



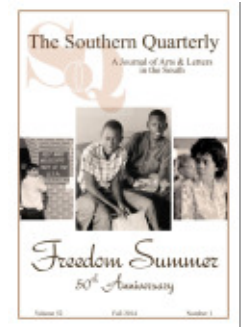
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Images from Freedom Summer, 1964

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Images from Freedom Summer, 1964

MICHAEL EDMONDS and STEPHEN HALLER

Freedom Summer was extensively photographed by the news media, embedded professionals such as Herbert Randall and Danny Lyon, many participants, and bystanders or other observers. In this photo essay, we have collected images from the vast civil rights collections at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) and the Wisconsin Historical Society. They range from poignant to powerful, offering a condensed visual story. These glimpses of Freedom Summer coincided in part with the *Freedom Summer 1964 50th Anniversary Conference* held at USM in Hattiesburg, Mississippi (June 19-21, 2014), the *Mississippi Freedom Summer 50th Anniversary Conference* in Jackson, Mississippi (June 25-29, 2014), and the *50 Years After Freedom Summer* conference at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (October 12-14, 2014).

The Wisconsin Historical Society owns more than ten thousand photographs related to the civil rights movement. They include a filmstrip assembled by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) early in 1965 from images taken during Freedom Summer to build support for their attempt to unseat Mississippi's segregationist congressional delegation. The filmstrip contains more than seventy images; eight are shown here. Although most of the photographers are not identified, the filmstrip shows how key leaders and participants tried to employ images from Freedom Summer much as we might use a PowerPoint presentation today. Notes for an accompanying script verify that these images were meant to have a persuasive, rather than simply documentary, purpose.

The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) holds more than one hundred collections related to civil rights, continues to actively collect in this area, and regularly adds images to its online digital civil rights

collections. Among these is the work of photographer Herbert Randall, who accompanied volunteers and documented activities in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, through the lens of his camera. This selection of eight of his photographs (i.e., chosen from over eight hundred now available online in his USM digital collection) shows volunteers gathering, registering new voters, participating in MFDP meetings, and teaching young people in the Freedom Schools.

Three visual exhibits were prepared by the authors for the Freedom Summer 1964 50th Anniversary Conference held at USM, each derived from their respective collections. A digital exhibit using twenty-two images from the Herbert Randall Freedom Summer Photographs Collection ran as a three-minute continuous loop on large screen monitors at the conference venue. Another forty-three images (mostly from the same collection) were on physical display in the lobby of Cook Library at USM. The exhibit showed books, photographs, and items that related to Freedom Summer from initial training for volunteers in Oxford, Ohio, through Mississippi activities that included voter registration, election activities, and especially the Freedom Schools. The WHS exhibit called *Risking Everything*, also at the conference, displayed forty photographs from the MFDP filmstrip and other collections. It told the story of Freedom Summer through facsimiles of images, manuscripts, and ephemera. Archivists and historians are both blessed and challenged with a multitude of visual images taken at the time of these historic events. The challenge is to select compelling but informative images to represent a number of activities and people, especially for general audiences beyond the more intensive researcher.

Wisconsin Historical Society
and
The University of Southern Mississippi



Police officers in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, march in formation toward demonstrators on Hattiesburg Freedom Day, 22 January 1964. Photograph by Danny Lyon, courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97709.



Society Hill Missionary Baptist Church, near McComb, Mississippi, after it was bombed on 20 September 1964. It had been used as a Freedom School. The Pike County sheriff told Rev. Taylor, pastor of the bombed church, "You niggers is just bombing one another." Photograph courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97712.



A young woman goes limp as she is dragged off by police on Greenwood Freedom Day, 16 July 1964. Greenwood, Mississippi. More than one hundred people were arrested that day. Photograph by Ted Polubbaum, courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97870. © Newseum. Used by permission.



This image epitomizes the day-to-day work of canvassing for voters during Freedom Summer. Neither the specific location in Mississippi nor the photographer are identified in MFDP records. Photograph courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), 97880.



Dozens of applicants waited hours for a chance to register to vote on Greenwood Freedom Day, 16 July 1964. Greenwood, Mississippi. Photograph by Ted Polumbaum, courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97868. © Newseum. Used by permission.



Children play a circle game outside their freedom school while the teacher looks on, 1964. Mississippi. Photographer unidentified in MFDP records. Photograph courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97888.



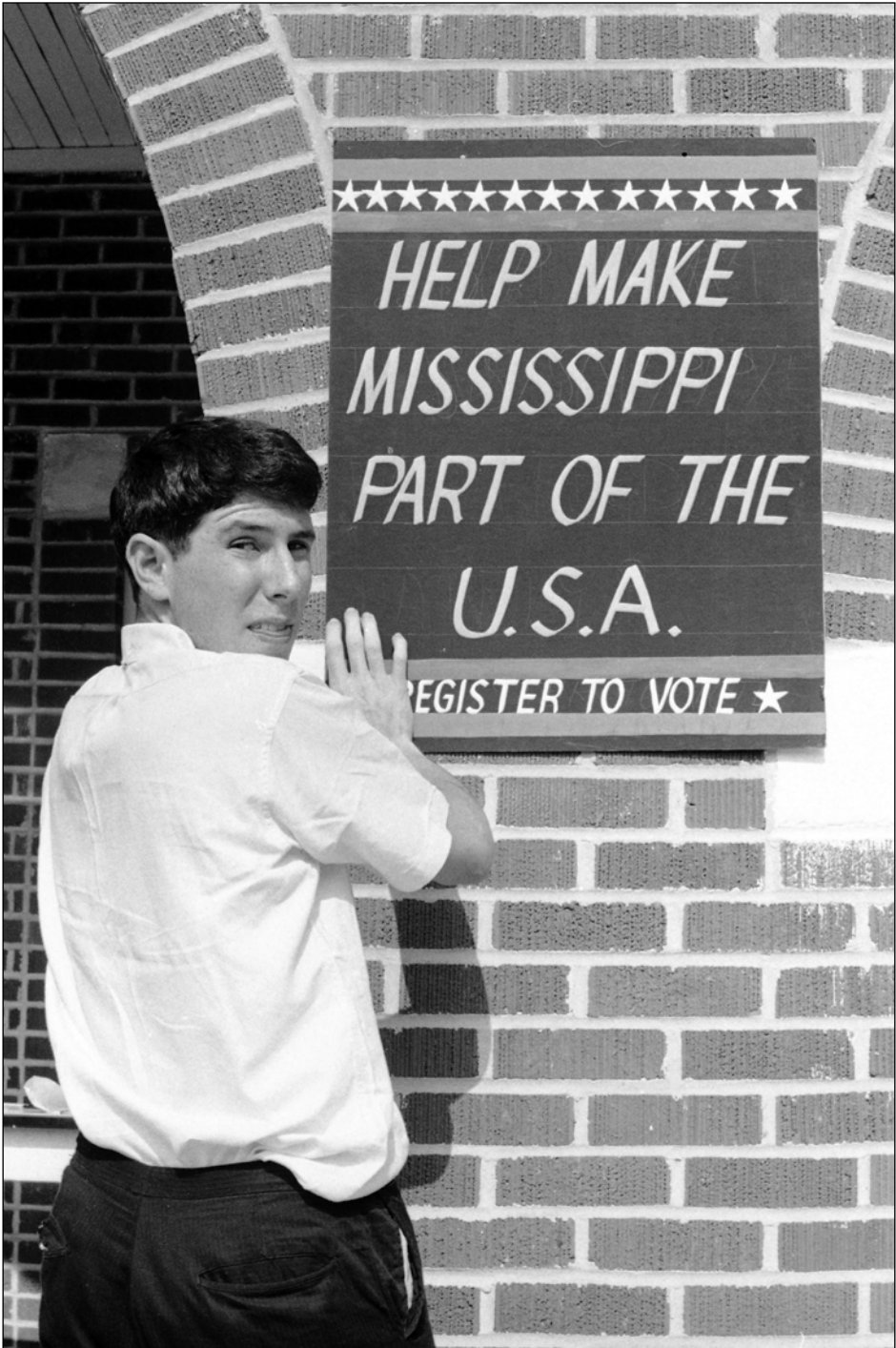
MFDP statewide meeting, 6 August 1964. Jackson, Mississippi. Delegates were being chosen to travel to Atlantic City, New Jersey, for the challenge to the Democratic National Convention. Photograph courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 97924.



Demonstrators on the boardwalk outside the convention hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey, carry posters of murdered civil rights workers James Chaney (left) and Andrew Goodman (right), 1964. They are demanding that the convention seat MFDP delegates rather than those from the white-supremacist Democratic Party of Mississippi. Photograph courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, WI), ID 98097.



Freedom Summer volunteers and local people singing at a fish fry hosted by local civil rights leader Vernon Dahmer on 4 July 1964, on his property in the Kelly Settlement north of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The event marked the beginning of Freedom Summer activities in Hattiesburg. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-162.



Freedom Summer volunteer Jacob Blum hanging a voter registration sign on the front of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, prior to a mass meeting during Freedom Summer, 1964. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-556.



Three Freedom Summer volunteers explaining voter registration procedures to a resident of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, during the summer of 1964. Dick Kelly stands on the far right; the others in the photograph are unidentified. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-531.



Campaign headquarters of Victoria Jackson Gray (Adams), the 1964 United States Senate candidate for the MFDP, on Mobile Street in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The COFO-Hattiesburg Project headquarters was in the same building. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-408.



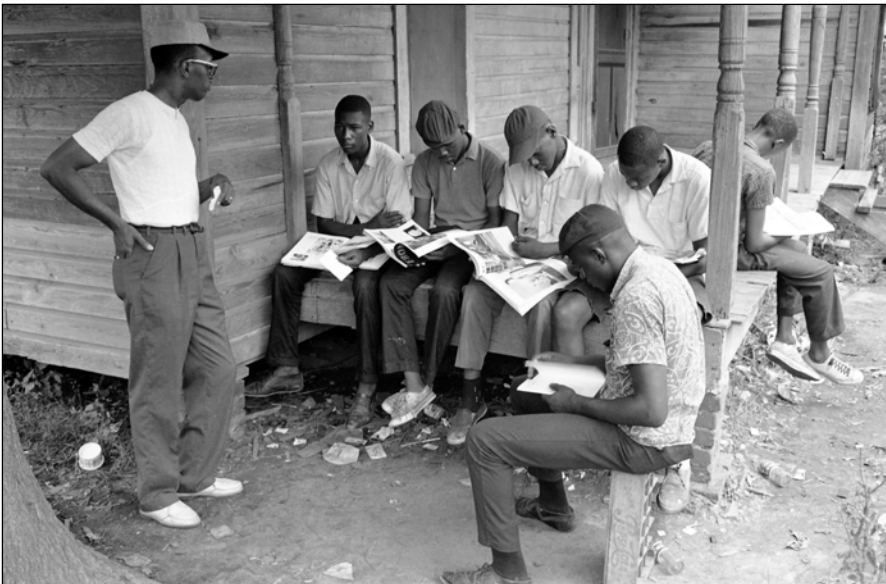
Local residents, freedom school students, and volunteers celebrate the opening of the Palmers Crossing Community Center in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, on 18 July 1964. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-249.



Volunteer Carolyn Reese teaching a Freedom School class at an African-American church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, during Freedom Summer 1964. Reese and her husband, Arthur, served as co-coordinators of the COFO-Hattiesburg Freedom Schools. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-087.



Folksinger Julius Lester plays the guitar in the midst of Freedom School students outside of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, during Freedom Summer, 1964. Lester was one of the many folksingers who visited the Freedom Summer projects. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-206.



Volunteer Arthur Reese, a school principal from Detroit, Michigan, and co-coordinator of the Freedom Schools in the Hattiesburg project, with group of Freedom School students on Gravel Line Street in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, 1964. They are reading issues of *Ebony* magazine, which they probably had never seen before. Used by permission of the photographer, Herbert Randall. Photograph courtesy of McCain Library & Archives, The University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS), M351-484.

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FOR FURTHER READING

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