who was from New York and he was anxious just to get his feet on the ground. He was not from

> the South….his name was Frank McGee…when the boycott started Frank McGee was out there with his reporters and their cameras and everything, shooting everything that happened….so now you got the Montgomery Advertiser and WSFA.
>
> Charles Varner

> Frank McGee was something else, he would give you that news right down the line and tell you just like it is.
>
> Susie Harris

WSFA provided immediate coverage of the boycott in its nightly newscast. Participants tended to feel that television coverage of the boycott was less biased and provided more balanced stories than the *Montgomery Advertiser.* But was the newspaper actually biased in its news coverage?

COMMUNICATION IN NEWS ORGANIZATIONS

To determine the role of the newspaper, the researcher analyzed 311 articles and looked for the major frames that came out of the data. This is important in understanding how often the local newspaper was covering the boycott and to what extent. Of the 311 *Montgomery Advertiser* articles analyzed, the major frames that emerged from the data were: *Bus Company as Victim*; *Blacks as Unlawful*; *Organizing and Maintaining the Boycott*; *Dr. King as an Outsider*; *Violence*; *Court Maneuvers and Decisions*; *Negotiating*; and *Fighting the Boycott/Preserving Our Way of Life.*

Bus Company as Victim

From the beginning of the boycott, the Montgomery Bus Lines and its officials said they were caught in the middle. As a result of the year long boycott, bus company officials said their business was about 75 percent below normal and they were forced to halt bus routes in black areas and increase bus fares. In the early days of the boycott, the bus service stopped running routes in predominately black neighborhoods. “We are doing this purposely on the basis that there is no demand for the service” (Dec. 10, 1955). At a Jan. 3 city commission meeting, bus officials told city leaders that unless the adult patron fares were doubled, “we just can’t live” (Jan. 4, 1956). Bus officials said that the bus boycott would likely have lasting effects even after it was over. “Many people we’ve lost during this boycott will never ride regularly again” (Jan 3, 1956).

State law dictated that they must segregate the races on public transportation and company officials said they had to abide by that law. The manager of the bus company, J.H. Bagley, issued this statement upon hearing about the plans to boycott the buses:

> The Montgomery City Lines is sorry if anyone expects us to be exempt from any state or city law. We are sorry that the colored people blame us for any state or city ordinance which we didn't have passed. We have to obey all laws just like any other citizen. We had nothing to do with the laws being passed, but we expect to abide by all laws, city or state, to the best or our ability.
>
> (Dec. 3, 1955)

During subsequent negotiations with blacks, company officials often reiterated that they could not change the law.

> We have a lot of good colored riders and we would love to have them, to do business with them the same as with anybody else, but we are operating under the laws of Alabama and the ordinances of Montgomery. We are living up to the law, we must comply with it, even though we may be sorry about the situation. We are not happy about it at all. We would be tickled if the law were changed but we (the corporation) are not voters in Alabama so there is nothing we can do but try to adjust these differences and continue operating…..we are simply trying to do a transportation job, no matter what the color of the rider.
>
> (April 2, 1956)

In April, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation on intrastate transportation illegal. This ruling came several months before the federal court ruling that eventually outlawed segregation on Montgomery's buses. After this April ruling, bus company officials said they would no longer enforce segregation on their buses. For one day, the buses were integrated until Montgomery city

officials said they would arrest any bus drivers who did not comply with the state and local laws.

> The order to stop assigning seats according to race put the bus company squarely in the middle between the Supreme Court ruling and a stern warning earlier yesterday from Montgomery Mayor W.A. Gayle to continue strict racial segregation.
>
> (April 24, 1956)

A circuit court judge directed the bus company to abandon its new integration policy. The bus company continued segregation on its buses until the U.S. Supreme Court specifically ruled that segregation on Montgomery city buses was illegal.

Blacks as Unlawful

On Dec. 1, 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat she was breaking the city's segregation law. A headline on Dec. 5 read "Negress Draws Fine in Segregation Case Involving Bus Ride." The headline implied that Parks brought this trouble onto herself by not obeying the law.

> In the Thursday night arrest of Rosa Parks, of 634 Cleveland Ct., city policemen acted under Section II, Chapter 6 of the Montgomery City Code. J.F. Blake 27 N. Lewis St, City Lines bus driver, said the Parks woman refused to accept a seat in the Negro section assigned to her and instead seated herself in the white section.
>
> (Dec. 5, 1955)

Subsequent stories outlined the law that Parks broke by her refusal to move. Parks' action precipitated the bus boycott. The tens of thousands of blacks who participated in the boycott were also considered lawbreakers because of a 1940 anti-boycott law in the Alabama State Code that stated:

> Two or more persons who, without a just cause or legal excuse for so doing, enter into any combination, conspiracy, agreement, arrangement or understanding for the purpose of hindering delaying or preventing any other persons, firms, corporations, or association of persons from carrying on any lawful business shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
>
> (Dec 8, 1955).

As a result, 89 boycotters were indicted and arrested. All of their names and addresses were published in the Montgomery Advertiser. The boycott was dubbed illegal and the people participating in it were lawbreakers.

> Montgomery County deputies arrested 75 Negroes political, religious and educational leaders here yesterday and expect to book a top 'face card' today in a wholesale roundup of 115 persons indicted by a Montgomery County Grand Jury on boycotting charges.
>
> (Feb. 23, 1956)

That "top face" card that the newspaper referred to was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, who turned himself into authorities that day. The boycott leaders were seen as lawbreakers who were urging other blacks to break the law. Senator Sam Englehardt said if they "break this law, and get away with it, then who's to say what unlawful acts they will advocate next" (Feb. 24, 1956).

Once the federal lawsuit against segregation was filed, one of the five women who signed the federal lawsuit claiming mistreatment on the buses said she was misled into signing her name and that she did not know she was signing a lawsuit. That woman, Jeannette Reese, claimed that attorney Fred Gray misled her. Reese said she never heard the word "suit" mentioned when she was at Gray's office. Gray was subsequently arrested and charged with "unlawfully appearing as an attorney" for someone who didn't employ him in that

capacity. This presented the frame of Gray as a lawbreaker. Gray was indicted but the charges were eventually dropped.

Other news about boycott leaders frequently made the newspaper such as MIA attorney Charles Langford's driving under the influence and the arrest of Dr. Soloman Seay, who was found at fault in a car accident. Church actions, such as a pastor and boycott leader voted out of his church by his congregation, were featured in the paper. The pastor, U.J. Fields, was heavily involved in the boycott and charged the MIA with misuse of funds. Fields eventually rescinded that accusation and he was voted back into the church. His accusations made it appear as if the MIA was unlawful in its financial dealings.

Organizing and Maintaining the Boycott

According to newspaper articles, boycott leaders said the boycott was 90 percent effective among Montgomery's 50,000 black residents. The Montgomery Improvement Association, was formed with the specific goal of fighting for fair treatment on the buses. It was responsible for planning and organizing the massive transportation carpool during the boycott. Weekly meetings at area churches kept the boycotters motivated. These meetings were centered on faith. The boycotters were framed as "frenzied followers." They were described as deeply religious, disciplined but uncompromising. Montgomery Advertiser reporter Joe Azbell described the scene before a meeting at a local church.

> As I drove along Cleveland Avenue en route to the Holt Street Baptist Church Monday night, I could see Negroes by the dozens forming a file, almost soldierly, on the sidewalk.
>
> (Dec. 7, 1955)

Azbell described the atmosphere in the church as the more than 5,000 people sang church hymns. Azbell concluded;

> The meeting was much like an old-fashioned revival with loud applause added. It proved beyond any doubt that there was a discipline among Negroes that many whites had doubted. It was almost a military discipline combined with emotion.
>
> (Dec. 7, 1955)

These weekly meetings at local churches became a staple of the boycott. After the indictment and arrest of 90 boycotters, they walked from the courthouse to the church and prayed. Stories often mentioned the prayer meetings and other religious activities the boycotters engaged in.

Dr. King as an Outsider

Originally from Atlanta, Dr. King, then 27, was characterized as a militant outsider. A feature story in the early days of the boycott described King's education and philosophy. "King speaks openly and with an authoritative air on the Negro view of the bus boycott" (Jan. 19, 1956). Advertiser stories described King as "dapper", "militant" and "outspoken." One headline called him "The Boycott Boss," and claimed Dr. King started the bus boycott. Actually, the boycott was started by Montgomery's black citizens and Dr. King was asked to be the spokesman for the Montgomery Improvement Association. Another article alluded to Dr. King as purposely "misleading." The news reporter quoted Dr. King as saying there could be a vote that night possibly to end the boycott, but King said he never told the reporter that a vote would take place that day. The newspaper article said King claimed he was "misunderstood" in quotes.

Montgomery's white leaders often described King as speaking with a double-edged tongue. They said King would say one thing to whites and another to blacks.

Violence

Violence during the boycott was rampant, although it often was downplayed in the newspaper. There was violence against Dr. King and other boycott leaders, a white pastor who supported the boycott, area buses, and threats of violence against the police commissioner and white housewives who gave their black maids rides to work. At the beginning of the boycott, the buses were fired on, but no one was injured. Bombs were detonated at the homes of boycott leaders such as Dr. King and E.D. Nixon. Again, no one was hurt. One article described the bomb at Nixon's home as "a mild blast" that "exploded harmlessly," causing damage to a nearby fence. The one white pastor in Montgomery who openly supported the boycott, the Rev. Robert Graetz, had his home bombed. Again, no one was injured, but the mayor called this bombing a publicity stunt to get coverage for the boycott. The Rev. Graetz refuted that statement. Aside from the bombings, there were numerous threats against Police Commissioner Clyde Sellers, and later in the boycott, white housewives who gave their black maids rides were threatened. The threats never materialized into violence. One newspaper article described the violence as the "highlight of the boycott have been shots fired at the buses in Negro sections,

and the bombing of homes of the Rev. M.L. King, boycott leader, Monday night." (Azbell, 1955, ¶ 25).

Court Maneuvers and Decisions

The court maneuvers and decisions were plentiful and many stories focused on this legal wrangling. After the 90 boycotters were indicted and arrested, there was a trial. Dr. King was found guilty of breaking the state's anti-boycott law and fined $500. Both sides, those fighting segregation and those fighting integration, filed numerous lawsuits and this legal maneuvering often served as the basis for news stories. The city filed a lawsuit to stop the carpool arranged by the Montgomery Improvement Association. In October, the city commission considered immediate arrests to stop the operation of the MIA carpool. The city pursued an injunction to stop the operation of the car pools. On the same day that the city won its injunction to stop the car pools, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation on the city's bus lines unconstitutional.

Stories featuring the U.S. Supreme Court and other desegregation decisions were front page stories. In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that segregation on intrastate transportation was illegal and it appeared imminent that segregation within state transportation would follow the same fate. Eventually it did. On Nov. 13, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation on Montgomery's buses illegal. Despite appeals by city officials, this ruling would stay.

Negotiating

During the boycott, there were many opportunities for negotiations between members of the Montgomery Improvement Association and Montgomery city officials. In its original proposal, the MIA asked for blacks to enter through the back of the buses and fill it from the back, while whites would continue to enter from the front. This original proposal deemed "that it would not be necessary to leave vacant seats while passengers of either race were standing" (Dec. 9, 1955), but eventually the MIA changed its demands to first come seating throughout the bus. The demands were not accepted. City commission Frank Parks said the city could not break the law, and therefore could not accept the MIA demands.

City officials and some independent white groups put forth compromises that would call for a moving "segregated" seating sign that could be readjusted based upon the number of black and white passengers riding the bus at the time. On Jan. 18, the white members of a bi-racial committee issued a report that stated they tried in good faith to find a compromise with the black representatives, but that the moving sign was the most they could do within the confines of the law. Dr. King and the MIA repeatedly refused this compromise. Dr. King and the blacks in Montgomery were seen as uncompromising. One commission member said;

> I came here prepared to vote for liberalization of interpretation of the city's laws with certain conditions. We have some whose minds are made up and I think Rev. King is one of them.
>
> (Dec. 10, 1955)

Mayor W.A. Gayle called the moving segregated seating sign option fair and a compromise that any fair-minded group would accept, he said the blacks were being uncompromising. Weeks later another article appeared which said that two groups, the Montgomery City Commission and a civic organization, "The Men of Montgomery," both presented compromise proposals but both proposals were turned down by the blacks. Eventually all negotiations broke down and legal challenges were the only official communication taking place between the two sides.

Fighting the Boycott/Preserving Our Way of Life

Montgomery's white leaders fought integration diligently. They referred to their efforts as "preserving their way of life." Several messages were presented to the public from city officials. City officials said the boycott was hurting their city and they blamed the NAACP for encouraging the Negroes and challenging the segregation laws in the city. They appealed to whites to stand up against the boycott and preserve their way of life. Police Commissioner Clyde Sellers said:

> It is a vital thing and means our life blood. We must at all cost strive to preserve our way of life and maintain the southern heritage of our fathers and forefathers. It is important and vital to our very existence as a people.
>
> (Jan. 10,1956)

In addition to their court maneuvers, the city also tried other methods such as a "get-tough policy." Police Chief G.J. Ruppenthal ordered strict enforcement of a city ordinance that prohibited more than three people in the front seat of a moving car. The mayor called the boycott just another way of stirring up racial

strife. He said that the blacks "are fighting to destroy our social fabric just as much as the Negro radicals who are leading them" (Jan. 25, 1956). Prominent whites speaking out against the boycott also fueled the city's message of anti-integration.

Mayor Gayle and members of Montgomery's city commission were all members of the Citizens Council, an all-white group whose sole purpose was to fight integration and preserve the southern way of life. Even after the federal court decision deeming segregation illegal on city's buses, city officials continued to fight and promised to use every legal means necessary to preserve racial segregation. A statement issued on Dec. 12 by the Montgomery City Commission voiced frustration with the Supreme Court decision but vowed to continue fighting against integration, and that the commission "will forever stand like a rock against social equality, intermarriage and mixing of the races in schools" (Dec. 12, 1956).

News Sources

In order to analyze the direct and indirect sources used in the articles, the following categories were developed: *Mayor and Commissioners; Police Chief and Law Enforcement; Bus Drivers and Authorities; Attorneys Opposing the Boycott; Whites Against the Boycott; Whites Supporting the Boycott; Whites Neutral About the Boycott; Dr. Martin Luther King; Other MIA and Boycott Leaders; Attorneys Supporting the Boycott; Boycott Participants; Blacks Supporting the Boycott; Blacks Opposing the Boycott; Other*. The research

indicates *Dr. Martin Luther King* was quoted most frequently, followed by the *Mayor and City Commissioners*. *Other Sources* such as local and federal judges, along with selective service draft board members, were quoted 21.2 percent of the time compared to the total number of quotes. The majority of indirect quotes were from Dr. King, again followed by the mayor and city commissioners.

Table 1: Direct Quotes

Direct Source	Frequency	Percentage
Mayor and Commissioners	71	13.4%
Police Chief and Law Enforcement	20	3.8%
Bus Drivers and Bus Authorities	42	7.9%
Attorneys Opposing Boycott	22	4.2%
Whites Against Boycott	30	5.7%
Whites Supporting Boycott	8	1.5%
Whites Neutral About Boycott	2	.4%
Dr. Martin Luther King	79	14.9%
Other MIA and Boycott Leaders	70	13.3%
Attorneys Supporting the Boycott	33	6.2%
Boycott Participants	25	4.7%
Blacks Supporting the Boycott	12	2.3%
Blacks Opposing the Boycott	1	.19%
Blacks Neutral to the Boycott	1	.19%
Other	112	21.2%

Table 2: Indirect Quotes

Indirect Quotes	Frequency	Percentage
Mayor and Commissioners	72	12.8%
Police Chief and Law Enforcement	46	8.1%
Bus Drivers and Bus Authorities	58	10.2%
Attorneys Opposing Boycott	26	4.6%
Whites Against Boycott	20	3.5%
Whites Supporting Boycott	6	1.1%
Whites Neutral About Boycott	3	.5%
Dr. Martin Luther King	75	13.2%
Other MIA and Boycott Leaders	57	10%
Attorneys Supporting the Boycott	39	6.9%
Boycott Participants	12	2.1%
Blacks Supporting the Boycott	10	1.8%
Blacks Opposing the Boycott	0	0
Blacks Neutral to the Boycott	1	.18%
Other	143	25.2%

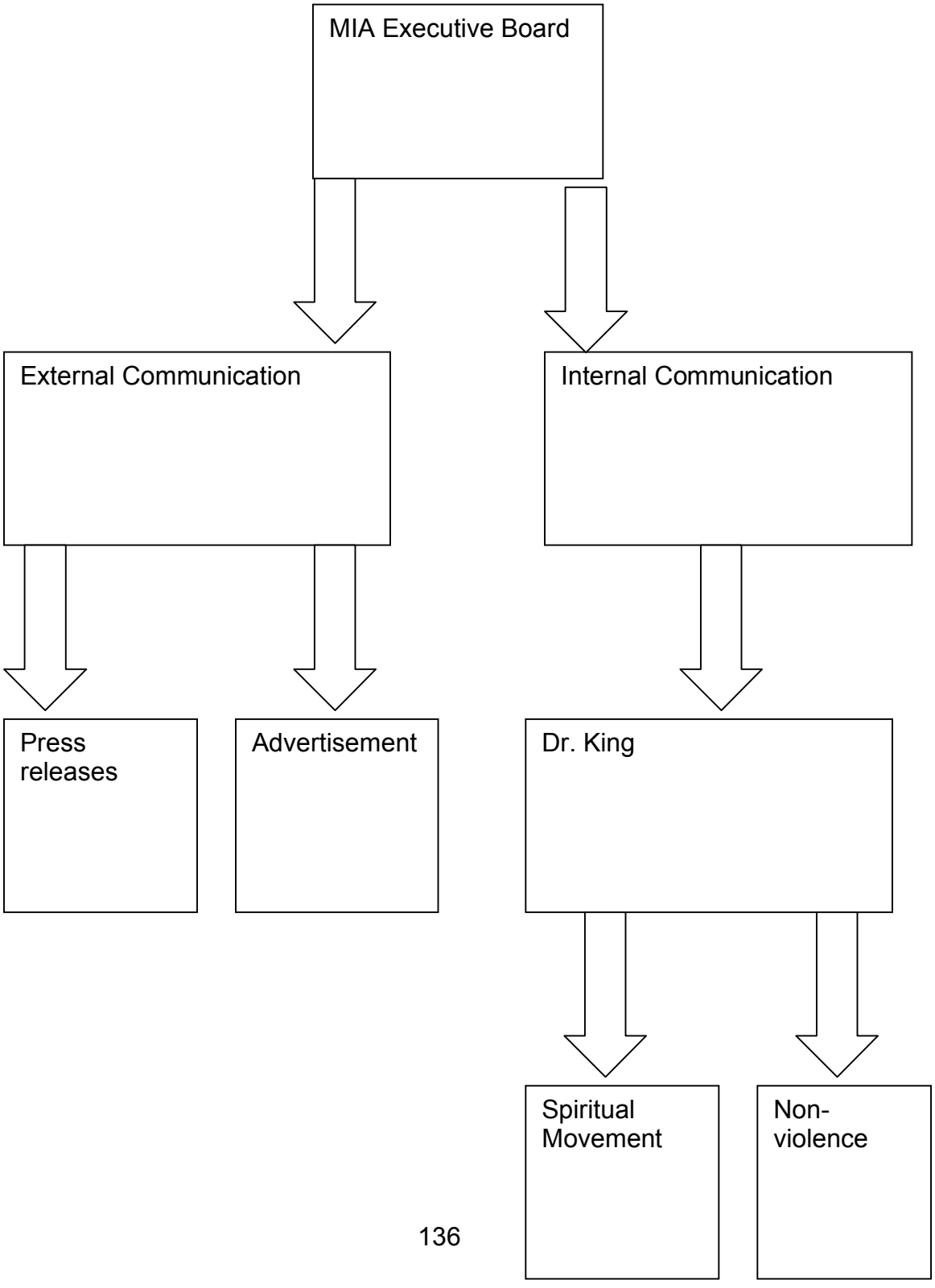
As a whole, Dr. King and the mayor and members of the city commission were quoted roughly about the same amount. Dr. King was the spokesman for the Montgomery Improvement Association, which would account for his frequent quotes, and since the issue was with the city's segregation laws, that would account for the reason the mayor and city commissioners were quoted so

frequently. It appears that the Montgomery Advertiser was fair in the number and frequency of the sources it quoted, however, the paper's history as part of the segregationist culture influenced its coverage. It framed the boycotters as lawbreakers who were blindly following Dr. King. It framed Dr. King as an outsider and an agitator, and the city commissioners as protectors of the southern way of life. Therefore, the participants of the boycott relied on other networks for their primary information.

Communication through Networks

The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) served as the formal social movement organization of the boycott. Within the MIA primary information was dispersed to the boycott participants. That primary information was delivered via mass meetings, newsletters, press releases and advertisements, as illustrated in the following chart. The overwhelming and consistent theme from the MIA was the use of non-violent measures in its protest of the city's segregation laws.

Figure 3: MIA Communication Flow



The Montgomery Improvement Association was officially organized after Park's arrest. At its first meeting, on Dec. 5, officers were elected. Dr. Martin Luther King was elected president. At this 3 p.m. meeting plans were made for the mass meeting that was going to take place later that evening at 7 p.m. The executive committee developed a resolution committee and the committee would be responsible for drawing up a resolution to present to the people. In this meeting it was agreed that the protest would be continued until the bus conditions were improved.

The mass meeting that evening was organized along the lines of a typical church service with an opening hymn, prayer, scripture, occasion, resolutions, offering, closing hymn and benediction. The Rev. Ralph Abernathy read the resolution and observation;

> Number one. That the citizens of Montgomery are requesting that every citizen in Montgomery, regardless of race, color or creed, to refrain from riding buses owned and operated in the city of Montgomery by the Montgomery Lines, Incorporated, until some arrangement has been worked out between said citizens and the Montgomery City Lines, Incorporated….
> Number two. That every person owning or who has access to an automobile will use their automobiles in assisting other persons to get to work without charge.
> Number three. That the employees, I repeat that the employers of persons whose employees live a great distance from them, as much as possible, afford transportation for your own employees.
> That the Negro citizens of Montgomery are ready and willing to send a delegation of citizens to the Montgomery City Lines, Incorporated, to discuss their grievances and to work out a solution for the same….thus ends the resolution.
>
> The Rev. Ralph Abernathy,
> MIA Meeting, Dec. 5

The boycotters overwhelming approved the resolution, and voted to extend the boycott and weekly mass meetings began. The program for the mass meetings was generally song and prayer service, followed by a pep talk, remarks by Dr. King and others, offering and benediction. The scriptures were readings that related to the experiences of the boycotters. For example on April 30, 1956, the congregation and ministers read the following scripture:

> Congregation: I am weary with my groaning: all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.
> Leader: Mine eye consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.
> Congregation: Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.
> Leader: The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.
> All: Let all my enemies be ashamed and sore vexed; let them return and be ashamed suddenly
>
> MIA Meeting
> April 30

Even the songs sung at the meetings were inspirational such as "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Blessed Assurance." It was during these mass meetings that Dr. King and the MIA leaders presented the boycott as a spiritual movement. His fiery speech at that first meeting laid for the groundwork for the Christian principles they would use in the boycott.

> We are here this evening because we're tired now. And I want to say, that we are not here advocating violence. We have never done that. I want it to be known throughout Montgomery and throughout this nation that we are Christian people. We believe in Christian religion. We believe in the teaching of Jesus. The only weapon that we have in our hands this evening is the weapon of protest. That's all.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> MIA Meeting, Dec. 5

Throughout the boycott, Dr. King and all of the ministers of the MIA preached the concept of Christian love and non-violent principles. After city officials announced a get tough policy on the boycotters and their drivers, Dr. King was arrested on a speeding charge. At the mass meeting that evening Dr. King told the crowd that the movement would go on, with or without him, but based on non-violent principles.

> We don't advocate violence. We will stay within the law. When we are right we don't mind going to jail. If all I have to pay is going to jail a few times and getting about 20 threatening calls a day, I think that is a very small price to pay for what we are fighting for.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> MIA meeting, Jan. 30

At a later meeting in March, after more than 90 days of walking and carpooling, Dr. King continued to preach to the boycotters the concept of non violence.

> As we walk we're going to walk with love in our hearts. Somebody has to have sense enough to cut off hate. The power of love is very strong; love your enemies. The whole armor of God is the weapon of love and the breastplate of righteousness. There is something about love that transforms; we're going to keep on in the same spirit.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> MIA Meeting, March 2

On March 22, Dr. King was convicted for violating the state's anti-boycott law. Ninety others had also been arrested for violating this same law and were awaiting trial. His conviction could have affected the mood of the boycott, but instead at the mass meeting that night the mood was one of determination and Dr. King's message was of hope.

> We have never and we do not intend to engage in any acts of violence….so we can say and we be true to ourselves and we can say honestly that we have not advocated violence and we have not participated in violence but that we have gone courageously with the Christian movement. This is a spiritual movement and we are depending on moral and spiritual forces…I believe that God is using Montgomery as his proving ground. It may be that here in the capital of the Confederacy, the birth of the idea of freedom in American and in the Southland can be born. God be praised to you, for your loyalty, for your determination. God bless you and keep you and may God be with us as we go on.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> MIA Meeting, March 22

Finally, on Nov. 13 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the lower court's decision that segregation on Montgomery buses was illegal. It was, ironically, the same day that Circuit Court Judge Eugene Carter enjoined the carpool. Therefore, the MIA's carpool was now illegal and so was segregation on the city's buses. However, the city didn't have to comply with the ruling until the verdict reached Montgomery, which meant more walking for the boycotters. That night, two mass meetings were held and Dr. King explained the court decision and what it meant to the current boycott.

At both meetings, the boycotters voted to accept the MIA executive board recommendations and continue the boycott until the Supreme Court decision took effect. Again, Dr. King talked about non-violent principles and that the movement was not against the white people who were against it, but was a struggle between justice and injustice, between forces of light and forces of darkness.

> All along we have sought to carry out the protest on high moral standards. Our methods and techniques have been rooted in the deep soils of the Christian faith. We have carefully avoided bitterness, and have sought to make love even to our opposers, a reality in our lives….let us go back to the buses in all humility and with gratitude to the Almighty God, for making this decision possible.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
> MIA Meeting, Nov. 14

Prior to the Supreme Court decision arriving in Montgomery on Dec. 20, the Montgomery Improvement Association prepared guidelines for riding on integrated buses. Copies of these guidelines were made and distributed at the mass meeting. The guidelines provided specific suggestions such as:

> Do not deliberately sit by a white person, unless there is no other seat.
> If cursed, do not curse back. If pushed, do not push back
> If struck, do not strike back, but evidence love and goodwill at all times.
> For the first few days try to get on the bus with a friend in whose non-violence you have confidence….
> If you feel you cannot take it, walk for another week or two.
>
> Integrated Bus Suggestions
> MIA, Dec. 19, 1956

Finally, when the Supreme Court decision arrived and at a mass meeting on Dec. 20, Dr. King discussed the decision and the continued commitment to non-violence and Christian principles.

> Now our faith seems to be vindicated. This morning the long awaited mandate from the United States Supreme Court concerning bus segregation came to Montgomery….This is the time that we must evince calm dignity and wise restraint. Emotions must not run wild. Violence must not come from any of us, for if we become victimized with violent intents, we will have walked in vain, and our twelve months of glorious dignity will be transformed into an eve of gloomy catastrophe. As we go back to the buses let us be loving enough to turn an enemy into a friend. We must now

> move from protest to reconciliation. It is my firm conviction that God is working in Montgomery. Let all men of good will, both Negro and white, continue to work with him.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
> MIA Meeting, Dec. 20

Although Dr. King was the spokesman for the Montgomery Improvement Association, the association's executive board developed the plans for the mass meetings. It was at these executive meetings that certain aspects were discussed in regards to furthering the information to the boycotters. Some information was specifically not disseminated to the boycotters, such as safety at the meetings. On Jan. 30, Dr. King's house had been bombed. At a Feb. 2 executive meeting, Dr. King announced that violence had increased and that while fortunately no one had been injured, he suggested that a committee of about 50 people volunteer to patrol the churches where the mass meetings were held.

> Look for time bombs and the like. Now this mustn't get to the people, because it may panic them and they may not come. I'm not saying these things will happen, but it's well to take precautionary measures.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> MIA Exec. Meeting, Feb. 2

At a Jan. 30 meeting, one of the ministers, the Rev. Alford, expressed a desire to compromise. The compromise put forth by the city didn't meet all of their demands but the Rev. Alford explained that the ministers were getting weary. However, another minister mentioned that it was pouring rain on this day, and the people were still walking. King said they needed to iron out any

differences in the executive meeting so they could be at one accord. He said he believed that if they accepted a compromise without their demands being met, then the majority of blacks would ostracize the ministers. He said the people were willing to walk. The executive committee ultimately did not agree to the compromise. At this same meeting, the filing of the federal lawsuit against segregation was discussed. King explained that they were in the process of finding plaintiffs and suggested that a minister also serve as a plaintiff. He asked for a volunteer. No one volunteered. Eventually four women served as plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

Five months into the boycott, Dr. King suggested the Montgomery Improvement Association reorganize. He recommended it have one mass meeting a week instead of two, increase activities by the voting and registration committee, develop a history committee and start an MIA newsletter.

> In order to give our numerous friends over the nation and the various newspapers an accurate account of developments in the bus situation, a bi-monthly newsletter shall be released.
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King
> Exec. Meeting, May 24

The Montgomery Improvement Association developed a newsletter to keep the boycotters abreast of recent happenings. During the time frame of the boycott, there appears to have been four issues of the newsletter. The researcher was only able to locate two of those issues. In Issue #2, dated June 23, there was front page discussion of the initial federal court decision. A story explained that a three judge federal court panel outlawed bus segregation, but

that attorneys on both sides had time to respond to the decision. It said that the carpool was going smoothly.

> Between 30,000 and 40,000 Negroes are being transported daily by the car pool. There are very few complaints, if any, for service is wonderful. Hundreds of people are still driving their cars, wearing out tires and automobiles, re-lining brakes and mending automobile parts. They expend their own energy and devote long hours daily to the cause. They are tired but they don't complain. They have been faithful for more than six months. They may have to serve many more. Nothing definite will be known for more than ten days.
>
> MIA Newsletter

On June 12, an article appeared in *The Montgomery Advertiser*, titled, "MIA Secretary Quits – Boycott Official Hits Funds Use." Recording Secretary Uriah Fields claimed that funds were being misused by the organization. The newsletter explained that Fields was replaced as recording secretary by another minister. It stated that Fields admitted he was mistaken and his claims were false.

> Reverend Fields resented the fact that he had been replaced, and in an emotional state, went to the press with false charges against the MIA. Since its beginning the MIA has encountered much opposition from local authorities and a few disgruntled persons within its own rank. The charges made by Reverend Fields were so preposterous that the Association felt the accusations were unworthy of refutation. Since that time Reverend Fields has been dismissed by his church, because of false charges. But, in a spirit of Christ, he has regretted his retaliatory steps against the organization and has apologized to the executive board and to the MIA mass meeting public. He has also issued, of his own free will, a statement to the press retracting his accusations….Reverend Fields admits with regret, the falsity of his accusations. He is a hard worker and is dedicated to the cause for civil rights. But in a moment of weakness, he lost self control. He was tired, for he has worked with 50,000 other Negroes for six months.
>
> MIA Newsletter
> June 23

In addition to court decisions and Field's retraction, the newsletter also included information about the new MIA headquarters, an upcoming voting clinic and honors for Dr. Martin Luther King.

> Dr. King has justly earned such outstanding awards. He has given himself to this movement, ignoring threats, enduring arrests, intimidations and humiliations of false accusations. He has remained calm, serene, Christ-like. The strain tells on him, however, he looks older than his twenty-seven years.
>
> MIA Newsletter
> June 23

The other newsletter during the time frame of the boycott was dated July 1956. This newsletter updated readers about the boycott. It explained that the decision by the three judge panel still stands, but that the court delayed the implementation of integration for a period of ten days to allow the city time to appeal. It also included the retraction that former recording secretary Urial Fields sent to the press.

Through Dr. King's messages during the mass meetings and the newsletters to boycotters, people were able to get direct primary information from the Montgomery Improvement Association. But the association also used media outlets to further its message. Periodically throughout the boycott, the Montgomery Improvement Association would distribute press releases to the media. The first press release appeared in the newspaper on Dec. 10, just nine days after Rosa Parks was arrested and five days after the boycott started. The press release outlined its proposal of a first-come, first-served policy.

> As good citizens we want to comply with the law until the law is changed or is over-ruled. However, we feel that we have the right to insist that the law be fairly administered. In answer to our request that that Montgomery City Lines adopt a policy of loading busses [sic] from rear to front with colored passengers and from front to rear with white passengers and that all passengers be permitted to retain their seats on a "first come-first served" basis, without reservation of seats for any particular race.
>
> MIA Press Release

The bus company claimed it would be a violation to the state's segregation laws, but the MIA tried to explain why this policy would fit under the current segregation laws and believed the issue could be resolved.

On Sunday, Jan. 22, *The Montgomery Advertiser* reported that a resolution had been reached on the boycott. The report was not accurate, as leaders of the MIA were not involved in that meeting with city officials. To spread the information that the boycott was still on, the MIA issued a press release to the newspaper explaining the inaccurate story.

> You have probably received a release from Commissioner Clyde Sellers stating that the Montgomery bus protest is nearing an end as a result of a meeting with a group of Negro ministers, city bus line officials, and the city Commission. If this release gives the impression that an agreement has been reached, it is totally erroneous. If there were any ministers in a meeting with the city commission on Saturday, I assure you that they do not represent even a modicum of the Negro bus riders….The bus protest is still on and it will last until our proposals are given sympathetic consideration through our appointed leaders.
>
> MIA Press Release

Dr. King also called the Associated Press and asked that the story be amended to say that none of the members of the MIA were present at the meeting. The Montgomery Improvement Association supplemented its press

releases with paid advertisements in the Montgomery Advertiser. On Dec. 25, a half-page advertisement appeared in the newspaper, signed by the "Negro Ministers of Montgomery and Their Congregations." The ad explained nine areas of complaints: courtesy, seating, arrests, two fares, making change, passing up passengers, physical torture, acknowledgement and adjudication. It further explained their proposal of first-come, first-served seating and the nature of their movement. They summarized the movement as non-violent, without coercion and committed to arbitration.

> We are willing to arbitrate. We feel that this can be done with men and women of good will. However, we find it rather difficult to arbitrate in good faith with those whose publish pronouncements are anti-Negro and whose only desires seems to be that of maintaining the status quo. We call upon men of good-will, who will be willing to treat this issue in the spirit of Him whose birth we celebrate at this season, to meet with us. We stand for Christian teachings and the concepts of democracy for which men and women of all races have fought and died.
>
> MIA Advertisement

After weeks of failed negotiations with the city, the Montgomery Improvement Association placed another ad in the newspaper, on Jan. 27, explaining its stand and rationale for boycotting the buses.

> Since report pronouncements have attempted to cloud and distort issues in the protest, we feel that further explanation is needed. Negroes want the entire citizenry of Montgomery to know that at no time have we raised the race issue in this movement, nor have we directed our aim at the segregation laws. We are interested in a calm and fair consideration of the situation which has developed as a result of dissatisfaction over bus policies. The protest which has been a non-violent method of bargaining, has been used in a democratic society to secure redress of grievances. This technique, however, has caused some of the leaders of the city to reject unrelated issues – such as "destruction of the social fabric" or

> "the southern tradition," which we feel is an effort to evade the real issues involved….
>
> MIA Advertisement

The advertisement then outlined three points: race relations, democracy and the Christian Way. Their proposal at the time of this advertisement was not to eliminate the segregation laws, but to go to a first-come, first serve seating arrangements with blacks seated from back to front and whites seated from front to back. In the advertisement, the association explained it is working within the framework of the law and that under a democracy blacks have every right to withhold their consumerism for what they deem as unfair services. Lastly, the association said the movement was grounded in "the Christian Way" and they believed that practicing Christian principles would eventually lead to a resolution.

The Montgomery Improvement Association would also typically advertise its stance or upcoming events in the local newspaper. On Dec. 29, 1955, it advertised a Day of Prayer. It called for all citizens of Montgomery to unite in a Day of Prayer.

> We offer the following suggested thoughts and mediation:
> 1. That people may be able to move with a sense of dignity about the City of Montgomery without fear and with love for all mankind.
> 2. The willingness to suffer that justice may triumph.
> 3. That God will help men of good-will to reach out for sympathetic understanding of the struggle in which we are engaged, and give them the courage to take a positive stand.
> 4. That we have the blessings of God and the continuous directions of the Holy Spirit.
>
> MIA Advertisement

The Montgomery Improvement Association was the organizing arm of the boycott. It was through the Montgomery Improvement Association that information was provided directly to the boycotters. The mass meetings, with remarks from Dr. King, provided primary information. During the boycott, the MIA was consistent with its non-violent message and this was reiterated in MIA published materials. The newsletters also became a source of information and provided updates on the court cases to MIA members and those sympathetic to the movement. Finally, the press releases and advertisements provided broad information to people who may have been unable to attend the meetings. They outlined the MIA's goals and resolutions. Also, the half-page advertisements were a way to provide information directly to Montgomery's white population, to inform them specifically of the MIA demands and why blacks were boycotting the city buses. These communication avenues proved to be successful as the boycotters were continuously informed about the direction of the boycott. The consensus among all of the participants was that they were kept informed of the boycott.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the data, it is evident that the Montgomery Bus Boycott was indeed a social movement within the political process model. In the political process model, the role of the political climate is used to explain a social movement.[399] Within this model, the movement is more of a political phenomenon as opposed to a psychological one. The aggrieved community has weak political bargaining power, but has the strength to organize itself into a campaign of social protest. In the case of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the aggrieved community was Montgomery's black residents. The development of the boycott was not spontaneous, as members of the Women's Political Council had been planning a bus boycott, but were waiting for the right time to execute their plans.[400] What began as a one-day boycott quickly became organized with defined goals. But in order for a social movement to be successful, it has to be publicized and what makes the Montgomery Bus Boycott so unique was the planned communication that went into the movement.

Rosa Parks was arrested on Thursday, Dec. 1,1955, but by Monday, Dec. 5, thousands of Montgomery's blacks knew about her arrest and the impending boycott. They were informed through word-of-mouth and written communication. The word-of-mouth communication was extraordinary. Blacks and whites didn't

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[399] McAdam, "*Political Process and the Development of the Black Insurgency: 1930-1970."*
[400] Robinson, *"The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It."*

live in the same neighborhoods in Montgomery, so the news of her arrest spread quickly in black homes.

> Again, I go back to the fact we lived in the same neighborhood, we weren't spread out. There were flyers to deliver and there was word of mouth. We talked to people so everybody knew what was going on.
>
> Anthony Dumas

By the time the story of Parks' arrest appeared in the *Montgomery Advertiser* the next day, "City Charge Faced by Negro Bus Rider" (Dec. 2, 1955), many people had already been informed about the arrest. After Parks' arrest, the Women's Political Council began spreading the news of a one-day bus boycott.[401] That evening of Parks' arrest Jo Ann Robinson and two other students ran off thousands of mimeographs at Alabama State University and circulated them all over the city of Montgomery.[402] Teenager Charles Varner said he saw one of those flyers outside of his home on his way to work.

> In essence it said don't ride the buses. And so as we, as I, was walking down to catch the bus to go to work everybody was walking around with one of those little flyers and they were talking about it….and we got to work, that is all everybody was talking about…it didn't say boycott, it just said don't ride the buses.
>
> Charles Varner

Also, the story in the Sunday paper of the *Montgomery Advertiser* with this headline: "Negro Groups Ready Boycott of City Lines" helped spread the news. The newspaper had a Sunday circulation of 72,948[403] and those who hadn't

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[401] Robinson, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*.
[402] Ibid.
[403] "Alabama Official and Statistical Register."

heard about the boycott by flyers or word of mouth, now found out about it in the newspaper.

> So Joe Azbell, thinking that it may be something of interest…blacks always talking about doing something, so he printed it in the Montgomery Advertiser on Sunday morning….So it was printed, and rather than the five thousand people getting it, were now fifty thousand people in the city of Montgomery getting it because every subscriber of *The Montgomery Advertiser* got it.
>
> Charles Varner

The churches provided the final stream of information. That Sunday morning, preachers encouraged their members to boycott the buses. So information about the boycott was projected in four ways: word of mouth, flyers, local newspaper and church pulpit. On Dec. 5, the one-day boycott was successful. According to bus company officials, black ridership was down by 90 percent.[404] At a mass meeting that evening, protestors voted to continue their boycott. These weekly mass meetings conducted by the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) kept the boycotters mobilized. MIA leaders were mostly ministers and the meetings were held at various churches around the city. These meetings became a staple of the boycott. They were so crowded that often people would arrive hours before the meeting just to get a seat. There was singing, praying, a pep talk and further directions regarding the boycott. At the end of the meeting, Dr. King would then provide information about what was going on logistically with the boycott.

[404] Azbell, "5000 at Meeting Outline Boycott ; Bullet Clips Bus."

How was communication mediated by the news media?

Although helping to initially inform the black community of the boycott, participants said they didn't rely on the newspaper for their primary information. The news framing of the boycott in the newspaper had a minimal effect on the boycotters. Lippman said news framing is a way that journalists shape a story and its ensuing public opinion.[405] Tuchman said that by framing an event, the news media define and give meaning to the news.[406] The Montgomery Advertiser, typically did not aggressively cover news in the black community prior to the boycott. The coverage of the bus boycott was a watershed event, as stories about the boycott were plentiful. However, how these stories were framed may be significant, specifically, in regards to how the boycott participants perceived them.

The frames that emerged from the analysis of more than three hundred articles were: *Bus company as Victim; Blacks as Unlawful; Organizing and Maintaining the Boycott; Dr. King as an Outsider; Violence; Court Maneuvers and Decisions; Negotiating*; and *Fighting the Boycott/Preserving Our Way of Life*. The frames of the articles could be further narrowed to: *Opposing the Boycott/Supporting Segregation, Supporting the Boycott/Opposing Segregation*; and *Bus Company as Victim*. Stories that focused on those opposing the boycott typically featured the Montgomery City Commissioners. On Jan. 24, it was reported that the mayor ceased any further boycott negotiations. City

[405] Lippman, *Public Opinion*.
[406] Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*.

commissioners joined the White Citizens Council (a group known to be against segregation) and said they were not going to let their social fabric be destroyed. Other prominent politicians, such as Alabama State Senator Sam Englehart, who were against the boycott became full page stories.

The stories about those *Supporting the Boycott/Opposing Segregration* typically focused on the boycotters themselves and the Montgomery Improvement Association leadership. These were stories about the mass meetings, the ongoing transportation pool, and other prominent blacks from around the country who visited Montgomery to show their support of the boycott.

The *Bus Company as Victim* was a prevalent story line throughout the news coverage. Bus company officials said they couldn't change the seating laws, and that it was up to Alabama voters, but they were suffering the effects of the boycott. During the boycott, the bus company dropped routes in predominately black neighborhoods and increased its fares. Transit executive Roy Fitzgerald said: "We would be tickled if the law were changed but we (the corporation) are not voters in Alabama so there is nothing we can do but try to adjust these differences and continue operating."[407]

But despite the numerous stories in *The Montgomery Advertiser*, the newspaper's management did not want to cover the boycott as aggressively as it did. City Editor Joe Azbell reluctantly admitted the paper gave the one day

[407] "Bus Official Says Boycott 'Regrettable'", *Montgomery Advertiser*, April 2, 1956.

boycott the news coverage that it needed and conceded the newspaper was even partly responsible for starting the boycott.

> We printed the story that they were going to stage a boycott and gave it publicity, so we helped it start. We had to print the story—we didn't want to, but it had already broken on TV and we had to print something since TV is a competing news. So all that publicity made it possible for them to get through with it – they couldn't have otherwise.[408]

Azbell frequently covered boycott stories but admitted that he thought the whole idea of a boycott was "a stupid idea."

> You think the 'Nigras' of Montgomery are boycotting the buses, but they're not. The complaint they had against the bus company has been filed in the federal court in the form of a suit, so that issue is dead as far as the bus company is concerned. This is not a bus boycott any more, it's just a stupid mess. They have a grievance and they won't ride the buses, but it's not a bus boycott.[409]

He said thousands would attend the mass meetings, it didn't equate to the 50,000 blacks in Montgomery.

> In the first place, 2% or less of the 'Nigra' population is causing this thing-if you go to the rallies, you don't find but a small proportion of the population there. There are 50,000 'Nigras' in Montgomery and how many of them go to the rallies- only 2,500- not 5 or 10 or 15,000[410]

This attitude on behalf the city editor may have contributed to the tone of the newspapers stories, despite the moderate views of the newspaper's own editor Grover C. Hall. "As the stakes in Alabama got higher, the pressure on the newspaper to aid and advance the strategy of the white segregationist leadership

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[408] Anna Holden, "Joe Azbell Interview " (New Orleans: Tulane University, Amistad Research Center, 1956).
[409] Ibid.
[410] Ibid, 2

and the incessant demands on Hall to stick with his own class, his own breed, his own race would be difficult to resist."[411] Hall even wrote a letter to his friend, Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, where he explains how volatile Montgomery has become. "Never in my nine years as editor have I seen Montgomery so inflamed as now. Trying to moderate, I have taken quite the mauling. Facts and reason are nothing to [white segregationist leaders] you are either for white folks or against them."[412] The newspaper was a product of the southern culture. Some of the journalists held segregationist views and the trust between Montgomery's black community and the newspaper was not going to occur immediately. The years of avoidance of black community news affected black residents, and this may explain why they questioned the newspaper's coverage.

Television was a new medium at the time, and participants said they did come to rely on the local television news for information. Frank McGee was the news director at WSFA and he began aggressively covering the boycott.[413] On the day the first story appeared in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, that night city commissioner Clyde Sellers appeared on television to denounce the effort. Sellers actions helped news of the boycott reach even more citizens, particularly those who missed the leaflets and the announcements at church that morning. McGee sympathized with the boycotters' demands, but more importantly he

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[411] Roberts and Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation,* 124.
[412] Ibid., 124.
[413] M. Murray, ed., *Encyclopedia of Television News* (Phoenix: The Oryx Press, 1999).

understood that he had a good story on his hands and covered it assiduously.[414] The paper was forced to follow suit. Again, this worked to the boycotters' advantage. "Once the boycott became a national story, NBC agreed, often including McGee's reports from Montgomery on the network news. In his memoirs, boycott attorney Fred Gray says early in the boycott, he established a working relationship with McGee and often provided information to him.[415] By bridging local and national audiences, "McGee's coverage allowed protesters to see themselves reported as social agents, both within Montgomery and within much larger struggles for human rights in the U.S. and internationally."[416] They were able to see their struggles in the newspaper and on the evening newscasts. "Both television and the movement were new enough that Montgomery whites apparently didn't think to censor televised representations of the protest. Thus, through the boycott, local television played a crucial and unusual role by breaking the local newspapers' monopoly on information."[417]

How was the boycott communicated by the participants, churches and their networks?

With a lack of confidence in the newspaper coverage, the primary network during the boycott was the Montgomery Improvement Association and since most of the leaders of the association were ministers, the network naturally included their church affiliations. The Montgomery Improvement Association was

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[414] S. Torres, *Black White and in Color* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 27.
[415] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*.
[416] D. Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 559.
[417] Torres, *Black White and in Color*, 27.

the social movement organization that developed because of the boycott. Together the participants, churches and the Montgomery Improvement Association were able to provide effective communication. Research shows that a social movement organization serves as the command post for the movement and that was the case with the MIA.[418] Before the transportation arm of the movement was fully developed, if boycotters needed a ride across town, they would call the main office of the Montgomery Improvement Association. Eventually, the MIA developed a transportation system to service the boycotters. The churches became involved by purchasing church vans and station wagons to help with the transportation during the boycott. Initially, participants who had cars would voluntarily provide rides to those who were walking. However, as personal cars were starting to deteriorate from overuse, the churches began purchasing vehicles for the boycott. The use of the church vans continued throughout the boycott until it was enjoined by the Montgomery County Circuit Court. During the boycott, Dean Drug Store, located downtown, served as a hub for information. Richard Harris owned the store. Attorney Fred Gray says whenever a problem occurred regarding transportation, MIA officials would immediately call Harris.

> In a sense, Rich Harris at Dean Drug Store was the nerve center for all major problems. Whenever a problem needed resolution, whether it was just a problem with transportation, or someone had been arrested or harassed, or just to get a message from one person to another, we would always call Rich Harris at Dean Drug

[418] McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory."

> Store. He was always there and could always make the contact and get the problem solved.[419]

The various churches also provided information to its members about the latest developments with the boycott. Every Sunday ministers would discuss the particulars of the boycott. So if participants missed the mass meeting they could also get the information at church on Sunday. As one participant explained, even if a participant missed the mass meeting and Sunday church services, he or she could still receive the information through word of mouth.

> The mass meeting was the basic means of communicating and in churches, and you have ministers that have ministerial organizations. The ministers were very active. Many of the church vans they used in their churches were used for transporting people during the bus boycott….so the ministerial alliance meetings would be….they spread it that way, leaflet circulations in churches, pastors announcing it in churches, the mass meetings that were held, weekly or more often. That was how communication was carried out.
>
> Henry Spears

Those who attended the mass meetings would take the information back to their neighborhoods. The same can be said for Sunday morning service, as churchgoers would share the information with family and friends who were not at church.

> So whatever decision was made in the Montgomery Improvement Association, the ministers communicated that information to the church congregations and the church congregations distributed it to the community…people began to go to church like never before and because that is where the real information was coming from, and believe it not everybody wanted to have that, that primary information. They wanted to be that first source of information....
>
> Charles Varner

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[419] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*.

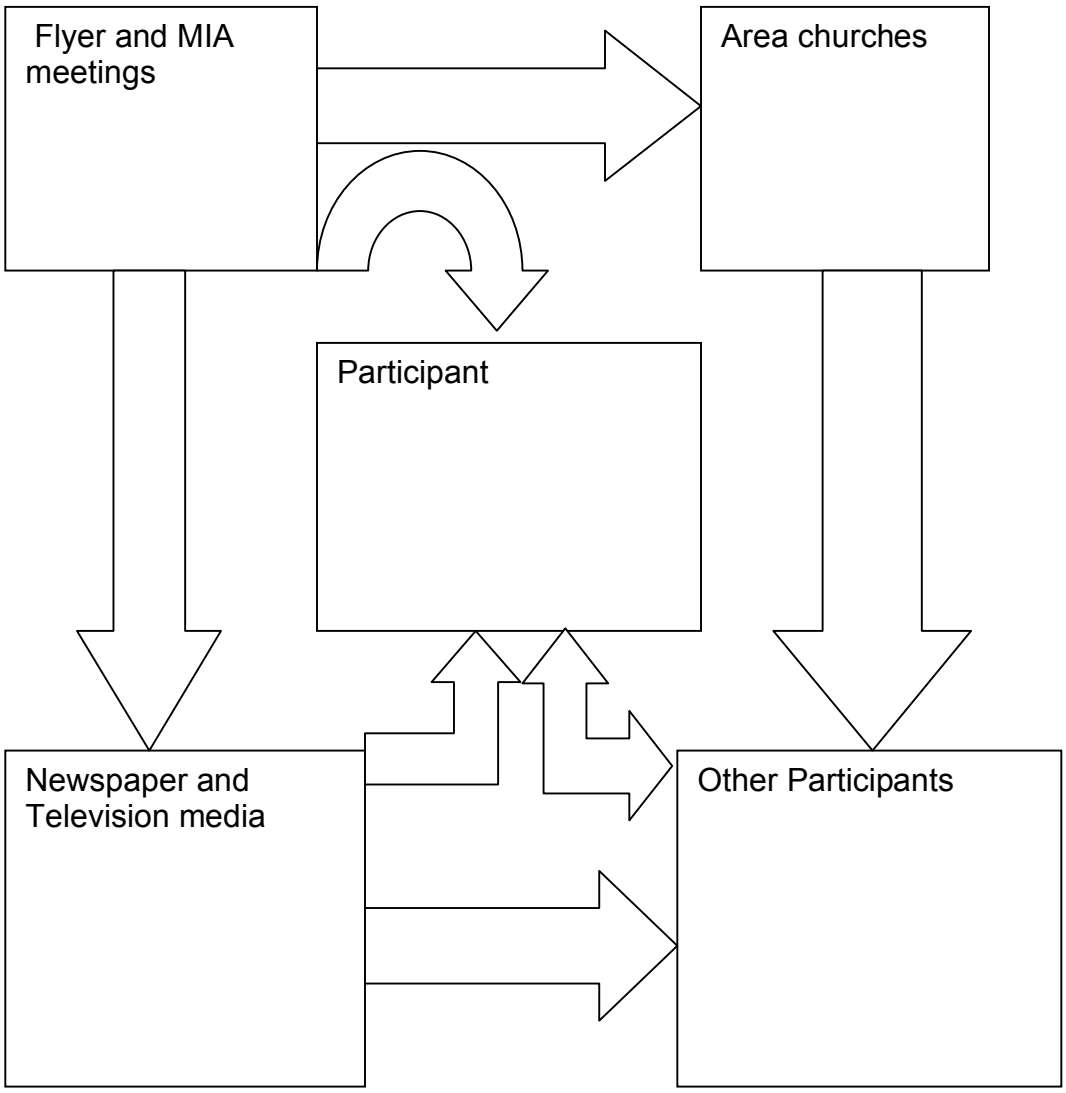
As MIA president, Dr. King would often make remarks at the meetings. His remarks would compare their experiences to biblical stories. He compared the boycott to a war, not a war between blacks and whites, but a war between the just and the unjust. His non-violent messages were crucial for the movement. Dr. King said at a March meeting: "This is a spiritual movement and we are depending on moral and spiritual forces….I believe that God is using Montgomery as his proving ground."[420] King's words were then repeated in other pulpits churches as pastors also were preaching non-violent principles.

The MIA provided information to the participants through weekly meetings, advertisements and flyers handed out at the meetings. About six months into the boycott, the MIA developed a newsletter. This newsletter provided up-to-date information about the boycott. In addition, the MIA periodically would purchase newspaper ads. The ads would promote upcoming city-wide prayer services or simply explain the MIA's stance in its request for first-come first-served seating on area buses.

As illustrated in chart #5, the Montgomery Bus Boycott had several communication aspects at work: the MIA, which served as its social movement organization (SMO) and organizing arm; the local churches, whose ministers were involved in the MIA, the local news media, that covered the stories, and the participants themselves.

[420] M. King, "Mia Mass Meeting."

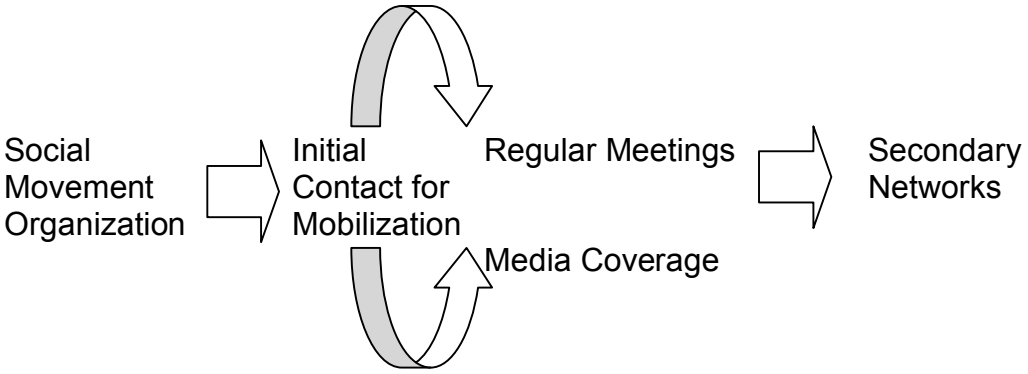
Figure 4:Flow of Communication to Participant



Communication networks used during the boycott worked congruently as information sources. The participants, the MIA and area churches, provided the primary information. Then among themselves, the participants provided more information.

Finally, the Montgomery Bus Boycott is an example of the power of communication in a social movement, and particularly advances the communication network in McAdam's Political Process Model. McAdam places the communication network under the category of indigenous organizational strength. The results of this research provide more explanation into what actually takes place within a communication network.

Figure 5: Communication Network of a Social Movement



For a social movement to be successful, the communication network of that organization must be effective. First, the organization must be prepared to initially contact potential participants. This initial contact should include the who,

what, when, where and why of the movement. We saw evidence of this in the initial flyer that was distributed about the boycott. In addition to the flyers, the initial media coverage by *The Montgomery Advertiser* and WSFA-TV provided information to potential boycotters. The first boycott meeting was on Monday, Dec. 5, the day of the one-day protest. These meetings were then held weekly to keep the boycotters informed about the developments of the boycott. *The Montgomery Advertiser* provided coverage of the meeting, along with WSFA-TV. Although boycotters were skeptical of the newspaper's coverage during the course of the boycott, it did keep the boycott a primary focus in Montgomery's white community. The coverage provided by WRMA, the city's only black radio station at the time of the boycott, also helped in filtering information to listeners. However, what truly solidified the communication was the local churches, ministers, and word-of-mouth contact among participants, which are referred to as secondary networks in this model. These secondary networks only strengthened the primary information that was coming from the Montgomery Improvement Association.

Even without the conveniences that would be common 50 years later, the 50,000 blacks in Montgomery were able to dismantle a segregated transportation system, and communication networks provided the necessary tools to make the boycott a success. This research adds to the body of knowledge about the boycott because it examines the role of communication in this successful social movement. Finally, we know more than just what

happened between Dec. 1 (the day Rosa Parks was arrested) and Dec. 21 (the day the first integrated buses rolled through Montgomery). There is more to this story and this research shows how important the communication networks were to the boycott. It could even be assumed that without the effective communication used to mobilize and continue the boycott, that it might not have been as successful.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Although there have been many studies on the bus boycott, the researcher believes it is still ripe for future research. This study examined the communication techniques of the movement. The researcher could find little information about WRMA, the only black radio station in Montgomery at the time. A future study might locate station archives to examine its role in covering the boycott, as well as program logs and other primary records. The *Montgomery Advertiser* wrote stories about the boycott, but what about Grover Hall's editorials? How did they shape the *Advertiser's* coverage? What was the tone of Hall's editorials? Did his editorials help fuel the segregationist fire? Also, in the *Montgomery Advertiser* were letters to the editor, published under the section titled, "Tell it to Old Grandma." Future research could analyze the letters to the editor. Were the majority against the boycott? What role did these letters play in the *Advertiser's* coverage. This study also discussed communication techniques used by the participants of the boycott, but what about Montgomery's white

residents? How did they get their information about the boycott that was affecting bus transportation in the city? Were the communication networks different from an opposition aspect? This study shows us how imperative interpersonal communication was in the boycott. Five months after the Montgomery Bus Boycott started, a boycott started in Tallahassee, Florida to integrate the bus system there, however, it was unsuccessful. Future research could examine the interpersonal communication used in the Tallahassee boycott and compare it to Montgomery. What were the similarities and differences? There are many studies on the practice of interpersonal communication and a few focus on interpersonal communication as it relates to black culture.[421] However, a *Lexis Nexis* and *WorldCat* search of "interpersonal communication" and "Montgomery Bus Boycott" garnered zero results. A subsequent search of "interpersonal communication" and "Civil Rights Movement" resulted in two hits. One article discussed New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and the other article was about African-Americans sharing their experience of attending Maryland Public Schools from the end of the Civil War to the height of the Civil Rights Movement. There are no books that specifically examine interpersonal communication during the Civil Rights Movement. Future research could also examine interpersonal communication on other specific aspects of the Civil

[421] R. Jackson, *African American Communication and Identities: Essential Readings* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2004), S. Talley, *Mulatto America: At the Crossroads of Black and White Culture: A Social History* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003).

Rights Movements such as the Selma to Montgomery March, the North Carolina sit-ins, or the March on Washington.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Discussion Guide

Study Explanation: The study is meant to explore the communication techniques used during the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The boycott began on Dec. 1, 1955 and ended approximately a year later. The communication used during the boycott and your participation is what I'm interested in.

There are two ways we can do this interview. It can either be "on the record" where you give me permission to use your name and directly quote you in my report or it can "off the record," in which your name would not be used and would not be associated with any direct quotes. Which type of interview do you prefer? I have an informed consent form that I must get signed before we can begin with the interview. Also, this informed consent just gives me permission to record the interview, is that o.k.? If you don't want the interview recorded, that's fine, just sign in appropriate section.

I want you to know that in this study, you are expert, because you were the one who actually observed the bus boycott and participated in it, I am simply here to learn from you.

Topic Idea	Questions
Trust Building – Tell me about yourself	Where did you grow up? When were you first exposed to segregation? How did that make you feel? Did you hear about problems Blacks encountered when riding the buses? Was there ever talk of a boycott before it actually started? How did you get involved in the boycott? How did you stay abreast of what was going on with the boycott? What did you think of the newspaper coverage of the boycott? Radio? Television? What about the Montgomery Improvement Association? What role did the MIA play? How were the churches involved? When segregation was outlawed, how did you feel? Looking back on your experience, what do

you think about that period of time?

APPENDIX B

CODING SHEET

01	DATE ___/___/_____
02	1-Front Page 2- Front Metro Page 3-Other 4-None indicated
03	REPORTER 1-AP or UP 2-Staff 3-Another Paper 4-None indicated
04	DIRECT QUOTES FROM SOURCES ___01 – Mayor and city commissioners ___02 – Police chief and law enforcement officers ___03 – Montgomery city bus authorities ___04 – Attorneys on behalf of city ___05 – White residents against boycott ___06 – White residents supporting boycott ___07 – White residents neutral about boycott ___08 – Dr. Martin Luther King ___09 – Other boycott leaders and MIA representatives (not attorneys) ___10 – Attorneys on behalf of MIA ___11 – Boycott participants ___12 – Blacks residents supporting boycott (not participants) ___13 – Black residents opposing boycott ___14—Black residents neutral about boycott ___15 – Other ___16 – No direct quotes in article
05	WORD COUNT FROM DIRECT QUOTES ___01 – Mayor and city commissioners ___02 – Police chief and law enforcement officers ___03 – Montgomery city bus authorities ___04 – Attorneys on behalf of city ___05 – White residents against boycott ___06 – White residents supporting boycott ___07 – White residents neutral about boycott ___08 – Dr. Martin Luther King ___09 – Other boycott leaders and MIA representatives (not attorneys) ___10 – Attorneys on behalf of MIA ___11 – Boycott participants ___12 – Blacks residents supporting boycott (not participants) ___13 – Black residents opposing about boycott ___14 – Black residents neutral about boycott ___15 – Other ___16 – No direct quotes in article

06	INDIRECT QUOTES FROM SOURCES ___01 – Mayor and city commissioners ___02 – Police chief and law enforcement officers ___03 – Montgomery city bus authorities ___04 – Attorneys on behalf of city ___05 – White residents against boycott ___06 – White residents supporting boycott ___07 – White residents neutral about boycott ___08 – Dr. Martin Luther King ___09 – Other boycott leaders and MIA representatives (not attorneys) ___10 – Attorneys on behalf of MIA ___11 – Boycott participants ___12 – Blacks residents supporting boycott (not participants) ___13 – Black residents opposing about boycott ___14 – Black residents neutral about boycott ___15 – Other ___16 – No indirect quotes in article
07	MAJOR THEMES OF ARTICLE 01 – Bus company as victim 02 – Negroes as unlawful 03 - Dr. King as outsider 04 – Violence 05 – Court maneuvers and decisions 06 – Preserving our way of life 07 – Other _____

APPENDIX C

Montgomery Advertiser Stories

Date	Title
Friday, Dec. 2	Negro Jailed for Overlooking Bus Segregation
Saturday, Dec. 3	Negro Urging Bus Boycott
Sunday, Dec. 4	Negro Groups Ready Boycott of City Lines
Monday, Dec. 5	Negro Rule in Boycott is to Walk
Monday, Dec. 5	Negress Draws Fine Segregation Case Involving Bus Ride
Monday, Dec. 5	Extra Police Set for Patrol Work in Trolley Boycott
Tuesday, Dec. 6	Bus Official Agree to Meet with Negroes
Tuesday, Dec. 6	5000 at Meeting Outline Boycott: Bullet Clips Bus
Wednesday, Dec. 7	At Holt Street Baptist Church - Deeply Stirred Throng of Colored Citizens Protest Bus Segregation
Wednesday, Dec. 7	In Face of Boycott: Employees of City Lines Agree on Two-Year Pact
Wednesday, Dec. 7	Negro Minister Denies Effort to End Segregation on Buses
Thursday, Dec. 8	Gunfire Rakes 2 Negro Homes
Thursday, Dec. 8	Negro Drivers Asked on Buses
Thursday, Dec. 8	2 Bus Drivers Make Reports of Shootings
Thursday, Dec. 8	The Law on Boycotts in General
Friday, Dec. 9	Bus Boycott Conference Fails to Find Solution
Friday, Dec. 9	Bus Company to Half Service on Two Routes
Saturday, Dec. 10	Bus Company Slashes Runs in Negro Area
Saturday, Dec. 10	Police Probe Bus Shooting
Sunday, Dec. 11	Bus Service at Standstill in Negro Area
Monday, Dec. 12	Bus Boycott is Continuing
Tuesday, Dec. 13	No End Sighted to Bus Boycott
Wednesday, Dec. 14	Negro Taxis Are Given Minimum Rate Reminder
Wednesday, Dec. 14	Bus Official Flies Here for Confab on Negro Boycott
Thursday, Dec. 15	BusLine Agent to Be Available for Boycott Talks
Friday, Dec. 16	Crowded Cars to be Stopped by City Police
Saturday, Dec. 17	Bus Boycott is Being Aired
Saturday, Dec. 17	Truce Session Set Today in Effort to End Bus Tiff
Sunday, Dec. 18	Committee Fails to Reach Settlement in Bus Boycott
Monday, Dec. 19	Bus Line Official Meets with Mayor
Monday, Dec. 19	Group to Try Again Today for Bus Pact
Tuesday, Dec. 20	Mayor's Committee Stalls in Hunt for Transit Truce
Wednesday, Dec. 21	Court to Hear Cabbie Booked on Code Count
Friday, Dec. 23	Holiday Ok'd on City Lines
Friday, Dec. 30	Citizens Council Sets $100 Reward in Bus Violence
Saturday, Dec. 31	Bus Seating - System in 6 Other Cities Differ from Ours, a Random Check Reveals
Saturday, Dec. 31	Mayor Urges More Riders for Bus Line
Tuesday, Jan. 3	Bus Company Asks Commission to Temporarily Double Fares
Wednesday, Jan. 4	Bus Fare of 15 Cents Authorized on City Lines
Wednesday, Jan. 4	Bus Officials Press Demand for Fare Hike

Thursday, Jan. 5	Bus Officials Win Approval on Fare Boost
Monday, Jan. 9	Meeting Slated on Bus Boycott
Tuesday, Jan. 10	Two-Hour Meeting Fails to End Bus Boycott Here
Tuesday, Jan. 10	The Mechanics of the Bus Boycott (Feature on Graetz)
Tuesday, Jan. 10	Bus Request Denied Negro Spokesman
Thursday, Jan. 12	Pastor Graetz is Threatened; and Quickly Receives Clyde Sellers' Protection; As Phone Gushes Praise, Abuse
Tuesday, Jan. 17	New Bus Pact by City Lines Likely Today
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Sellers Asserts "Fear" Keeping Negroes off Buses
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Physical Fear of Negroes Blamed for Bus Boycott
Wednesday, Jan. 18	Group Reports on Bus Boycott- Stalemate is Cited by White Conferees
Thursday, Jan. 19	Stalemate Ends Boycott Parley
Thursday, Jan. 19	The Rev. King is Boycott Boss - 27 Year-Old Baptist Pastor Seems to be Deferred to By Other Leaders;
Thursday, Jan. 19	Group Advises Reserved Seats for 2 Races on City Bus Lines
Monday, Jan. 23	Bus Company Resumes Services on Three Negro Boycott Lines
Tuesday, Jan. 24	City Commission Lauded for Bus Boycott Stand
Tuesday, Jan. 24	Mayor Stops Boycott Talk
Wednesday, Jan. 25	End to Free Taxi Service Request by Mayor Gayle
Wednesday, Jan. 25	Free Rides' End Asked by Mayor in Bus Boycott
Thursday, Jan. 26	Hearing Set for Negro in 'Bus' Case
Friday, Jan. 27	Negro Group Asks Franchise for Transportation Service
Friday, Jan. 27	Speeding is Charged to Boycott Leader
Saturday, Jan. 28	King Says Vision Told Him to Lead Integration Forces
Saturday, Jan. 28	Boycott Leader Gets $10 Fine
Saturday, Jan. 18	Negro Accused of Violence Over Boycott Gets 10 Days
Sunday, Jan. 29	Boycott Boss Gets $14 Fine in Speed Case
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Blasts Rocks Residence of Bus Boycott Leader - None Injured After Bombing of Kings Home
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Threat of Retaliator Bombing Given to Commission Sellers
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Appeal Cases Pend for Keys in Bus Protest
Tuesday, Jan. 31	City Offers $500 Reward in Bombing
Wednesday, Feb. 1	Sellers Reports Threats Made in Telephone Calls
Thursday, Feb. 2	Negro Woman Disavows City Segregation Suit
Thursday, Feb. 2	No Clue Found to New Blast in Negro Area
Thursday, Feb. 2	Officials Probing Blast in NAACP Leaders Yard
Thursday, Feb. 2	5 Negroes Attack Segregation in Federal Court
Thursday, Feb. 2	Start and City Laws Listed on Segregation in Travel
Friday, Feb. 3	Pistol Permit is Denied to Negro Boycott Leader
Friday, Feb. 3	Negro Woman Withdraws Action on Segregation
Saturday, Feb. 4	Negro Leader Fails to Get Pistol Permit
Tuesday, Feb. 7	Meeting is Set on Bus Boycott
Wednesday, Feb. 8	Group to Study Possibility of Ending Boycott of Buses
Wednesday, Feb. 8	Men of Montgomery' Urge Solution to Boycott
Wednesday, Feb. 8	1-A Status May Be Given Negro Lawyer
Wednesday, Feb. 8	Negro Attorney Classified 1-A
Wednesday, Feb. 8	Negro Board Holds Session
Thursday, Feb. 9	Negro Leader Denies Saying End of Boycott to be Aired

Saturday, Feb. 11	Throngs Pack Coliseum for Eastland's Address
Monday, Feb. 13	Grand Jurors Told to Probe Legality of Bus Boycott
Tuesday, Feb. 14	Local Boycott Being Studied by Grand Jury
Wednesday, Feb. 15	Boycott Penalties Explained by Judge
Wednesday, Feb. 15	King says Boycott Part of Revolt by Oppressed
Wednesday, Feb. 15	Gun Permit Denied King
Wednesday, Feb. 15	Indictments Anticipated by Bus Boycott Leader
Wednesday, Feb. 15	Circuit Judge Cites Possible Penalty for Conviction on Anti-Boycott Laws
Saturday, Feb. 18	Negro Freed After Charge in Car Pool
Saturday, Feb. 18	Negro Attorney Arrested for Unlawful Practice
Sunday, Feb. 19	Boycott Attorney Indicted by Jury
Sunday, Feb. 19	Boycott Issues Being Aired by Grand Jury
Monday, Feb. 20	More Indictment Loom in Bus Boycott Here
Monday, Feb. 20	Meeting is Held on Bus Boycott
Tuesday, Feb. 21	Grand Jury Nears End of Probe into Montgomery Bus Boycott
Tuesday, Feb. 21	Boycott Leaders Reject Compromise Proposals
Tuesday, Feb. 21	No More Meeting, City Officials Say
Wednesday, Feb. 22	37 Held in Mass Arrests on Boycott Indictments
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Deputies Beginning Roundup for 115 Charged in Boycott
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Grand Jury's Text Hits City Bus Lines Boycott
Wednesday, Feb. 22	1-A Draft Status of Gray is Upheld
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Suit Dismissal Asked by City
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Mayor Blocks Future Talks About Boycott
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Boycott Illegal Under Alabama Law
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Text of Jury's Report on Bus Boycott Probe
Thursday, Feb. 23	Court Upholds Parks Verdict
Thursday, Feb. 23	Rev. King and 88 Others Booked on Boycott Writs
Thursday, Feb. 23	75 Nabbed by Deputies on Boycott Indictment
Thursday, Feb. 23	Speed Marks Means Arrests of Boycotters (Speed)
Thursday, Feb. 23	Negro Lawmaker Asks Protection for All Indicted in Bus Boycott
Thursday, Feb. 23	Negro Minister One of Pair Voting to Halt Boycott
Thursday, Feb. 23	Pilgrimage Day Set by Negroes
Thursday, Feb. 23	Boycott Aids Explain Stand
Friday, Feb. 24	89 Enter Not Guilty Pleas to Bus Boycott Indictment
Friday, Feb. 24	Grand Jury Praised by Englehardt
Friday, Feb. 24	Negro Throngs Jam Rally on Even of Arraignment for Defendants
Friday, Feb. 24	Boycotters Plan Passive Battle (Boycott)
Friday, Feb. 24	Indicted Negroes Plod from Court into Church
Friday, Feb. 24	FBI Secures Boycott List
Friday, Feb. 24	Englehardt Praises Indictment Action
Friday, Feb. 24	Leaders in Bus Boycott Pledge to Carry on 'Passive" Protest
Saturday, Feb. 25	89 Answer Not Guilty at Bus Boycott Hearing
Saturday, Feb. 25	Boycott Indictments Likened to 'Soviets'
Sunday, Feb. 26.	Deliverance Day Protest Aimed at Boycott Arrests
Monday, Feb. 27	Negro Ministers Assert Segregation on Way Out
Monday, Feb. 27	Gray's Trial Set for Friday
Monday, Feb.27	Local Negro Pastor Speaks in North Carolina
Monday, Feb. 27	Segregation Can't Last, Negro Ministers Say

Tuesday, Feb. 28	Gray's Trial Slated Friday
Tuesday, Feb. 28	Negro Clerics Issue Call for Continued Resistance
Tuesday, Feb. 28	Negro Ask Non-Jury Trials
Wednesday, Feb. 29	Citizens Council Backs Bus Boycott Indictments
Thursday, March 1	Boycott Defendants Undecided on Trials
Thursday, March 1	Boycott Court Procedure to be Determined Today
Thursday, March 1	Negro Leader Fined in 'Walk-Day' Mishap
Friday, March 2	Text of Demurrer Seeking to Overthrow Boycott Law
Friday, March 2	Negro Who Urged Boycott Draws Fine on Driving
Friday, March 2	Longshoremen Protests Mass Boycott Arrests
Saturday, March 3	State Drops Action Against Gray
Sunday, March 4	Protestant Ministers Pray for Boycott
Sunday, March 4	Dixie Looks for Answers to Heal Racial Strife
Monday, March 5	Negro Lawmakers says He May Resign from Post
Wednesday, March 7	Negro Reporter Labeled Imposter by Correspondent
Wednesday, March 7	Negro Reporter Called Imposter
Thursday, March 8	12 Sunday Runs of Buses Halted
Thursday, March 8	Negro Reporter Called Imposter by 2 Newspapers
Friday, March 9	Bus Company Wins Approval for Big Sunday Service Cut
Friday, March 9	Boycott Experts from North Plan Full Report for Public
Monday, March 12	Negro Minister Set for Boycott Fast
Wednesday, March 14	Rep. Powell Hints Boycott May Spread
Thursday, March 15	Clanton Preacher Arrested in Boycott
Thursday, March 15	City Cooperates in Bus Parleys
Friday, March 16	Another Minister Linked to Boycott
Friday, March 16	Mayor Replies on Boycott
Saturday, March 17	Boycott Trials Start Monday
Sunday, March 18	Reporter Here for Boycott Trials Says Movement Confuses French
Sunday, March 18	Five Lawyers Ready Defense of Boycotters
Monday, March 19	Anti-Boycott Act Valid, Ruling by Judge Carter
Tuesday, March 20	Trial Opens Today for 93 Boycotters
Tuesday, March 20	Negro Congressman Attending Trial Here; Raps Segregation
Tuesday, March 20	Testimony Involves Funds of Negro Group
Tuesday, March 20	Score of Newsmen Flock to Boycott Trials
Tuesday, March 20	Bus Boycott Trials Here Get Wide Coverage
Wednesday, March 21	Boycotters Draw New Orleans Aid
Wednesday, March 21	Judge Overrules Defense Motion to Acquit King in Boycott Trial
Thursday, March 22	King Denies Encouraging Negroes to Boycott Buses
Thursday, March 22	Records of Association Reveal Thousands Spent to Support Bus Boycott
Thursday, March 22	Judges Named to Air Attack on Race Laws
Thursday, March 22	Socialist Leader Covering Boycott Trials
Friday, March 23	State Heading Toward Close in King Case
Saturday, March 24	Defense Uses 28 Witnesses in King Trial
Sunday, March 25	President Gets Question on Montgomery Trials
Monday, March 26	Court Fines King $500 on Boycott Law Charge
Monday, March 26	Rev. King Trial Tips Mark for Coverage, Court Records
Wednesday, March 28	Council Head Outlines Plans for King Fund
Thursday, March 29	Negro Cleric Arrested on Misconduct Charge

Tuesday, April 2	King Speaks at Big Rally in Brooklyn
Tuesday, April 2	Patterson Motion Asks Court to Dismiss Suit
Wednesday, April 4	Day of Prayer Being Marked Today
Thursday, April 5	Scattered U.S. Points Observe Day of Prayer
Friday, April 20	Bus Official Says Boycott Regrettable
Monday, April 23	City Approves Bus Line Cut
Tuesday, April 24	Hearing Scheduled May 1 on Anti-Segregation Case
Wednesday, April 25	PSC Members File Answer in Race Suit
Wednesday, April 25	Gray Asserts Bus Boycott to Continue
Thursday, April 26	City Lines Drivers Ordered to Halt Segregated Seating
Saturday, April 28	Negroes Will Continue Boycott of City Lines
Wednesday, May 2	Confusion Clouds Busline Dispute
Thursday, May 3	Negros Vote to Continue Boycott
Friday, May 4	City Officials, Bus Firm Fail to Settle Rift
Tuesday, May 8	No Future Conferences Set Between City, Bus Officials
Thursday, May 10	City Turns to State Courts to Head Off Bus Integration
Friday, May 11	Court to Air Plea by City in Bus Hassle
Saturday, May 12	Judge Jones Delays Ruling on Race Laws
Thursday, May 17	Judge Panel to Hear Segregation Challenge Here
Wednesday, May 23	Judge Orders Bus Lines to Abandon Integration
Friday, May 25	Segregation Suit Being Aired Here by 3-Judge Panel
Monday, May 28	U.S. Judges Deliberate Bus Segregation Fate
Tuesday, May 29	Giant Civil Rights Program Scheduled in Gotham May 24
Wednesday, May 30	Englehardt Asks TV Network for Time to Answer NAACP
Friday, June 1	Boycott Probers Hurt in Mishap with Boycotters
Saturday, June 2	Bunche Lauds Boycott, Raps Nationwide Racial Problem
Wednesday, June 6	Decision Indicated in Case Brought on Bus Segregation
Wednesday, June 6	NAACP Will Obey Order Banning State Activities
Tuesday, June 12	PSC Will Appeal Segregation Rule on State Carriers
Wednesday, June 13	Boycott Official Hits Funds Use
Saturday, June 16	Bus Boycott Group Denies Charge of Misusing Funds
Tuesday, June 19	Negro Cleric to tell "facts" on funds use
Tuesday, June 19	Negro Minister Discharged After Blast at MIA Leaders
Thursday, June 21	Negro Cleric Retracts Charges of Bus Boycott Fund Misuse
Friday, June 22	Attorney Today Begin Fight for Delaying Bus Integration
Saturday, June 23	Injunction Lifts Race Ban on Transportation Systems
Tuesday, June 26	City to Air Appeal Plan on Bus Writ
Wednesday, June 27	City to Ask for Reversal in Bus Case
Friday, June 29	Boycott Stand Bring Award for Ministers
Friday, June 29	State, Negroes Weigh Action on Bus Ruling
Tuesday, July 3	State Joins City in Appealing Order for Bus Desegregation
Tuesday, July 10	NAACP Records Sought in Patterson Petition
Wednesday, July 11	Gray to Undergo Draft Physical
Thursday, July 12	Early Decision Promised on Records Baring Case
Thursday, July 12	Fred Gray Given Pre-Draft Exam
Sunday, July 15	Birmingham Negroes Request First Come Policy on Buses-Birmingham
Saturday, July 21	Hearing Rescheduled in NAACP Injunction
Tuesday, August 7	City Bus Operators Faced with Insecurity Due to Lack of Patrons Caused by Boycott

Wednesday, September 5	Boycott Lawyer Receives Draft Call
Sunday, September 16	White Clergy Reject Talk by Rev. King
Monday, September 17	Graetz Denies Bomb Hoax
Monday, September 17	Two Arrested in Bombing
Wednesday, September 19	Gray Draft Fix Hinted
Wednesday, September 19	Graetz Says Boycotters Denied Auto Insurance
Thursday, September 20	Question Mark Shrouds Draft of Fred Gray
Saturday, September 22	Three Quit Posts with Draft Board Over Gray Ruling
Monday, October 1	Barbour Board Resigns Over Gray Deferment
Wednesday, October 3	Boycott Driver Gets $75 Fine
Thursday, October 4	Folsom Blasts 'Politics" for Gray's Draft Delay
Saturday, October 13	Bullock Halts Draft, Two More Officials Quiet
Wednesday, October 17	Congressional Probe Asked on State Draft
Thursday, October 18	Fred Gray Charges Police Tried to Intimidate Him
Saturday, October 20	Boycott Driver Gets $50 fine for violation
Saturday, October 27	Housewives Get Threats to Stop 'Hauling" Maids
Saturday, October 27	Draft Order Will Bypass Four Boards
Tuesday, October 30	City Plans legal Action Against Negro Car Pools
Tuesday, October 30	MIA Reportedly Halting Operation of Car Pools
Wednesday, October 31	Illegally halting inductions
Wednesday, November 3	Negro Leaders Indicate Car Pool Will Continue
Wednesday, November 7	Legal Crackdown Shapes Up as Negroes Resume Car Pool
Friday, November 9	Negroes Hold "Pep Rallies" at Churches
Wednesday, November 14	City Attorney Told to Seek Car Pool Halt
Wednesday, November 14	City Requests Car Pool Halt
Wednesday, November 14	Negro Boycott Driver Fined in Near Crash
Wednesday, November 14	Supreme Court Outlaws Bus Segregation; White Spokesman Warn of Possible Violence
Wednesday, November 14	Boycotters Instructed to End Car Pool
Wednesday, November 14	Bus Boycott May be Ended at MIA Meet
Thursday, November 15	Hill Deplores Bus Decision by U.S. Court
Thursday, November 15	Federal Court Asked to Bar Car Pool Ban
Thursday, November 15	Southern Leaders Will Await Separate Tests of Bus Laws
Thursday, November 15	Events Which Led to Court Decision
Thursday, November 15	Boycotters Vote to Board Buses Again; End of Protests Awaits Formal Notice of Edict
Friday, November 16	Negroes Lose Injunction Bid: Federal Judge Denies Petition for Intervention
Friday, November 16	Bus Official Awaits Order from Court
Friday, November 16	Negroes Plan Seminar on Non-Violence Move
Saturday, November 17	State Bus Officials Foresee No Change in Seating Riders
Sunday, November 18	City Vows City Battle in Desegregation by Legal Methods
Sunday, November 18	Mayor Denies Meeting Related to Bus Issue
Tuesday, November 20	Sellers Denies Parley Held on White Boycott
Tuesday, November 20	Bus Segregation Question Top Subject for Citizens
Tuesday, November 20	Lawmakers Study Means of Ducking Court's Bus Desegregation Ruling
Wednesday, November 21	Negroes Seek to Speed up Write Delivery
Wednesday, November 21	Supreme Court Refuses to Speed up Bus Writ Negroes Lose Plea Asking Quick Action

Thursday, November 22	Brownell Calls Conference to Enforce Desegregation
Sunday, November 25	Negroes Deny Court Ruling Disappointing
Friday, November 30	City to Ask Rehearing on Integration Decision: State PSC May Request Write Review
Monday, December 3	Judge Says Court Ruling Affects Only Montgomery
Tuesday, December 4	Two Boards Resume Induction After Shutdown in Gray Case
Tuesday, December 4	Klan Stages Ritual Here
Tuesday, December 4	Segregated Seating Laws Prohibit Boycott Rally Plans for Coliseum
Wednesday, December 5	Anniversary Celebration of Boycott Starts Today
Thursday, December 6	Alabama Asks Court Review on Bus Edict
Thursday, December 6	King Labels 'Hoodlum' Ban to Racial Harmony
Friday, December 7	MIA Cash Register Rings as Negroes Give for Cause
Saturday, December 8	Negro leaders Hail Boycott as Wedge in Racial Barrier
Sunday, December 9	Clarification of Bus Ruling Asked by City
Tuesday, December 11	Novelist Says Non-Violence, Boycott Aided Negro Cause
Tuesday, December 11	Speakers at Negro meet Blast White Leadership
Wednesday, December 12	People Volunteer Many Ways to Bypass Bus Integration
Friday, December 14	Brownell Asks Carriers to Enforce Integration: Help Offered Transit Lines to Keep Law
Saturday, December 15	Court Delays Taking Steps on City Plea
Sunday, December 16	Autos of White Minister, Negroes Splashed with Acid
Monday, December 17	Brownell Plan Draws Attack by Englehardt
Tuesday, December 18	26th Birthday Placing Gray Beyond Draft
Wednesday, December 19	School' Prepares Negroes for Mass Return to Buses
Thursday, December 20	U.S. Supreme Court May Act on 2 Bus Petitions Monday
Thursday, December 20	City, State Await Ruling on Bus Plea
Thursday, December 20	City Bows to Court Decision, Pledges Fight for Segregation: Negroes Given Warning for Avoiding Bloodshed
Thursday, December 20	Driver, Passengers Silent on Ruling by Supreme Court
Thursday, December 20	Desegregation Order Put in Mail by Supreme Court
Friday, December 21	Station Wagon Pick-up for Whites Passengers Studied as Bypass to Desegregated Buses
Friday, December 21	Court to Air Boycott Fine of Rev. King
Friday, December 21	Whites Told to Consider Bus Boycott
Friday, December 21	MIA Asks Police Protection in Expected 'Danger Zones'
Friday, December 21	Bus Desegregation Order Served Here: Negroes Vote to Call Off Boycott Acquiescence Keynote to Officials Reaction
Friday, December 21	Jones Blasts High Tribunal; Lifts Bus Ban
Friday, December 21	City Lines Post Integration Writ
Friday, December 21	Appeal Case of Rev. King Rescheduled
Friday, December 21	Calm Broken on Delivery of Bus Writ

VITA

Born and raised in Pontiac, Michigan, Felicia McGhee-Hilt graduated from the University of Michigan in 1992 with a Bachelors Degree in Communication. Ms. McGhee-Hilt has more than 13 years of broadcasting experience. Upon graduation, she worked as a news anchor at WQBH Radio in Detroit, Michigan. Less than a year later, she accepted a job as a news reporter at the ABC Affiliate in Montgomery, Alabama. She worked as a morning news anchor at WTOK, the ABC affiliate in Meridian, Mississippi and eventually made her way to WTVC, the ABC affiliate in Chattanooga, where she was a reporter/fill-in anchor. She is currently the host and moderator of WTCI's *Tennessee Insider*, the only local primetime public affairs show in Chattanooga. She has also hosted special reports, such as "*One-on-One with the Candidates*," 30-minute specials featuring political hopefuls. In addition, she provided political commentary for "*The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*" during the 2008 presidential primary.

In addition to her on-air work, Ms. McGhee-Hilt is a lecturer at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She received her Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga. Ms. McGhee-Hilt has been teaching in the Communication Department for nine years. Her research interests include framing and civil rights issues.