

overSEAS 2022

This thesis was submitted by its author to the School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. It was found to be among the best theses submitted in 2022, therefore it was decorated with the School's Outstanding Thesis Award. As such it is published in the form it was submitted in **overSEAS 2022** (<http://seas.elte.hu/overseas/2022.html>)

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

K. Szabó Márta Inez

Anglisztika alapszak

Amerikanisztika szakirány

2022

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

*Az afroamerikai nők és a polgárjogokért folytatott
küzdelem: a nemek és a társadalmi osztály kérdése a
polgárjogi mozgalom idején*

*African American Women and the Struggle for Civil
Rights: Gender and Class During the Civil Rights
Movement*

Témavezető:

Dr. Cseh Dániel
tanársegéd

Készítette:

K. Szabó Márta Inez
Anglisztika alapszak
Amerikanisztika szakirány

2022

A HKR 346. § ad 76. § (4) c) pontja értelmében:

„... A szakdolgozathoz csatolni kell egy nyilatkozatot arról, hogy a munka a hallgató saját szellemi terméke...”

NYILATKOZAT

Alulírott **K. Szabó Márta Inez s.k.** ezennel kijelentem és aláírással megerősítem, hogy az ELTE BTK **anglisztika**..... alapképzés/alapszak **amerikanisztika** szakirányán írt jelen szakdolgozatom saját szellemi termékem, melyet korábban más szakon még nem nyújtottam be szakdolgozatként/záródolgozatként és amelybe mások munkáját (könyv, tanulmány, kézirat, internetes forrás, személyes közlés stb.) idézőjel és pontos hivatkozások nélkül nem építettem be.

Budapest, 2022. 04. 06.

K. Szabó Márta Inez s. k.

aláírás

Abstract

The role of African American women in the Civil Rights Movement has been largely overlooked: scholarship tends to focus more on Black men's participation or white activists. When Black women are considered, however, they are often dichotomized into leaders and followers. This thesis proposes an intermediary layer of bridge leaders, which consisted largely of Black female activists. Furthermore, the reasons why bridge leadership was the highest rank African American women could achieve are identified as the constraints of race, gender, and class. By applying these three factors to the bridge leadership concept within an intersectional framework, the lives of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer are used as case studies to illustrate the intersectional nature of Black women's position within civil rights activism.

Keywords: Civil Rights Movement, intersectionality, race, gender, class, bridge leadership, Fannie Lou Hamer, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Chapter 1: The triple constraints of race, gender, and class: intersectional theory as a framework	2
3. Chapter 2: Bridge leaders and the intersections of race, gender, and class.....	6
4. Chapter 3: Exemplifying bridge leadership: Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer	13
4.1 Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and the Montgomery Bus Boycott	14
4.2 Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party	18
5. Conclusion.....	22
Appendix	24
Works Cited.....	28

1. Introduction

Black women have often been referred to as the “backbone” of the American Civil Rights Movement (Urban 187; Gyant 635), continuing their simultaneous and previous role of being the “backbone” of African American churches (Barnett 170). While there is no exact data available on the number of Black female participants in the movement, many assume that it was largely men who engaged in civil rights activism. However, this is incorrect, as they often comprised the bulk of some of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) or Black Panther Party branches (Gyant 630; Greene 1-2). Even though this image is often employed to highlight the contributions of Black female activists, it also serves to illustrate a problem faced by these women: being relegated to “the back”, that is, to invisible and subordinate roles (Grant qtd. in Barnett 170). This notion has been created by the fact that it was largely men who held titles and belonged to the visible leadership of civil rights organizations (D. K. King 55; Barnett 169; Urban 188). Research has also concentrated on male leaders and treated Black women as people who refrained from that role (Barnett 164-165). While it was not only men who were in higher positions, they did tend to dominate institutions such as the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) (Urban 185, 188; Greene 5; Williams 89; Robnett, “African American Women” 1669-1670, 1673). Those African American women who did manage to stand out, if only for a short time, were lowered to the level of symbols or were acknowledged merely because of their relation to men in power (Greene 2). Still, those women who exhibited characteristics of a leader and could not enter the ranks of formal leadership, were not fully relegated to the role of mere followers. Instead, Robnett argues that a separate layer of so-called bridge leaders emerged, who provided a link between formal organizations and grassroots activists, and were predominantly women (“African American Women” 1664).

However, gender was not the only factor that led to the exclusion of Black female activists from formal leadership positions. This paper uses the framework of intersectionality to argue that Black women's race, gender, as well as their class status all contributed to them becoming bridge leaders. In the first chapter the theoretical background concerning the interaction of these three types of oppressions is established and intersectionality is introduced. The second chapter details the way these interlocking systems led to the formation of majority-women intermediary leadership roles. The third chapter serves to illustrate the problem through the lives of two female civil rights figures. Subchapter 1 deals with Jo Ann Robinson and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, while Subchapter 2 outlines Fannie Lou Hamer's participation in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. By highlighting two women who were active in different decades of the civil rights era, one can avoid depicting African American women as a monolithic group, while also accounting for the nuances of the aforementioned three factors in their lives.

2. The triple constraints of race, gender, and class: intersectional theory as a framework

The history of intersectionality as a field and its connection to Black women needs to be examined before applying its principles to their activism within the Civil Rights Movement. Moreover, such a review also helps establish the connections between race, gender, and class. This chapter aims to first discuss the failings of applying only one of these factors during analysis; then, a selection of Black feminist scholars, whose works are important when trying to link the three elements are considered; lastly, intersectionality and its limitations are explained.

When examining Black female participants' positions, some scholars have utilized a so-called monistic approach, which uses only one lens (such as race, gender, class, or other

viewpoints) for analysis. This method also claims “that important social relations can all be reduced to the economy, state, culture, or gender” (Albert et. al. qtd. in D. K. King 51). Such reductive reasoning has led to Black women being excluded both from Black Studies and Women’s Studies, as their experiences were left unexamined in both fields, resulting in the “[a]ll of the women are white, all of the Blacks are men” problem (Bell-Scott et. al. qtd. in Barnett et. al. 12). This line of thinking also seemingly ignores the fact that individuals may have multiple marginalizing identities (Bright et. al. 60).

Nonetheless, African American women have realized their special status as a group situated at the intersection of various oppressing identities, rejecting the monistic method. Julia Cooper is credited as the founder of Black feminism: in her 1892 book titled *Voice from the South*, she writes: “[t]he colored woman of to-day occupies, one may say, a unique position in this country. [...] She is confronted by a woman question and a race problem [...]” (Cooper 112). She was among the first scholars to point out the “double enslavement” phenomenon: not only are Black women oppressed on account of their race, suffering from the consequences of slavery, but they are also victims because of their gender (D. K. King 42). An example for this is the sexual abuse female Black slaves experienced (47).

Similarly to Cooper’s thinking, activist and lawyer Pauli Murray used the term “Jane Crow”, highlighting the combination of racism and sexism (Greene 4). She points out the simultaneity of these systems and shows the logical progression of this paradigm, mentioning the financial consequences for African American women as well: “within this framework of ‘male supremacy’ as well as ‘white supremacy,’ the Negro woman finds herself at the bottom of the economic and social scale” (Murray qtd. in Azaransky 156). Frances Beale’s concept of “double jeopardy” from 1972 also denotes the joint oppression caused by race and gender. Like Murray, she realized as well that this combination had material consequences as well, but she too omitted it from her analysis (D. K. King 46). Up until this point, the crucial factor

of class was still underemphasized or largely missing. Nevertheless, this oversight was corrected by people such as Ella Baker, who, as the coauthor of *The Bronx Slave Market*, already names the “triple stigmas of gender, race, and poverty” (Greene 5). Similarly, Barnett uses the term “triple constraints”, naming class as the third one (163).

By the 1980s, Black feminist scholars already adopted the three previously mentioned concepts in their analysis (Barnett et. al. 11-12). King used the term “multiple jeopardy”, adding class inequality to the already acknowledged two marginalizing factors (D. K. King 47). She critiqued previous approaches that only dealt with systems of oppression as “additive”, and specifically chose the word “multiple” to call attention to their intertwining nature as well as to the fact that they exacerbate one another (47). Thus, the previously mentioned example of slavery should be augmented to include the lens of class subjugation as well as that of race and gender to get a more accurate picture of the lives of enslaved Black women. As such, in addition to slave labor, their reproductive systems were also exploited and this further supplemented the economy built upon slavery (D. K. King 47).

The previously introduced theoretical background helped form the theory of intersectionality and aided in its analysis. Introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality “describe[s] discrimination that occurs at the intersection of race and sex (as well as class, on the basis of sexuality, and so on)” (Azaransky 158). Since then, intersectionality has become a field of its own and widened its focus. A more recent, 2008 definition states that intersectionality is “[t]he interaction [among] categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power” (Davis qtd. in Gopaldas 91). In other words, intersectionality recognizes that a single individual can be a member of more than one demographic group, and the different identities interact with each other and should not be considered on their own (Bright et. al. 60, 62). An example by Cole is African American

women's wages, which tend to be impacted adversely, not just because they are Black and not just because they are women, but because they are Black women (qtd. in Bright et. al. 63).

This way the field addresses the qualms raised about monism at the beginning of the chapter. Furthermore, intersectionality posits that the singular layers of oppression should not be evaluated as one being more important than the other (Barnett et. al. 15, 16). Lastly, it has to be noted that the listed systems all create an upper class and an underclass. This also means that people will both experience benefits and suffer marginalization to different extents and in different contexts as a result of their complex identities, sometimes by basing their struggle on the very identities that otherwise limit them (Barnett et. al. 15; Lutz 41-42). This point will be of importance in the next chapter when discussing race affecting Black female activists during the Civil Rights Movement.

One pitfall of intersectionality is the “‘et cetera’ problem” (Cho et. al. 787). Since there are numerous ways to categorize people based on their identities, it becomes difficult to limit one's scope of research. As illustrated above, using a single factor does not yield an adequate analysis, while the incorporation of more than three lenses can prove to be too challenging (Gopaldas 92). Since research dealing with Black women in the Civil Rights Movement highlights race, gender, and class, this thesis is also restricted to these three factors (Barnett 163, 173; D. K. King 49; Barnett et. al. 8-9; Robnett, “African American Women” 1663). All in all, utilizing intersectionality's principles serves to help this paper examine African American women's distinctive positions, since race, gender, and class can explain the reasons why Black female participants could thrive in some roles, but not in others. Furthermore, when it comes to the case studies of Jo Ann Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer, intersectionality can support a more particular analysis of these three factors through specific examples. The following discussion will connect intersectionality to the wider issue of Black women's situation during the Civil Rights Movement.

3. Bridge leaders and the intersections of race, gender, and class

Firstly, to be able to analyze African American female activists' role through intersectionality, the place they occupied within different organizations has to be defined. Upon examining participants in the Civil Rights Movement, research has divided activists into either followers or leaders (Robnett, "African American Women" 1664). Robnett, however, proposes a more complex view of the movement and includes another level, which she called bridge leaders. According to her analysis, bridge leaders were activists who used multiple tactics, including providing information, convincing individuals to join the movement, even those not initially targeted, and uniting peoples' beliefs with those of the movement (Robnett, *How Long?* 19, 13). Through these activities, they could become a "bridge" between local communities and the larger movement on the national scale, as well as links aimed at fostering change at the individual and institutional levels (Robnett, *How Long?* 19). Robnett also contrasts bridge leaders with formal leaders, who held titles in nation-wide operating organizations, while also interacting with journalists and strategizing. They were often in executive positions as well (Robnett, *How Long?* 18). She also argues that Black female participants, who wanted to become leaders, were often forced to work on the "intermediate level" of bridge leadership (Robnett, "African American Women" 1661, 1667).

Nevertheless, even though her analysis of bridge leaders is sound, at the core of it stands the sole lens of gender (Robnett, "African American Women" 1667). While she does acknowledge other categories of oppression that influenced Black women's participation, such as race, class, or culture (Robnett, *How Long?* 19; "African American Women" 1666, 1667), she states that it was "gender" that "operated as a construct of exclusion" and that "women were excluded as formal leaders because of their sex" (Robnett, *How Long?* 19-20). Still, as intersectionality has shown, the effects of race, gender, and class cannot be considered separately. To extend Robnett's analysis, in addition to gender, Chapter 2 also

examines the influence of race and class on Black women's bridge leadership in the Civil Rights Movement, drawing a connection between the established intersectional framework and the demographic group in question.

When examining the literature on African American women's position as influenced by their gender in the Civil Rights Movement, scholars usually draw two conclusions. The first stance highlights the sexism within the movement as a major factor in limiting women's ability to become formal leaders. Meanwhile, a second approach claims that Black female participants did not feel oppressed as parts of the intermediary leadership, and assisted Black men in becoming formal leaders. To analyze the first assertion, the paper *Women in the Movement* can provide a starting point. It was authored by Mary King and Casey Hayden in 1964 and it details their experience in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), providing numerous examples of sexism within the organization (Urban 187-88). This included structural limitations: when African American activists held office jobs, they were often clerks of their male supervisors (Urban 188). Robnett corroborates this: if women did receive a title within an organization, it usually meant secretarial work instead of a leading position ("African American Women" 1675).

M. King and Hayden were trying to address the belief embedded in the movement that women should not lead. Instead of leaders, they were characterized as the "mamas of the movement", especially those residing in the rural South (Greene 6; Gyant 634). Robnett quotes Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s preface to the book *Echo in My Soul* to illustrate the prevalence of this idea: "Echo in My Soul epitomizes the continuous struggle of the Southern Negro woman to realize her role as a mother *while fulfilling her forced position* [emphasis added] as community teacher, intuitive fighter for human rights and leader of her unlettered and disillusioned people" (M. L. King qtd. in Robnett, "African American Women" 1672). To the Reverend King, women's leadership is a temporary status, added to her motherhood as

more of a burden than an empowering role. Because of the prevalence of this view, many female African Americans turned to “women’s work” instead of formal leadership, which was one of the types of roles that Black women could inhabit, since it conformed to societal expectations (Irons 699). Providing food and shelter to civil rights activists constituted this “activist mothering” role, which was also something local bridge leaders practiced (Urban 187; Robnett, *How Long?* 148). If women did defy expectations and attempted to assume traditional leadership, they were demeaned as “emasculating matriarchs” (D. K. King 55).

Lastly, the influence of the church on the movement also meant restricted roles for women. Providing a space for the community to safely congregate, churches presented themselves as a natural place for recruitment and communication with the locals. As Elliott describes it, “[t]he civil rights movement was a church-based movement” (597). Therefore, it is not surprising that the constraints that were imposed on women in the church would also translate to the wider movement itself. Ministers were almost exclusively men, while women were confined to intermediary roles, such as in committees concerning welfare and membership (Robnett, “African American Women” 1669). Furthermore, they were also barred from entering the clergy (Barnett 170). These same roles would also appear in civil rights organizations: formal leadership was largely made up of men, while women often worked on projects such as enlisting activists and collecting donations. This structure was most evident in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which was primarily led by ministers and operated according to a strict hierarchy (Robnett, “African American Women” 1670). Ella Baker, for example, while working for the SCLC, realized that on account her gender and age, she had no chance to be a formal leader (Baker qtd. in Lerner 351).

On the other hand, some researchers point out that a lot of women did not find the conditions in these organizations oppressing. Robnett in particular, basing her claims upon

multiple interviews with Black female activists, shows that women felt empowered and did not consider male leaders to be a problem (Robnett, *How Long?* 36-37). She also goes on to add that what was acceptable for women did change, even if not completely (39). Drawing upon interviews with civil rights activists, Gyant also notes that not all African American female participants opposed the gendered hierarchy (645-46). Even in the church, a lot of Black women did not perceive their own roles as restricted, and instead encouraged Black men to assume leadership positions. Robnett quotes Prathia Hall Wynn, a minister and ex-leader of SNCC:

[...] I am now, in my own research, looking at the religious women, the church women, and of course there is no place where women are more subordinated than the church. But some of that, I think, is also related to what I am about to say about SNCC, and that is that, because of the ways in which Black men have been demeaned, because there were no places in which Black men could give leadership with dignity except those places which were controlled by the Black community, and that would be the Black church and the Black movement organization... so in that sense, I think that there has been an attitude of support for Black male leadership by very, very strong, assertive Black women [...]. (qtd. in Robnett, *How Long?* 42-43)

This can be explained in multiple ways. Firstly, civil rights organizations operated in the context of American society of the 1950s and 1960s, which still prescribed strict gender roles for both men and women (Barnett 175). It was this division that was also reflected in the gender roles within Black spaces as well. Thus, the sexism that was present in various organizations is partially due to the fact that they too, were products of their time, as Urban reckons with regards to SNCC (189). Furthermore, optics was quite important to formal leadership, since they represented the movement on the national level. Black men had better chances at being accepted by the white leadership simply because they were men and usually

already held leadership positions, such as being the heads of congregations (Barnett 173; Robnett, *How Long?*). This was another reason why women did not reach the level of formal leaders within the Civil Rights Movement. However, some women, who did not want to endanger men's rank within the movement, willingly supported this decision (Barnett 175). For these women, race seemed to matter more than gender, as the movement operated within the context of white society (Robnett, *How Long?* 40, 43).

Moreover, Black women also recognized that Black men did not have a lot of opportunities to lead either. Since they were also excluded from white society, it was only in their own communities and churches that they were offered leadership positions (Hall Wynn qtd. in Robnett, *How Long?* 42). Additionally, the main focus of the Civil Rights Movement was on ending segregation and securing the right to vote, not on gender issues. At the time, raising the issue of representation within leadership was not prevalent (Robnett, "African American Women" 1669). Identifying problems within the movement provided a base for the emerging second wave of feminism that was to follow (Urban 185). Consequently, gender as a factor did not play a major role within the movement in the eyes of some of its participants.

Both the approach focusing on sexism within the movement and Black female activists' tolerance of it can be reconciled through intersectionality, which reminds researchers not to fall into the trap of accepting one view held by members of a demographical group as one that is shared by all: Black women are not a "monolith" (Robnett, "African American Women" 1663). However, while some academics do mention other factors in passing, they tend to prioritize gender and thereby apply a monistic approach to the detriment of the race and especially the class factors. This is inadequate: for example, Burnham counters the view that centers on gender by pointing out that, when it comes to the causes of poverty for Black women, race and class are more meaningful than gender (qtd. in D. K. King 62-63). Moreover, addressing economic inequality was one of the goals of the

movement: in 1963, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom also gave this concern a central position (Williams 197-98). Even Dr. King had planned to direct his attention to advocating for the economically disadvantaged, by coordinating the Poor People's March, similarly to its predecessor (Schiller 13). Therefore, the following part of the chapter is dedicated to examining the ways class and race intersect with gender, leading to African American women becoming bridge leaders instead of joining the ranks of formal leadership.

One of the reasons why Black female activists could not become formal leaders is rooted in their peculiar financial situation. While on the surface it may seem like this is solely informed by the constraint of class, race and gender also played a role. Firstly, Black women, unlike white women, often had to work: Black men alone could not support their household from their low salaries (D. K. King 65). As a result, African American women also joined the labor force, mostly in the "domestic and nonhousehold service and agricultural" sectors (D. K. King 65). As their families depended on their salaries, Black women's time and resources became limited. This hindered their participation, especially in leadership roles. Meanwhile, the literature implies that for ministers, who already enjoyed leadership positions, becoming civil rights leaders was a logical extension of their professions, facilitating the transition between the two more easily.

The positions of professional bridge leaders were not financially secure either. The official positions that Black female participants did manage to get in civil rights organizations were often underpaid: Ella Baker, for example, received a lower wage than her male successor (Barnett 176). When it comes to middle class Black women, even in their relatively higher position, when compared to their working class counterparts, they were still not considered equal by society in places like Mississippi (Irons 702). Furthermore, Barnett also adds that "economic vulnerability cut across socioeconomic class lines", meaning that neither middle class, nor lower class African American women enjoyed job security (174). Due to

their involvement in the movement, multiple women were either warned not to participate or lost their jobs (Barnett 174; Williams 210). These threats deterred Black female activists from occupying high-profile positions, including leadership roles (Gyant 633). For lower-class Black women, this factor was exacerbated by the fact that the professions in which they worked, such as the domestic sphere, often had no unions (Krochmal 940). Compared to the position of ministers, who did not depend on the mercy of white employers, only on their parish, African American women's employment seems precarious at best (Barnett 174). Even race influenced Black female participants' role as bridge leaders. For example, Black women and white women occupied different positions not only in the wider society, but also within the Civil Rights Movement, with Black female participants able to exercise leadership more often than white women (D. K. King 53). African American activists also had more opportunities to do field work because of the local cultural rules of the South, while white women were assigned more clerical duties (Robnett, *How Long?* 129).

Furthermore, early in the movement there was an agreement that white people's tasks included reaching out to their own communities, while Black people would be involved in coordinating efforts within Black communities (Evans 54). In the middle of the 1960s, particularly around the time of the Freedom Summer of 1964, the arrival of northern white students compelled SNCC, CORE, and SCLC to let them operate in the rural South as well (Evans 69). However, the reason why this was not accepted immediately became clear. White women sometimes failed to grasp the danger they posed to Black men in the rural South (Robnett, *How Long?* 127). Moreover, the sight of a white woman and a Black man next to one another could more easily reveal their identities as civil rights workers, putting their lives at greater risk. If white people were careless or disrespectful about local customs, they could even unintentionally sabotage the efforts of bridge leaders. All of the above reasons led to Black female activists being local bridge leaders, usually working in the field, while white

women were usually what Robnett defines “mainstream bridge leaders”, establishing connections with white associations (*How Long?* 21).

Intersectionality also helps understand the complexities behind this arrangement. As discussed, different sections of identity can have both advantages and disadvantages in particular contexts (Lutz 41-42). Therefore, in the context of a primarily Black movement, when examining the effects of race, African American female participants did seem to have certain privileges in the case of leadership positions and being able to work in the field more often. Still, white women understood this, and often thought of female Black leaders as sources of inspiration (Evans 73-75). In summary, while gender did have a great impact on making Black women turn towards bridge leadership as a viable alternative to formal leadership, to which they largely lacked access, class, and even race also influenced the gendered leadership structure of the Civil Rights Movement. The next chapter aims to illustrate these general trends in practice through the case studies of two female Black bridge leaders: Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer.

4. Exemplifying bridge leadership: Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer

As it has been explained, African American women were not a homogenous group. Therefore, when looking for a representation of female bridge leadership during the civil rights era, it is beneficial to examine more activists within the group. The present analysis is limited to Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, president of the Women’s Political Council, and her involvement in the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956; and Fannie Lou Hamer, vice president of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party, which was active in the 1960s. Starting with Robinson in Subchapter 1 and ending with Hamer in Subchapter 2, this chapter examines the previously enumerated factors that led to these women becoming bridge leaders

while applying the principles of intersectionality: their class origins and the limitations imposed upon them because of their gender. Furthermore, since they were active at different times within the larger movement, they also demonstrate a shift within the movement: the first decade, the 1950s, were mostly led by middle class Black people, while the advent of SNCC brought lower class leaders as well (Bloom 212-13).

4.1 Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

According to Bloom, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was a crucial point in the Civil Rights Movement, comparing its significance to *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision in 1954 (185). However, the origins of the boycott, that it was initially spread by the Women's Political Council (WPC), are often omitted (Robinson, ix). Its president from 1950, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, is identified by Robnett as one of the many bridge leaders of the Civil Rights Movement (*How Long?* 60). Her relatively obscure status can serve to highlight the role of female leadership at the time. The WPC was established in 1946 by Mrs. Mary Fair Burks, and was composed entirely of Black women, most of whom had professional careers linked to Alabama State College (Robinson 22). Aiming to uplift Black people, both in education and in voting registration, they managed to organize three different chapters within Montgomery, with altogether about 300 women (23-24). Moreover, the WPC deliberately had no male members, and as a result, it was a space in which African American women could potentially become leaders (Robnett, *How Long?* 56).

One of these women was Mrs. Robinson, who became part of the organization in 1949, after she started teaching at the Alabama State College and following Mrs. Burks as the president of the WPC in 1950 (Robinson 9-10, 24). Under her leadership, one of the focuses of the WPC became the unjust treatment of Black people on the buses of Montgomery. The

WPC received a large number of reports connected to public transportation: in 1953 thirty such cases were reported to them, while between 1954 and 1955 the number of these reports started to rise (Robinson 22, 25). These cases included the arrest of two children, the murder of a Black man by the police, and the jailing of a Black woman, among others (Robinson 20-22). Additionally, as Mrs. Burks notes, the primary subjects of this treatment were women, since men often had cars, while ministers did not have to regularly use the bus services (qtd. in Robnett, *How Long?* 61). Robinson herself had a similar experience: when she absentmindedly sat down in the white section of a bus, the driver shouted at her, and she, shaken from the humiliation, fled the vehicle (Robinson 15-17). Mrs. Robinson began talks with the Mayor of Montgomery, which proved to be a harmonious relationship that lasted for years, up until the boycott itself (Robinson 25). However, as there was no progress in the treatment of Black people on the city buses, Robinson proposed a solution: a boycott could put pressure on the transportation system (Robinson 27). This is important to note, since it shows that Robinson and the WPC leadership had been planning the boycott before Rosa Parks' refusal to concede her seat.

When Parks did commit her historic act, Robinson did two things that are hallmarks of bridge leadership. Firstly, when the news reached her, she outlined a flyer calling for the boycott, and with the help of two of her students and the mimeograph at the college, they managed to print 35,000 during the night on Thursday, December 1, 1955 (Robinson 45; Parks 65). Afterwards, they also planned ways to disseminate these, with the aid of the WPC members (Robinson 46). These were crucial for communication, as large proportions of the Black population had to be informed for the boycott to be successful (Robnett, *How Long?* 59). Furthermore, it also put pressure on other formal leaders to act: as Robinson explains in her memoir, Black people were already frustrated, and Parks' arrest only amplified their feelings, but they still lacked leaders (Robinson 44). The WPC did not have the support

needed to administer a large-scale boycott, but it could act as a voice of the community and convince the ministers of the local churches to act. This was successful, and the boycott was largely taken over by the newly formed Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) on Friday, December 2 (Robinson 61). Robnett argues that this mediation between the locals and the ministers is what made Jo Ann Robinson a bridge leader: by transmitting the community's needs to the ministers, she and the WPC also rallied them as formal leaders to the cause ("African American Women" 1677-78).

Nevertheless, Robinson's further role was influenced by her gender and her class. She did hold titled positions, such as the aforementioned WPC presidency, as well as being on the Executive Board of the Montgomery Improvement Association, along with most of its committees, such as the Mayor's Committee, which was responsible for mediating between the city officials and the boycotters (Robinson 65, 74). Nonetheless, gender as a factor is already present. Robinson was unique in that after the first negotiation, she was the only woman present at the meetings with the mayor (Robinson 80, 87). She even met the Governor of Alabama, who provoked her about participating and being the only woman in the delegation, which otherwise consisted of ministers only (Robinson 129). A further role that Robinson had was being the editor of the MIA monthly newsletter. These, however, first had to be authorized by Martin Luther King before printing (Robnett, *How Long?* 65).

The above examples illustrate that men generally did not view women as equals in leadership. Robinson and the WPC realized this, and instead of trying to lead the boycott by themselves, they sought to convince the established formal leaders, the ministers, to assume this role instead (Robnett, *How Long?* 59). Because of this, the WPC accepted its task as mediators between the community's wants and their formal leaders. Furthermore, class also influenced Robinson's position as a bridge leader. Born as the twelfth child to Black farmers in Georgia, she was the only one of the siblings to receive a college-level education

(Robinson 9). Being a college professor, however, did positively impact her leadership role. Her status was safer than that of Black female domestics, who, as unskilled laborer, could earn between \$2 per week for maids to \$25-30 per week for cooks, the average salary being about \$15 (Robinson 107). As the result of the boycott, Black women also risked losing their jobs: at one point the Mayor even asked white employers to break their solidarity with their Black domestics, since many of them gave additional money for the cabs that took them to work instead of commuting by bus (Robinson 119-20). Some of the domestics did get laid off as a consequence of this (Robinson 120). In comparison to these African American women, Robinson's middle class status makes her an exception that had both positive and negative impact on her participation in the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Robinson, on the one hand, had a favorable position, as she had a secure, professional career as an English professor at the local college. She even says so in her memoir: "Yes, I had been less afraid than most women, because I knew I could get teaching positions elsewhere" (Robinson 173). She could even afford not being financially compensated for her work in the MIA (Robinson 74). After being questioned by the college's president about her involvement in the boycott, she managed to convince him of its legitimacy, and even earned his monetary support (Robinson 48-50). On the other hand, she was also asked by the principal "to be careful, to work behind the scenes, not to involve the college, and not to neglect [her] responsibilities as a member of the faculty of Alabama State College" (Robinson 50). Therefore, her professional background also limited her leadership role, forcing her to be another "backbone" of the movement, a bridge leader.

In summary, Robinson was a prime example of both bridge leadership and women's activism during the 1950s' Civil Rights Movement, which is characterized by Bloom as spearheaded by the Black middle class, while the lower classes provided a strong foundation (Bloom 233). During the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the activists established a race-based

unity, which would be continued by organizations such as SNCC, turning its attention towards the plight of the African American community in the Deep South (Bloom 193, 234). This shift was also marked by the appearance of new leaders, such as Fannie Lou Hamer.

4.2 Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party

One of the reasons why SNCC started to focus on Southern states, like Mississippi, was their belief in horizontal organization as opposed to the strictly hierarchical composition of the NAACP or the SCLC. Ella Baker, who played a significant role in founding the organization, was of the belief that in order to transform one's life, people have to be willing to become leaders themselves (Elliott 8). As such, SNCC began to look for these potential leaders. On August 27, 1962, at a rally in Ruleville, Mississippi, they found one in the figure of Fannie Lou Hamer (Myers Asch 176).

Born to sharecropper parents as their twentieth child, Hamer grew up to be a sharecropper as well, moving to the plantation of W. D. Marlow after her marriage (Williams 245; Lee 18). By the time she came into contact with SNCC, she was already a local leader. She was a timekeeper on Marlow's plantation, meaning that she was the one measuring the amount of cotton the sharecroppers picked. However, she discovered that the weights provided to her were not accurate, and would use her own to provide the little economic justice she could (Lee 25; Myers Asch 59). At the end of a workday, other sharecroppers would often meet at the Hamers' house, who were also helped by Hamer through her mediation between sharecroppers and plantation owners (Lee 37). Her connections made her invaluable not only to the SNCC, but also to the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), which combined the efforts of SNCC, CORE, the NAACP, and SCLC (Williams 228).

By 1964, as field secretary, she provided the link between Black Mississippians and civil rights organizations: her home became the heart for distribution of food and clothing donated by northern supporters (Lee 37, 61-63). She was in touch with her community's needs and represented them over the aims of the national goals of organizations (Lee 63). Due to these qualities, Robnett identifies her as a bridge leader ("African American Women" 1685). Nevertheless, Hamer also held titled positions. She was a founding member of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), the political party extension of SNCC and COFO, which aspired to challenge the all-white Democrat candidates of the 1964 presidential elections from Mississippi, as well as the segregated nature of the delegation (Rouse 24, 27; Myers Asch 210). At the same time it also aimed to teach the newly-registered Black population how to use their constitutional right. Not only did Hamer become one of the MFDP's 68 delegates, she was also elected to be the party's vice-chairperson. In August of 1964, the MFDP went to the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City to get seated instead of the white Mississippi delegation (Lee 85). Even though Hamer remained active after the convention, this essay focuses on Hamer's involvement in Atlantic City because of two reasons: her speech in front of the credentials committee (see Appendix 1 for Hamer's speech), and her participation in the negotiations.

Firstly, her speech exemplifies her intersectional identity, while drawing on her background as a bridge leader as inspiration (Cox 142). Intending to convince the committee, she talked about her first, failed attempt to register to vote. After being one of the first people to volunteer (showcasing her leadership potential), eighteen Black people from Ruleville traveled to Indianola to get registered (Lee 25). Upon returning, Hamer was kicked off the plantation and had to leave her family behind (Hamer 43). With time, the family lost its home, as it was tied to the plantation (Myers Asch 178). The event illustrates the intersection of race and class: Hamer, a Black person attempting to exercise her right to vote, was immediately

met with economic reprisals. This would not be the last time: her husband continuously got laid off, one time her adoptive daughter did not get hired, and Hamer's SNCC wage was quite inconsistent (Lee 33, 67; Myers Asch 178-79, 204). Due to her poor background, Hamer was different from other leaders in that she always viewed class and poverty as issues just as important as dismantling segregation (Lee 63). This attitude often made her antagonistic towards ministers, foreshadowing disagreements to occur at the National Convention (Myers Asch 61).

The other experience Hamer highlights in her testimony is the time she spent in jail in Winona (Hamer 44). When traveling home by bus after attending voter registration workshop, she and a group of civil rights workers were imprisoned for violating segregation laws at a local restaurant (Lee 46). Hamer was beaten so badly during her confinement that she was blinded on one eye and her kidneys were injured so seriously that upon release she had to be taken to a hospital in Atlanta for treatment. Additionally, her limp, a remnant of polio from her childhood, worsened (Lee 53, 57). Moreover, she was beaten by both jailed Black men, who were made to do the white police officers' bidding, and by the white officers themselves (Lee 51). Hamer's account also reveals that the Black men hesitated: they only started obeying the white officers after multiple orders, which implies that they did not want to harm her, it was the white men who forced them. Viewing the event through an intersectional lens reveals not only the racialized, but also the gendered nature of the violence: as Hamer describes in her speech: "[o]ne white man – my dress had worked up high – he walked over and pulled my dress, I pulled my dress down and he pulled my dress back up" (Hamer 45). Hamer herself acknowledged the sexual connotations of the event, noting that the officers appeared to experience pleasure (Lee 59). This was not Hamer's first encounter with cruelty inflicted upon Black women: previously, she was also given a hysterectomy without her

knowledge or consent and continued to discuss the “sterilization of poor women in the South” (Lee 21).

While Hamer’s statement was shown on television, President Lyndon B. Johnson scrambled to hold a conference so as to take away Hamer’s airtime, but her speech was broadcast again during primetime, drawing immense positive response in the form of telegrams (Lee 89-90). Despite her success, she would be ignored during discussions and was even prohibited from attending them after her commitment to refuse to compromise (Lee 95; Robnett, *How Long?* 158). Ultimately, Johnson’s staff offered to seat only two middle class men, Aaron Henry and Ed King (Myers Asch 212-13). Hamer objected: two middle class men, one of whom was white, cannot be adequate representatives for a party whose membership was mostly comprised of poor Black people women (Robnett, *How Long?* 151, 159; Cox 150). Still, on account of their gender and class, President Johnson’s team preferred these two candidates: African American women’s intersectional identity once again barred them from leadership positions. Hamer was also disrespected both by NAACP executive director Roy Wilkins, who said that the female delegates ought to “listen to their leaders”, and also by President Johnson, who wanted to “silence ‘that illiterate woman’” (Robnett, “African American Women” 1687; Myers Asch 212). Seen as an illegitimate leader due to her race, gender, and class by both the mainstream white leadership and also the national Black leaders, Hamer remained at the level of bridge leaders. Hamer commented that “everybody that would compromise in five minutes is the people with a real good education”, highlighting the disagreement between the middle class leaders and the largely uneducated base of the MFDP (Hamer qtd. in Myers Asch 213). She still communicated what her community and other delegates wanted: no compromise. Eventually, the delegates voted, and the MFDP left without getting seated on the convention floor (Cox 150; Rouse 27).

5. Conclusion

Even though the Civil Rights Movement has been thoroughly studied, scholarship usually concentrates either on male leaders or on the participation of white activists (Greene 2). When Black women are the subjects of research, the focus tends to be on their gendered experience within the leader-follower division (Barnett 162-63; Robnett, “African American Women” 1663-64). The aim of this thesis was to prove the connection between the bridge leadership and Black female activists’ participation in the Civil Rights Movement by employing the theory of intersectionality and the examining the experiences of Jo Ann Robinson and Fannie Lou Hamer. Through the review of intersectionality in the first chapter, it was found that multiple lenses have to be considered, such as race, gender, and class, in order to properly account for African American women’s experiences. In the second chapter these factors were applied broadly to Black female participants in the Civil Rights Movement, examining their special position as bridge leaders, the link between the grassroots activists and the structured nation-wide organizations such as the NAACP, CORE, SCLC, or SNCC. This was usually also the highest point in the organizational hierarchy that could be attained by Black female activists, due to a number of factors, not just gender. The results indicate that, aside from the complex relationship between Black women and men, the economic situation of Black families and female activists’ inequality of income also prevented African American women from ascending in the hierarchy of the civil rights groups. Race, however, could provide advantages over white female civil rights workers.

The last chapter explored civil rights activism of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson during the Montgomery Bus Boycott between 1955 and 1956, and Fannie Lou Hamer’s role within the political project of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1964. While both Robinson and Hamer occupied titled positions, they still remained bridge leaders, restricted to communicating between the community and formal leadership, due to the factors of race,

gender, and class. The literature also suggests that middle class African American women, like Jo Ann Robinson, even though they were in a better financial situation, still remained at the level of bridge leaders, just like their lower class counterparts. As studied in the thesis, Black women's roles were constrained due to the race, gender, and class factors. By applying the theory of intersectionality, it is evident that Black female activists predominantly occupied bridge leadership positions.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Fannie Lou Hamer's Testimony Before the Credentials Committee at the Democratic National Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, August 22, 1964 (Hamer 43-45).

Mr. Chairman, and to the Credentials Committee, my name is Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, and I live at 626 East Lafayette Street, Ruleville, Mississippi, Sunflower County, the home of Senator James O. Eastland and Senator Stennis.

It was the thirty-first of August in 1962, that eighteen of us traveled twenty-six miles to the county courthouse in Indianola to try to register to become first-class citizens. We was met in Indianola by policemen, highway patrolmen, and they only allowed two of us in to take the literacy test at the time. After we had taken this test and started back to Ruleville, we was held up by the city police and the state highway patrolmen and carried back to Indianola where the bus driver was charged that day with driving a bus the wrong color.

After we paid the fine among us, we continued on to Ruleville, and Reverend Jeff Sunny carried me four miles in the rural area where I had worked as a timekeeper and sharecropper for eighteen years. I was met there by my children, who told me that the plantation owner was angry because I had gone down, tried to register. After they told me, my husband came, and said the plantation owner was raising Cain because I had tried to register. And before he quit talking the plantation owner came and said, "Fannie Lou, do you know—did Pap tell you what I said?"

And I said, "Yes, sir."

He said, "Well, I mean that." Said, "If you don't go down and withdraw your registration, you will have to leave." Said, "Then if you go down and withdraw, then you still might have to go because we are not ready for that in Mississippi."

And I addressed him and told him and said, "I didn't try to register for you. I tried to register for myself." I had to leave that same night.

On the tenth of September 1962, sixteen bullets was fired into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tucker for me. That same night two girls was shot in Ruleville, Mississippi. Also, Mr. Joe McDonald's house was shot in.

And June the ninth, 1963, I had attended a voter registration workshop— was returning back to Mississippi. Ten of us was traveling by the Continental Trailways bus. When we got to Winona, Mississippi, which is in Montgomery County, four of the people got off to use the washroom, and two of the people— to use the restaurant—two of the people wanted to use the washroom. The four people that had gone in to use the restaurant was ordered out. During this time I was on the bus. But when I looked through the window and saw they had rushed out, I got off of the bus to see what had happened. And one of the ladies said, "It was a state highway patrolman and a chief of police ordered us out."

I got back on the bus and one of the persons had used the washroom got back on the bus, too. As soon as I was seated on the bus, I saw when they began to get the five people in a highway patrolman's car. I stepped off of the bus to see what was happening and somebody screamed from the car that the five workers was in and said, "Get that one there." And when I went to get in the car, when the man told me I was under arrest, he kicked me.

I was carried to the county jail and put in the booking room. They left some of the people in the booking room and began to place us in cells. I was placed in a cell with a young woman called Miss Euvester Simpson. After I was placed in the cell, I began to hear sounds of licks and screams. I could hear the sounds of licks and horrible screams. And I could hear somebody say, "Can you say, 'yes, sir,' nigger? Can you say 'yes, sir'?" And they would say other horrible names.

She would say, "Yes, I can say 'yes, sir.'"

“So, well, say it.”

She said, “I don’t know you well enough.” They beat her, I don’t know how long. And after a while she began to pray, and asked God to have mercy on those people.

And it wasn’t too long before three white men came to my cell. One of these men was a state highway patrolman and he asked me where I was from. And I told him Ruleville and he said, “We are going to check this.” And they left my cell and it wasn’t too long before they came back. He said, “You’s from Ruleville all right,” and he used a curse word. And he said, “We are going to make you wish you was dead.”

I was carried out of that cell into another cell where they had two Negro prisoners. The state highway patrolmen ordered the first Negro to take the blackjack. The first Negro prisoner ordered me, by orders from the state highway patrolman, for me to lay down on a bunk bed on my face.

And I laid on my face and the first Negro began to beat. And I was beat by the first Negro until he was exhausted. I was holding my hands behind me at that time on my left side, because I suffered from polio when I was six years old. After the first Negro had beat until he was exhausted, the state highway patrolman ordered the second Negro to take the blackjack. The second Negro began to beat and I began to work my feet, and the state highway patrolman ordered the first Negro had beat me to sit on my feet—to keep me from working my feet. I began to scream and one white man got up and began to beat me in my head and tell me to hush. One white man—my dress had worked up high—he walked over and pulled my dress, I pulled my dress down and he pulled my dress back up.

I was in jail when Medgar Evers was murdered.

All of this is on account of we want to register, to become first-class citizens. And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off of

the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings, in America? Thank you.

Works Cited

- Azaransky, Sarah. "Jane Crow: Pauli Murray's Intersections and Antidiscrimination Law." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2013, pp. 155–60, <https://doi.org/10.2979/jfemistudreli.29.1.155>. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Barnett, Bernice McNair, et al. "New Directions in Race, Gender & Class Studies: African American Experiences." *Race, Gender & Class*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1999, pp. 7-28.
- Barnett, Bernice McNair. "Invisible Southern Black Women Leaders in the Civil Rights Movement: The Triple Constraints of Gender, Race, and Class." *Gender and Society*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1993, pp. 162–82, www.jstor.org/stable/189576. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Bloom, Jack M. *Class, Race, and the Civil Rights Movement*. 2nd ed., Indiana University Press, 2019.
- Bright, Liam Kofi, et al. "Causally Interpreting Intersectionality Theory." *Philosophy of Science*, vol. 83, no. 1, 2016, pp. 60–81, www.jstor.org/stable/26551723. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Cho, Sumi, et al. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis." *Signs*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013, pp. 785–810, <https://doi.org/10.1086/669608>. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Cooper, Anna Julia. "The Status of Woman in America." *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper: Including A Voice from the South and Other Important Essays, Papers, and Letters*, edited by Esme Bhan and Charles Lemert, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998, pp. 109-17.
- Cox, Julia. "Never a Wasted Hum: The Freedom Singing of Fannie Lou Hamer." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 3 & 4, 2018, pp. 139–57, www.jstor.org/stable/26511336. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.

- Elliott, Aprele. "Ella Baker: Free Agent in the Civil Rights Movement." *Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 26, no. 5, 1996, pp. 593–603, www.jstor.org/stable/2784885. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Evans, Sara. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement & the New Left*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.
- Gopaldas, Ahir. "Intersectionality 101." *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, vol. 32, 2013, pp. 90–94, www.jstor.org/stable/43305317. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Greene, Christina. "Women in the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements." *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, 2016, pp. 1-18, doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.013.212. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Gyant, LaVerne. "Passing the Torch: African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement." *Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 26, no. 5, 1996, pp. 629–47, www.jstor.org/stable/2784888. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Hamer, Fannie Lou. "Testimony Before the Credentials Committee at the Democratic National Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, August 22, 1964." *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer: To Tell Like It Is*, edited by Maegan Parker Brooks and Davis W. Houck, University Press of Mississippi, 2011, pp. 42-45.
- Irons, Jenny. "The Shaping of Activist Recruitment and Participation: A Study of Women in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement." *Gender and Society*, vol. 12, no. 6, 1998, pp. 692–709, www.jstor.org/stable/190513. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- King, Deborah K. "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology." *Signs*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1988, pp. 42–72, www.jstor.org/stable/3174661. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.

- Krochmal, Max. "An Unmistakably Working-Class Vision: Birmingham's Foot Soldiers and Their Civil Rights Movement." *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 76, no. 4, 2010, pp. 923-60.
- Lee, Chana Kai. *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*. 1st ed., University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Lerner, Gerda. *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History*. Vintage, 1972.
- Lutz, Helma. "Intersectionality as Method." *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1-2, 2015, pp. 39-44, doi.org/10.11116/jdivegendstud.2.1-2.0039. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.
- Myers Asch, Chris. *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2008.
- Parks, Rosa. "'Tired of Giving In': The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott." *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*, edited by Bettye Collier-Thomas and Vincent P. Franklin, New York University Press, 2001, pp. 61-74.
- Robinson, Jo Ann Gibson. *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*, edited by David J. Garrow, The University of Tennessee Press, 1987.
- Robnett, Belinda. "African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization." *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 101, no. 6, 1996, pp. 1661-93.
- . *How Long? How Long? African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Rouse, Jacqueline A. "Examination of Black Female Grass Roots Leaders in Mississippi during the 1960s: Annie Devine, Fannie Lou Hamer and Annie Rankin." *Negro*

History Bulletin, vol. 63, no. 1/4, 2000, pp. 23–30, www.jstor.org/stable/44985762.

Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.

Schiller, Reuel. “Mourning King: The Civil Rights Movement and the Fight for Economic

Justice.” *New Labor Forum*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2018, pp. 12–20,

www.jstor.org/stable/26503620. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.

Urban, Dennis J. “The Women of SNCC: Struggle, Sexism, and the Emergence of Feminist

Consciousness, 1960–66.” *International Social Science Review*, vol. 77, no. 3/4, 2002,

pp. 185–90, www.jstor.org/stable/41887103. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.

Williams, Juan. *Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, 1954–1965*. Viking Penguin, 1987.