

## BACKGROUND INFO ON CIVIL RIGHTS

### Background Info Talking Points

- Activists in Birmingham launch Project "C," for "confrontation." Although the city government is in a state of confusion following a disputed election, the segregationist Commissioner of Public Safety, Bull Connor, takes charge. When Martin Luther King, Jr. is arrested, he writes his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail," which justifies the movement's work. In early May, activists begin recruiting children to march. By the end of the first day, 700 have been arrested. On May 3, 1000 more children show up to peacefully protest; and Commissioner Connor turns high-pressure fire hoses and police dogs on them, creating some of the most indelibly violent images to date. After 5 days, 2500 protesters fill the jails, 2000 of them children.
- In 1963, Commissioner Bull Connor unleashed dogs and high-powered fire hoses on boycott-bound schoolchildren.
- Civil Rights demonstrations took place in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. The water hoses there, at that time, carried 700 pounds pressure, enough to strip the bark off tree.

### Info from news article Birmingham bombing

That Sunday, September 15, inside the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, four young girls had snuck out of Bible class and were talking in the basement ladies room.

They were dressed in white from head to toe because this was the church's annual Youth Day, and they had a special role in the 11 o'clock service. Suddenly, a blast shook the building, and showered everyone inside with debris. The air filled with shouts, then moans, then sirens. Maxine McNair searched desperately for her daughter. She found her father crying in the rubble. "She's dead, baby," he said. "I've got one of her shoes."

Ten-year-old Sarah Collins staggered out of the hole in the outer wall. She was partially blinded and bleeding from her nose and ears. Twenty others had been injured and were taken to the University Hospital. In the ruins of the church basement, the four girls in white were found dead: Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Addie Mae Collins, and Carol Robertson, ages 11 to 14.

Ballad of Birmingham shows emotional toll of civil rights movement

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175900>

### You Tube Video Links

- Video produced by students, won a national documentary award, focuses on the youth during the Civil Rights movement [http://youtu.be/hCxEdi\\_SzoQ](http://youtu.be/hCxEdi_SzoQ)
- Video footage of Civil Rights sit-ins <http://youtu.be/f82cAuXM4IE>
- From Jim Crow to Civil Rights <http://youtu.be/VSmCBvsXyMk>

- Civil Rights Movement through photographs <http://youtu.be/MLoSVxuKtxs>

### Photography Links

- Civil Rights Movement in photographs <http://www.crmvet.org/images/imghome.htm>
- Preparing Young people for peaceful protest <http://life.time.com/history/civil-rights-photos-from-sit-ins-and-protest-training-sessions-1960/#1>
- Images of youth sit-in protests <http://www.crmvet.org/images/imgcoll.htm>
- Youth Protests, Bull Connor and his dogs <http://www.crmvet.org/images/imgbham.htm>

### Audio

- I Have a Dream speech (requires flash plugin)  
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm>