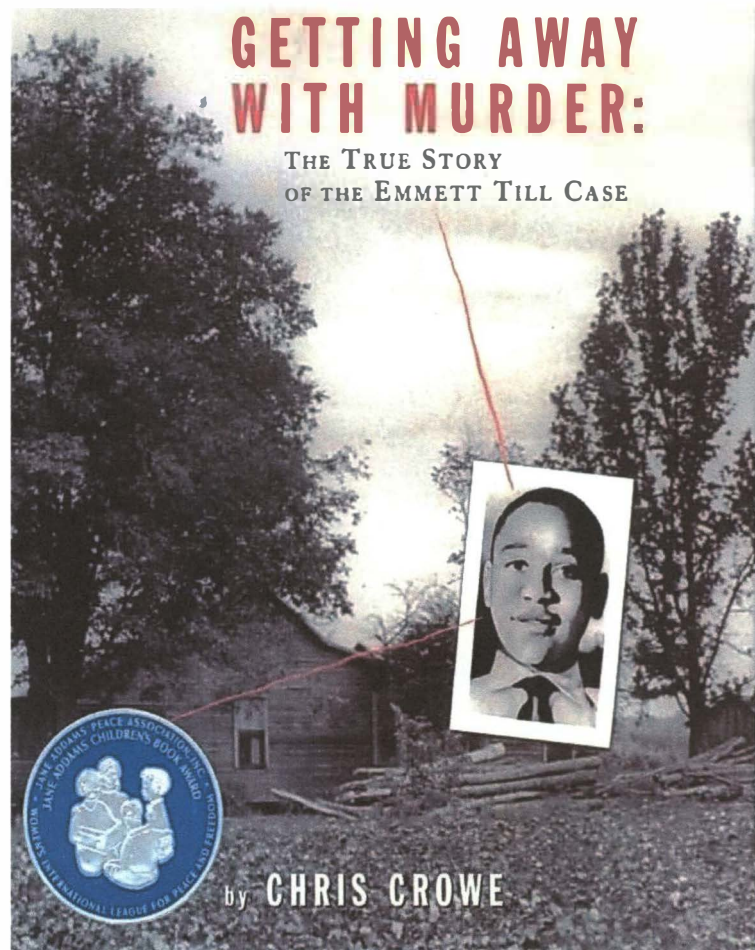
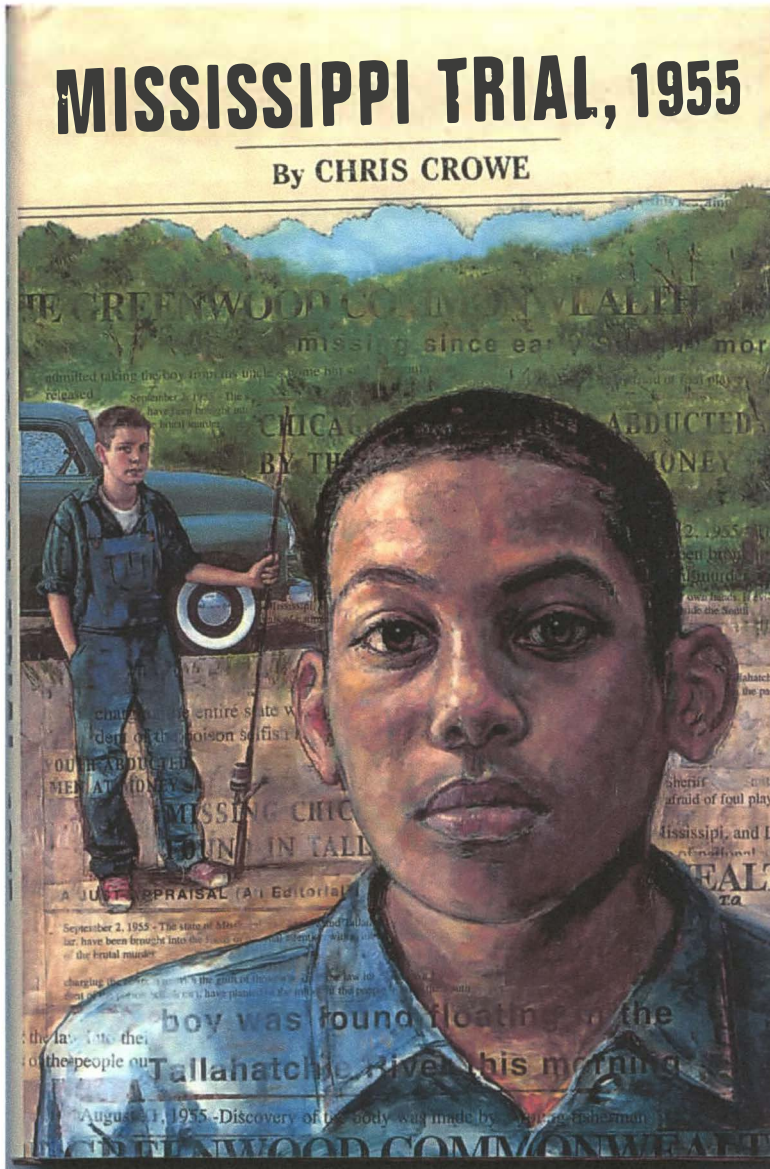


TEACHER SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Property of
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Collaboration ASK
Interactive Video
Conference



<http://chriscrowe.com/>

About Chris Crowe, author of "Mississippi Trial, 1955" and "Getting Away with Murder"

I was born in Danville, Illinois, in 1954, just eleven days after the US Supreme Court announced its decision in the Brown v. Board of Education case and less than a year before a fourteen-year-old boy from Chicago named Emmett Till was murdered in Mississippi.

I had two older brothers, and before my younger brother was born, we had moved to Normal, Illinois. A couple years after he was

born, our family moved to Bloomington, Illinois, and that's where our baby sister, Elizabeth, was born. I attended Holy Trinity Elementary School in Bloomington from kindergarten through third grade, but at the end of third grade, we moved again, this time to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Our family moved regularly after that, from Santa Fe to Las Cruces, New Mexico, then to Carmichael, California, then to Dublin, California, and finally to Tempe, Arizona. I started 8th grade at McKemy Junior High in Tempe, and our family stayed put long enough for me to graduate from McClintock High School, Tempe's second high school, in 1972.

I attended Brigham Young University on a football scholarship, married my high school sweetheart after my freshman year, played in the Fiesta Bowl my junior year (we lost) and graduated with a degree in English and a license to teach high school English. I taught English (and coach football and track) at my high school alma mater, McClintock High School, for 10 years.

While teaching at McClintock, I attended graduate school at Arizona State University, eventually earning a masters and doctoral degrees in English education. My first university job was at Himeji Dokkyo University, in Himeji, Japan. In 1989, I left Japan for a position in the English department at Brigham Young University, Hawaii; and in 1993, I moved to the English department at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.





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Cool Links

Here are some links to resources and other good sites relating to information I've used in writing my books:

Emmett Till Murder - <http://www.emmettillmurder.com>

The Emmett Till Murder Scene - <http://www.bluejeansplace.com>

The Murder of Emmett Till - <http://soundprint.org>

The History of Jim Crow - <http://www.jimcrowhistory.org>

An essay about Emmett Till - <http://www.jimcrowhistory.org>

The PBS documentary about Emmett Till - <http://www.pbs.org>

Another terrific book about the Emmett Till case - <http://www.upress.virginia.edu>

Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary - <http://www.thurgoodmarshall.com/home.htm>

Landmark Supreme Court Cases - <http://www.landmarkcases.org/brown/marshall.html>

Justice for All: The Legacy of Thurgood Marshall - <http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/books/marshall.pdf>

Library of Congress: African American History -
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=African%20American%20History>

Voices of Civil Rights - <http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org/>

Mildred D. Taylor, Mississippi Writer - http://www.olemiss.edu/mwp/dir/taylor_mildred/

The Shorter Works of Mildred D. Taylor: Welcome to the World -
<http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E00789/additionalMaterial.pdf>



Teacher Guide for Students

Discussion Questions and Lesson Plans about Emmett Till

1. Poetry. There is a long history of poets using their craft to draw attention to social problems or to protest local or national events. Have students write poems to express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings about a current social situation.

2. History. Engage students in a research project about the trial of Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam, the men arrested for kidnapping and killing Emmett Till. (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/till/>) What were the conditions of the trial? Do students feel that justice was served? Ask students to send a letter to one person involved in the trial. The student should express his or her opinion on that person's role in the trial.

3. Current Events. At the time of the book's publication, no one had been convicted of Emmett Till's murder. However, in 2004 the U.S. Department of Justice reopened the case based on new information presented in two documentaries about Emmett Till. Have students find out more about the Department of Justice's announcement and then write letters to the editor of the local newspaper making the case for why or why not this matter should be pursued so many years later.

Here is a website for the latest information about the Till case, USA Today <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2018/07/12/emmett-till-justice-dept-reopens-murder-case/778053002/>

4. Activism. Students can research to learn what social conditions existed that allowed Emmett Till to be murdered in 1955. Ask students to reflect on their own time and place, then ask them to write essays about whether and why Emmett Till's murder could happen today. As

5. Writing. Have students write an obituary for Emmett Till. What is important for people to know and remember about him and his fate?

6. Personal Connections. Ask students to think back to before they read a book about Emmett Till. Have students write about the most important things they've learned from reading the book. What aspects of Emmett Till's story will stay with them for the next fifty years?

7. Music. Introduce students to the lyrics of "Strange Fruit," written by Abel Meeropol, which was recorded as a song in 1939 by Billie Holiday or the song "Ode to Billy Joe" by Bobbie Gentry. Students can write a brief paper comparing and contrasting the song about Emmett Till.

"Strange Fruit" song is explained by Billie Holiday
<https://billieholiday.com/signaturesong/strange-fruit/>

Bobbie Gentry explains song at this website - <https://playback.fm/bobbie-gentry-ode-billie-joe-true-story>. While Bobbie Gentry admits the story is fictionalized, she did explain that it was inspired by the 1954 murder of Emmett Till. Till was only 14 years old when he was shot and thrown over the Black Bayou Bridge in Mississippi for offending a woman in a grocery store.

1

Decision Education Foundation English Curriculum

Mississippi Trial, 1955

by Chris Crowe

Unit Snapshot

Designed For	Middle School Students
Essential Questions	How do fictional and historical characters influence me? How do our decisions define us? What makes characters in a novel interesting?
Content and Skill Focus	Decision Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six elements of a good decision • decision skills help problem solving English Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • historical fiction • research skills • expository writing
Expected Outcomes	Students will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and explain the six elements of a good decision • write clearly and confidently about characters in the novel • produce a three to five paragraph expository essay using research
Kinds of Assessment	Two Culminating Writing Projects Six Journal Entries Sixteen in-class decision skill exercises
Time Required	Six classes over the course of a four to six week unit.
Comments	<i>The Mississippi Trial, 1955</i> , a gripping story that follows the kidnapping and murder of Emmet Till through the eyes of a sixteen-year old boy, is the central focus of this unit that explores decision skills and historical fiction.

(Version 7)



Mississippi Trial, 1955 Letter Writing Assignment

1. You will be writing a letter to the author of Mississippi Trial, 1955 Professor Chris Crowe.
2. You can write questions about why a character acted a certain way, something you disagreed with, something not answered in the text that you think should have been included, or any kind of wondering.
3. Using the four square plus one letter writing organizer, begin to organize your thoughts and questions about the novel Mississippi Trial, 1955.
4. When you have finished the organizer, each of the squares will become a paragraph in your letter.
5. Thoughts from your organizer must be written in complete sentences.
6. After you finish the draft of your letter, have your teacher proof your letter.
7. When you are ready to type your letter, go to the Letter Generator at the following web address:

www.readwritethink.org/materials/letter_generator/

This site will guide you as you type your business letter.

8. Professor Chris Crowe
3135 JKHB
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah 84602
9. Once your letter is complete, be sure to address an envelope.

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Carousel Activity:

1. What event in Mississippi Trial, 1955 were you most surprised or shocked about?
2. What lessons can be learned from reading Mississippi Trial? (tolerance/acceptance)
3. What prejudices/stereotypes still exist today?
4. What character do you believe was most important to this story and why?

www.chriscrowe.com

)))
Mississippi Trial, 1955- Four Square Plus 1 Letter Writing Organizer

Initial reaction to the book.
After reading Mississippi Trial, 1955...

What connections did you make? How did this novel make you feel? Could you connect with any character?

Your name, school, grade and the title of the novel.

Questions for Professor Crowe. What do you wonder about?

What did you learn from reading this novel? Would you recommend this book? Why? Closing statements.

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USA Today 5/6/05

Family members split over Till case

Most of Emmett Till's relatives oppose FBI plans to exhume the boy's remains 50 years after his infamous civil rights-era abduction and murder, a family member said. But a cousin said he supports the effort.

Bertha Thomas, president of the Emmett Till Foundation, said she was speaking for a majority of the family in saying she would rather the inquiry end than allow the boy's body to be exhumed. "They had over 40 years to do this, and my major question is why now?" said Thomas, a distant cousin who knew Till's mother.

But Simeon Wright, a cousin who was with Till the night he was taken, said the exhumation is needed because identification of the mutilated body was an issue at the first trial. FBI spokeswoman Deborah Madden said Wednesday the agency plans an autopsy to confirm the identification and determine the cause of death. Till, 14, was visiting an uncle in Money, Miss., when he was abducted and killed. Two white men were acquitted by an all-white jury. The two, now dead, confessed later in a *Look* magazine article.

The Justice Department announced plans last year to reopen the inquiry, citing new information and the possibility that other conspirators might still be alive.

I've heard of him (Making Connections)
I was only 12 (" ")

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USA Today 5/6/05

Wouldn't they want to bring the guilty to justice? (Asking Questions)

Some of Till's family want the body exhumed, some do not. (Determining Importance)

Reminds me of the hideous picture in Jet Magazine (visualization, making connections)
There must be good reason to open the case. (Infer)

From the accounts I have read, I can see and feel that courtroom. (visualization) (making connections)



Mississippi Trial, 1955

By Chris Crowe

Based on the true story and murder of Emmitt Till

Concept Analysis

Organizational Patterns

Chapter one begins with Hiram Hillburn's explanation of some "awful things that happened to Emmitt Till" in 1955. This is told from his sixteen year old point of view. But before he recaps the culminating events of the book, Hiram takes us back seven years earlier when he was being raised by his grandpa and grandma Hillburn. The first thirty-seven pages, (through chapter four), establish Hiram's relationship with his grandfather and grandmother and his young life in Greenwood Mississippi. Chapter five brings us back to the present time of the novel when Hiram returns for a visit, without his family, to Greenwood.

Each chapter runs between ten to fourteen pages with the exception of chapters fourteen (31 pages) and sixteen (21 pages). Chapter fourteen contains the bulk of the trial for the alleged murderers of Emmitt Till. Chapter sixteen resolves some of the unanswered questions concerning Emmitt's murder.

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Issues related to this Study of Literature

Themes:

Certainly the overriding theme of this book is *racial prejudice*. The fictional re-telling of Emmett Till's heinous murder represents the prejudice between blacks and whites so prevalent in the south in 1955. But the prejudice in the story goes beyond skin color. The Hillburn's demonstrate that prejudice can be in your own family. There is prejudice against anyone different in the small town of Greenwood. The prejudice in this town is as pervasive as the weeds in a cotton field.

Relationships are another theme that prevails throughout the novel. The predominant relationship of turmoil represented is between father and son. Hiram is well aware of the angst and dislike between his grandfather and his father. Because Hiram's father can't get along with his father, Hiram is pulled away from the life he loves as a nine year old boy. Yet when Hiram reaches his teenage years, he too, cannot get along with his father. Throughout the narrative, Hiram's relationship with his father eats away at him. He is always trying to understand why his father and grandfather can't get along and tries to apply those observations to his own father. The father-son attitudes force us to look at prejudice within a family.

Personality and perception *labels* are not only given to the African Americans, but to several characters/types in this book. Grampa Hillburn has always had several misperceptions about the black men who work for him. Hiram's father perceives that everyone in the Mississippi Delta is prejudiced. RC believes that living animals are stupid and therefore can be hurt and abused. Ralph and Ronnie Remington are ostracized because they are labeled as "fairies"(22). People who are for integration and civil rights are called "Northern Rabblers"(148). Trouble makers are called "Redneck Peckerwoods"(124). Hiram Hillburn and his sweet grandmother are the two characters who try to look beyond labels and care and socialize outside of their label.

Setting: This book is based on a true story of a murder that happened in Money, Mississippi. The Hillburn's home and crops are in Greenwood Mississippi. The trial takes place in Sumner, north of Greenwood in the Tallahatchie County Courthouse. Emmett Till is visiting from Chicago and his body is found in the Tallahatchie County Courthouse.

Hiram has ties to Arizona and after leaving Greenwood, actually grows up in Tempe Arizona; but very little action happens in Tempe.

Point of View: Hiram Hillburn is the first person narrator of this tale. The point of view never varies from Hillburn's life lens.

Literary devices as found in Mississippi Trial:

Tragedy:

According to a CyberEnglishwebsite (http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms/tragedy.html), Aristotle defined tragedy as "the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself." A tragedy includes "incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish the catharsis of such emotions The Mississippi Trial fits the definition of a tragedy and even more so because of the truth it re-tells.

Emmett Till can also be used as an example of a tragic hero. A tragic hero will invoke our pity and our fear. That he is not especially good or especially wicked is a possibility. He died as a young innocent boy so that would be a harsh judgment to make on a fourteen year old boy. But if we apply the circumstances and the context-that Emmett possibly was misbehaving towards a southern woman, ("He was a colored boy who didn't know his place" 135), that he continually broke the social standards of the segregated south- we may be able to cast him in this role as tragic hero. This could be a lively debate for a class: Does Emmett Till fit the role of a tragic hero, or was he just an innocent bystander caught in the prejudicial poison that pervaded the Delta? Is it an act of prejudice to put any blame on the young man when there is no excuse for his treatment? Is there any culpability to Emmet's actions?

As an educator, studying Emmett Till as a tragic hero, it is important to make two things very clear. First, according to the book it was never proven whether or not Emmett Till was the black man who flirted with the store woman. Second, whether Emmett Till was or was not guilty of the accusations, he did not deserve to be tortured or murdered. That a tragic hero brings on his own downfall would have to be explored as a question with sensitivity and zero tolerance for racial hate and murder.

Certainly Emmett fits the role of a tragic hero in that his life changes from happiness to misery because of a mistaken act.

A tragic hero is doomed to fail and is put in a situation where he cannot win. Emmett Till was a stranger to the social morays of the south. As an aggressive northern black youngster, putting him in the prejudice saturated Mississippi delta was a tragedy in the making. When Emmett Till is playing in the river with his friends, he sees Hiram and crosses the highly symbolic river to talk to him. Emmett's friends stay on the other side of the river in discomfort. They know better than to treat a white boy as a friend.

A tragic hero achieves a moral victory. Emmet certainly wins a moral victory even if it is after his death, for his story and his spirit live on and this incident is cited as the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

Allusion—There are at least three casual references to famous historical events and people. The allusions would provide tangents to study important Civil Rights subjects. The first allusion is to the Jim Crow laws. The reference made to the NAACP is another allusion. During the trial, Charles C. Diggs, a congressman from Michigan, shows up in the delta. Author Chris Crowe uses the real names of southerners who were actually involved in the case: Sheriff HC Strider, Judge Curtis L. Swango, public prosecutor Gerald Chatham. All of these men have a fascinating history. Since the entire novel is an allusion to a historical event, it would be interesting to find and study the real transcripts from the trial and see how closely the author stayed to this historical event.

Tone

Hiram Hillburn is a sweet young man who is trying to sort out the conflicts that he confronts. His tone is sympathetic as he yearns to learn about and find justice in his surrounding circumstances. The author attempts to be objective and let the reader, or Hiram figure out the mystery of the murder and his patriarchal examples of relationships. The overall tone of the novel is sympathetic, solemn and questioning.

Affective Issues Related to the Work

Throughout the novel, Hiram Hillburn questions his family relationships. He is bothered by his own communication with his father and his father's adversity towards his father. Readers of this novel are at the age when they begin to question their relationships with family members. It is a time when they become aware of their own parent's shortcomings and frailties. They are developing autonomy and their wills are strong to stand up to and question their parent's expectations and demands.

Naomi has the burden of running her household since her mother's death. There will be readers of this novel who share that same responsibility of house, sibling and parent care. Naomi sometimes considers jumping into the river. She is contemplating suicide. It is important that the end of the book resolves with a lightening of her load. She is taken out of her home and is given another chance to be a child. Teenagers need to see that they too will grow-up, that siblings grow up and one day, they too will leave behind many of their burdens. This can be used to teach that one should not give into despair because it is most likely a temporary despair.

Friendship is always an applicable subject to our students. Hiram wants to be friends with Emmett Till but when he stands by and watches his white friend torture Emmett, he is ashamed of himself and all chances of friendship are caboshed. RC is the redneck whom Hiram really doesn't want to be around but because of their history together, he feels obligated to hang with him.

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There are some strong and apparent issues of bullying in this novel. And, as every human being is continuously faced with doing what is right or failing to do what is right, this is an affective issue.

There are two deaths in the novel. One is the tragic murder and the other is the natural passing of an aged grandparent.

Vocabulary Issues

Mississippi Trial is written in easily understood language. Chris Crowe has chosen to spell some words such as grandma and grandpa as gramma and grampa. There is a minimal amount of southern vernacular such as *Sisbaby* (197), and Hillbilly talk but it is still easy reading. Emmett Till's spoken words are written as if he stuttered. The word been is spelled *b-b-been*(49). Both of these variations of language would make an interesting study.

Background Issues

It is imperative that students have an understanding of slavery, segregation, Jim Crow laws and the facts of the Emmett Till murder trial. Questions that could be answered with a few history lessons are: Why were attitudes concerning blacks and whites so different in the south and the north? How did southerners get away with miss-treatment of blacks? Why did southern blacks tolerate such injustice? What role did the Emmett Till case have on the Civil Rights movement? What was the Civil Rights movement? Who were Emmett's family members? Friends?

Implications for Students of Diversity-Diversity and the lack of tolerance and acceptance are blaring issues in this novel. This is not only pertinent to African American and other diverse students but to all students because of how it affects our nation, our communities and our selves.

Students will also confront the treatment of others who are diverse not because of ethnicity but because of preferences and actions that separate them from the *norms* of society.

Gender Issues-During 1955 women weren't allowed to be on juries. Naomi is regularly beat up by her father. She was also put into female caretaker role because of her mother's death.

That these white men felt empowered and even felt it was their right as white men to subjugate, beat-up and even murder black men could be looked at as a gender issue.

There is some question if the Remington brothers have gender issues. Students may question that they are called *faeries* in the text.

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The Central Question of Enduring Issue

There are many issues and questions that arise from the exploration of this novel. At the crux of our narrator's heart and mind is the turmoil of wanting to help his family, his neighbors, his friends and his enemies, and not knowing how or the limitations of his abilities to help. For that reason the enduring question centers on how far can we, should we and must help—"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Research Issues/ Project Ideas

1. Interview a person who is not of your race or background-find out where you differ and what makes you the same?
2. Pick any aspect of the Civil Rights movement and apply towards a research paper, media presentation or other creative endeavor.
3. Pick any of the real characters and present a real -life character sketch. Present the situation from your character's point of view.
4. Try writing a chapter in the point of view from one of the characters in this book.
5. Research the Jim Crow laws-the origin, history and/or effect on the southern states.
6. Report on any of the injustices that occurred in the southern states: Ku Klux Klan, lynching postcards, etc.
7. Research recent racial, crimes, trials or injustices.
8. Read and report on one of many non-fiction accounts of the Emmett Till tragedy.

Informational Functional Texts

1. If we are to apply the lessons of Mississippi Trial to our modern day, the Southern Poverty Law Center is an excellent place to track 20 and 21st century injustices. They also have an invaluable program of teaching tolerance.
"Teaching Tolerance." 2005 Southern Poverty Law Center. September 24, 2005.
<<http://www.splcenter.org/center/tt/teach.jsp>>.
2. There are several books written about Emmett Till. Only two of many are listed:
Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America by Mamie Till-Mobley and Christopher Benson.
Getting Away with Murder by Christ Crowe
3. Over 265,000 websites are listed with information about the Emmett Till murder. There is even an Emmett Till blog.
emmett-till.blogspot.com/
An ET slideshow put to the Bob Dylan song about ET.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjfGcRM35xg>
A sight dedicated to the boy's memory

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<http://www.emmettillmurder.com>

4. A copy of the Jim Crow laws would be interesting.
5. Slave narratives.
6. Civil Rights book, magazines, and articles.
7. It would be interesting to search for newspaper articles from Mississippi during the 1950's.

From Past to Present



Wichita's NPR Station

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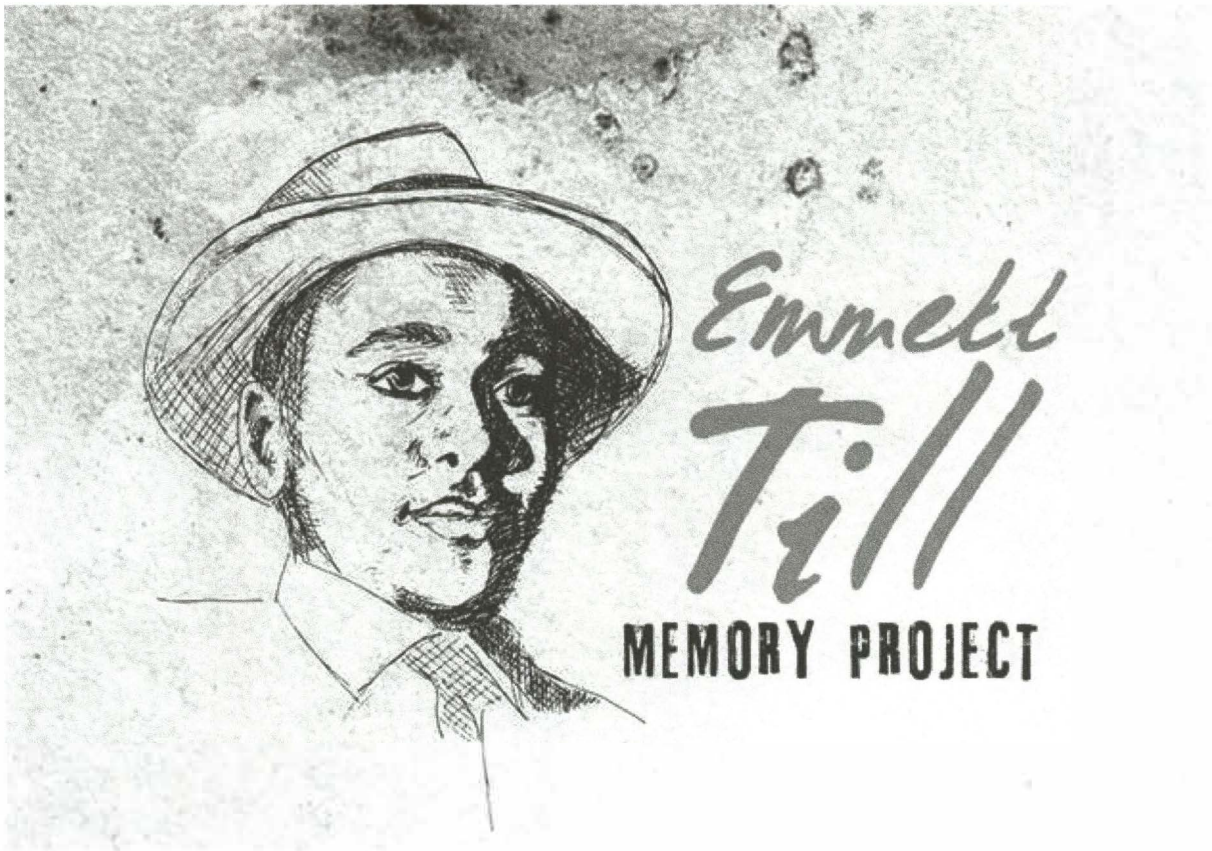
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Site Menu

'Transform The Present': Remembering The Story Of Emmett Till

By CARLA ECKELS • AUG 24, 2018

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THE EMMETT TILL MEMORY PROJECT

Listen 7:19

In 1955, Emmett Till – a black Chicago teenager visiting his relatives in Mississippi – was brutally murdered after reportedly whistling at a white woman. The 14-year-old was abducted, beaten, shot and dumped into the Tallahatchie River with a 75-pound cotton-gin



fan tied with barbed wire around his neck.

University of Kansas professor Dave Tell wrote an article contradicting a 50-year-old version of the crime that had been spelled out in Look magazine. This eventually led him to start the Emmett Till Memory Project. Tell recently spoke with KMUW's Carla Eckels about the project and the 63-year-old murder case that helped spark the civil rights movement.

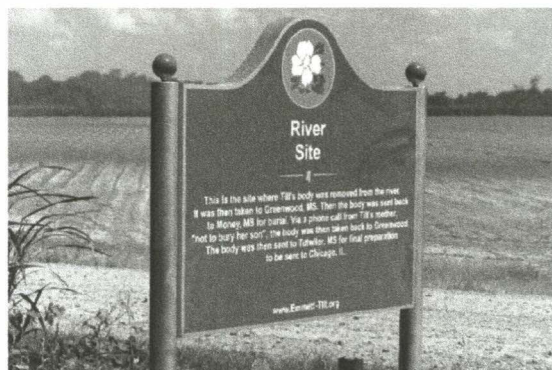
Interview Highlights

Dave Tell: For 49 years and 11 months there was not a single sign or plaque or marker or museum anywhere in the state of Mississippi to commemorate the murder of Emmett Till.

But finally — starting in early 2006 — the Emmett Till Memorial Commission was trying to do the hard work of commemorating the murder.

[In] 2008, they just put up the first signs and now my article is beginning to circulate...and then vandalism happens. Their first sign is not in the ground for more than six months before it's pulled out of the ground and thrown into the Tallahatchie River — reminding the local black community of what happened to Emmett Till's body. A second sign was spray painted with the letters KKK. A third sign was found attached to a pick-up truck ready to pull it out of the courthouse square. Another sign was filled with bullet holes.

And so what happened is the Emmett Till Memorial Commission was wondering



Several of the signs commemorating the murder of Emmett Till were vandalized.

CREDIT COURTESY PHOTO

what to do about the vandalism, so they called a conference. They invited me down there and a couple of other academics. They also invited the FBI agent in charge of the case from 2004 to 2006 and they invited members of the Till family.

In that summer of 2014, this little conference of people spent three days traveling to the various Emmett Till sites and talking about how we could best remember the story.

That's when the Emmett Till Memory Project was born.

Our idea was to build a small little basic smartphone app. Using GPS technology, we take visitors to five sites related to the murder and the memory of Emmett Till.

Carla Eckels: In thinking about the murder itself, I've got to ask you, there was one point when Emmett Till was taken away – when he was abducted – that there were some other people in the truck. Because the question's been asked, how come he didn't just jump out of the truck?

Tell: Here's the answer: When Emmett Till was kidnapped, he was put in the back of J. W. Milam's 1955 Chevrolet pickup truck. Many people, including his own mother, have wondered, why didn't Emmett Till run? There's one way that question has been answered for nearly 50 years and it's dead wrong. Here's the wrong answer. People say, "Well, Emmett Till wasn't scared."



Of course he was scared. He was a 14-year-old boy from Chicago kidnapped in the middle of the night in the Mississippi Delta and beaten and tortured to the extent that parts of his body were falling off. He was terrified. So the question is, why do people still say that Emmett Till was not scared? Why to this day is there a museum in the heart of the Mississippi Delta called the Emmett Till Intrepid Center? The intrepid – a supposed

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Emmett Till

CREDIT WIKIPEDIA

testimony to the fact that Emmett Till was not scared.

The real reason Emmett Till didn't get out of that truck and run was, not because he wasn't scared, [it was] because he was guarded by two men, Levi Collins and Henry Lee Loggins, but those two men were jailed in a separate county to keep them from testifying during the trial.

And so because they hadn't been tried, they still face legal jeopardy. They would not sign release forms and so they could not be included in the story [journalist] William Bradford Huie told.

For that reason, Huie had to invent another reason to keep Emmett Till on the truck, so he invented the myth of a "not scared" Emmett Till. That myth has been so influential that it showed up on the 1987 celebrated "Eyes On The Prize" [documentary] series.

It's so important to remember that that bravery was invented by a white journalist to protect two accomplices from the murder who refused to sign a release form and so could not be included in the story of what happened to Emmett Till.

You said that the Till murder continues to haunt us. How so?

The Till murder does continue to haunt us, and I've been thinking a lot about what makes the murder of Emmett Till so resonant in today's society. It's far more resonant now. It's talked about way more in the media now than it ever was in the 1970s, 80s or 90s. Part of it is Black Lives Matter, but I think part of it is also a shift in the racial fault lines in our country. In the 1950s and 60s, during the heart of the civil rights movement, the battle for equality was a legal battle for equality. That battle, in some ways, is over, legally speaking, but the racial fault lines in our country are now cultural fault lines.

Just earlier this week a group of students on the University of North Carolina's campus brought down a Confederate statue. That's a parallel movement to the vandalism of what's going on with the Emmett Till signs right now in the Mississippi Delta.

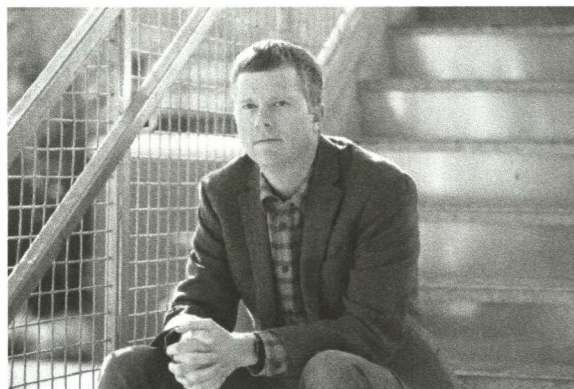
Both are examples of how our culture right now is focused on questions of memory on the

4

cultural negotiation of race.

How has the Emmett Till Memory Project changed you?

The Emmett Till Memory Project has consumed my life for the last five years. I did not learn about civil rights and become an activist and then learn about Emmett Till – Emmett Till is my entry point into this.



KU professor Dave Tell

CREDIT COURTESY PHOTO

My first baptism and learning about civil rights was being in Tallahatchie County, seeing how the memory commission used the historical stories of Till's murder to help pursue racial reconciliation in the present. What's changed me above all is I'm not any longer just a historian or an academic interested in figuring out what happened in 1955. My real passion, and this is the vision of the Emmett Till Memorial Commission and the Emmett Till Memory Project, my real passion is to use the facts of 1955 to transform our present.

Tell will be in Park City on Saturday to discuss his work on the Emmett Till Memory Project as part of the 2018 Park City Alive! Programs. The presentation is at the Park City Library on Saturday, Aug. 25, at 7 p.m. Tell is also the author of the book Remembering Emmett Till, which will be released next spring.

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Carla Eckels is director of cultural diversity and the host of Soulsations. Follow her on Twitter @Eckels. To contact KMUW News or to send in a news tip, reach us at news@kmuw.org.

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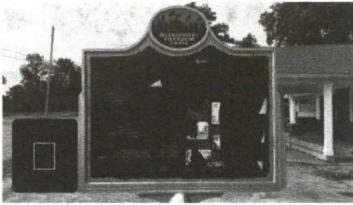
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RELATED CONTENT

Emmett Till Sign Vandalized Again

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By EDITOR • JUN 27, 2017



An Emmett Till historical marker in Money, Miss., has been vandalized two times in as many months, most recently last week, when panels with the 14-year-old's image and his story were peeled off.

Installed in 2011, the sign stands on the Mississippi Freedom Trail, which commemorates people, places and events that played a part in the civil rights movement.

Old Newspapers Shed New Light On Emmett Till Murder

By RUSSELL LEWIS • MAR 31, 2013

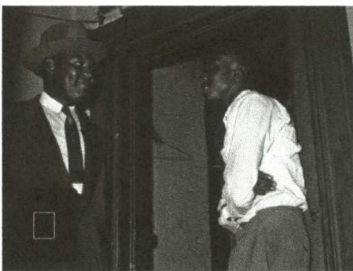


New details about one of Mississippi's most infamous murders are coming to light — more than a half-century later. The death of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old black boy who allegedly whistled at a white woman, helped spark the civil rights movement.

Till lived in Chicago, and was visiting his relatives in the Mississippi Delta when he was murdered. His body was mutilated and dumped into a river. The accused were the woman's husband and her half-brother, and their trial drew reporters from both the white and black press.

Key Witness Against Emmett Till's Killers Led A Quiet Life

By KAREN GRIGSBY BATES • JUL 25, 2013




Willie Louis may be one of the most celebrated but least-known figures in a pivotal point in American history: He testified against the men accused of kidnapping and murdering 14-year-old Emmett Till. He died July 18, but his wife, Juliet, announced his death this week.

'Hope For The Future': The Dockum Sit-In, Sixty Years On

By CARLA ECKELS • AUG 10, 2018



 Listen
28:06

This year is the 60th anniversary of the first successful student-led sit-in of

the modern civil rights movement. And it didn't happen in the South, but rather in the heart of the Midwest: in

6

“Haiku For Emmett Till” (37)

Who was Emmett Till?

“Emmett Till was an African-American teenager who was murdered in Mississippi the age of 14 after reportedly flirting with a white woman. Till was from Chicago visiting his relatives in Mississippi, when he spoke to 21-year-old Carolyn Bryant, several nights later, Bryant's husband and his half-brother went to the house where Till was staying. They took Till away to a barn, where they beat him and gouged out one of his eyes, before shooting him through the head and disposing of his body in the Tallahatchie River. Three days later, Till's body was discovered and retrieved from the river.”

(Wikipedia)

Medgar Evers' Involvement in the Till Case

After the murder of Emmett Till, Evers was investigating the murder, and he had a target on his back from the white supremacists.

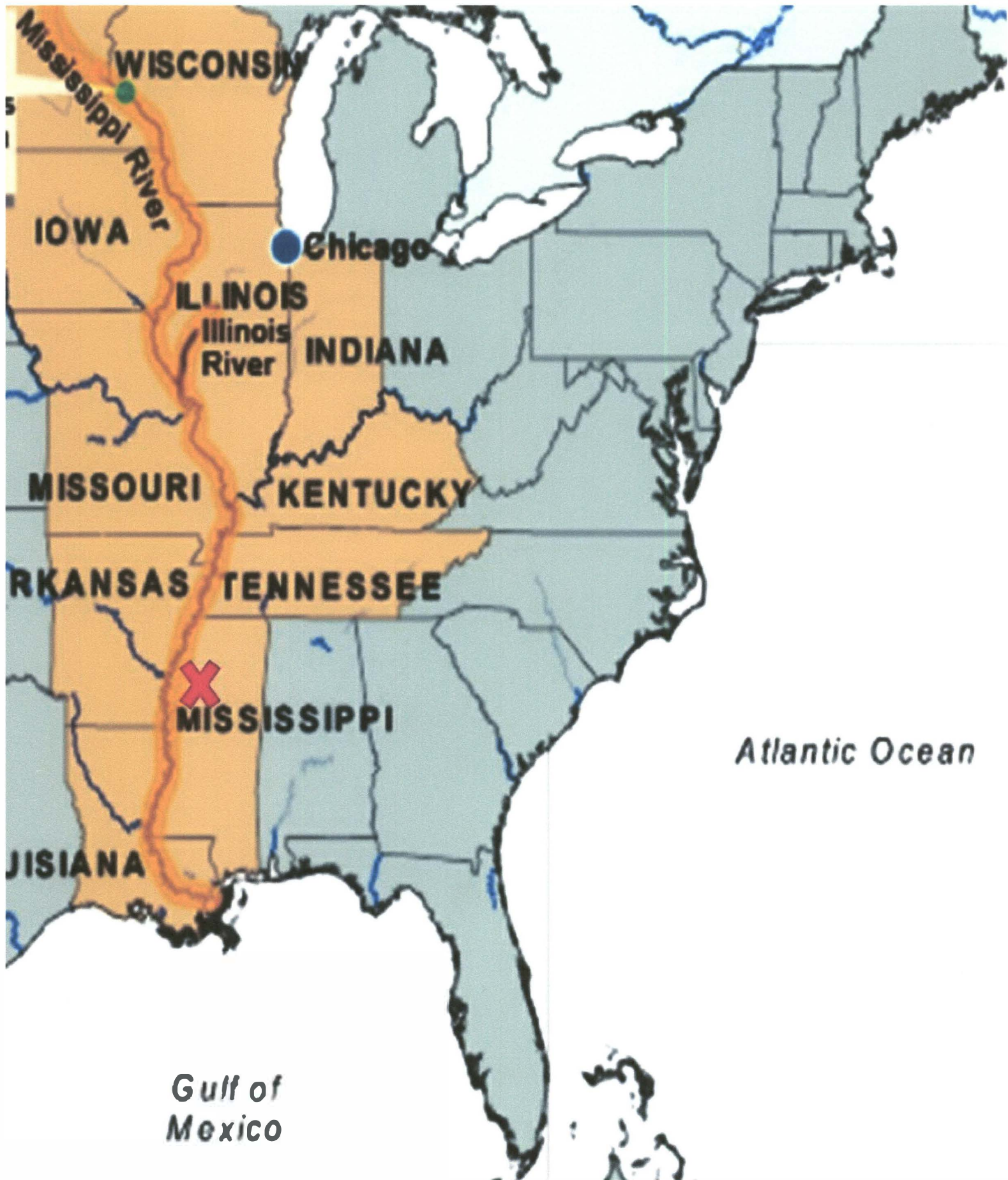


eyeball rape: Till's supposed flirtation with a white woman

come home in a box: the box Till came home in was a casket

mongrel: racist word for a person of mixed descent





WISCONSIN

Mississippi River

IOWA

Chicago

ILLINOIS
Illinois River

INDIANA

MISSOURI

KENTUCKY

ARKANSAS

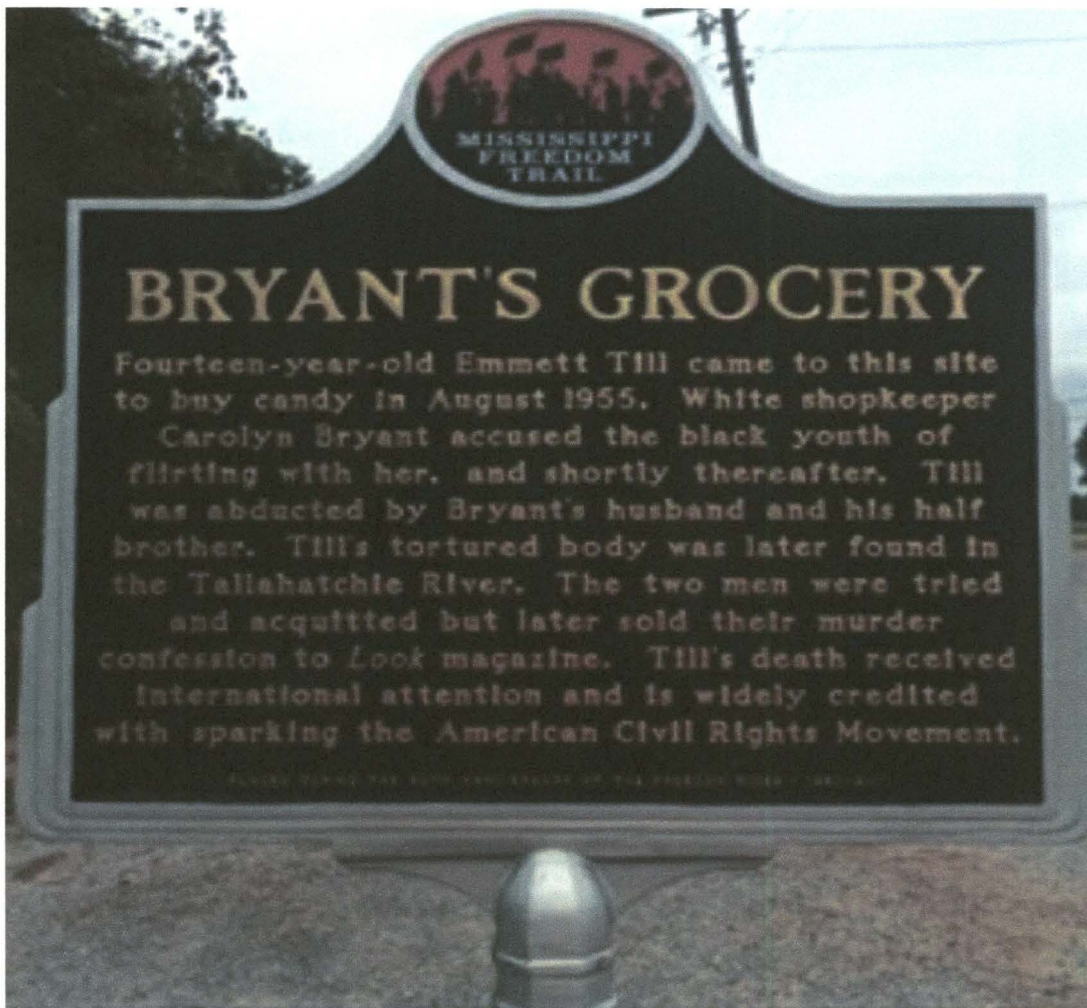
TENNESSEE

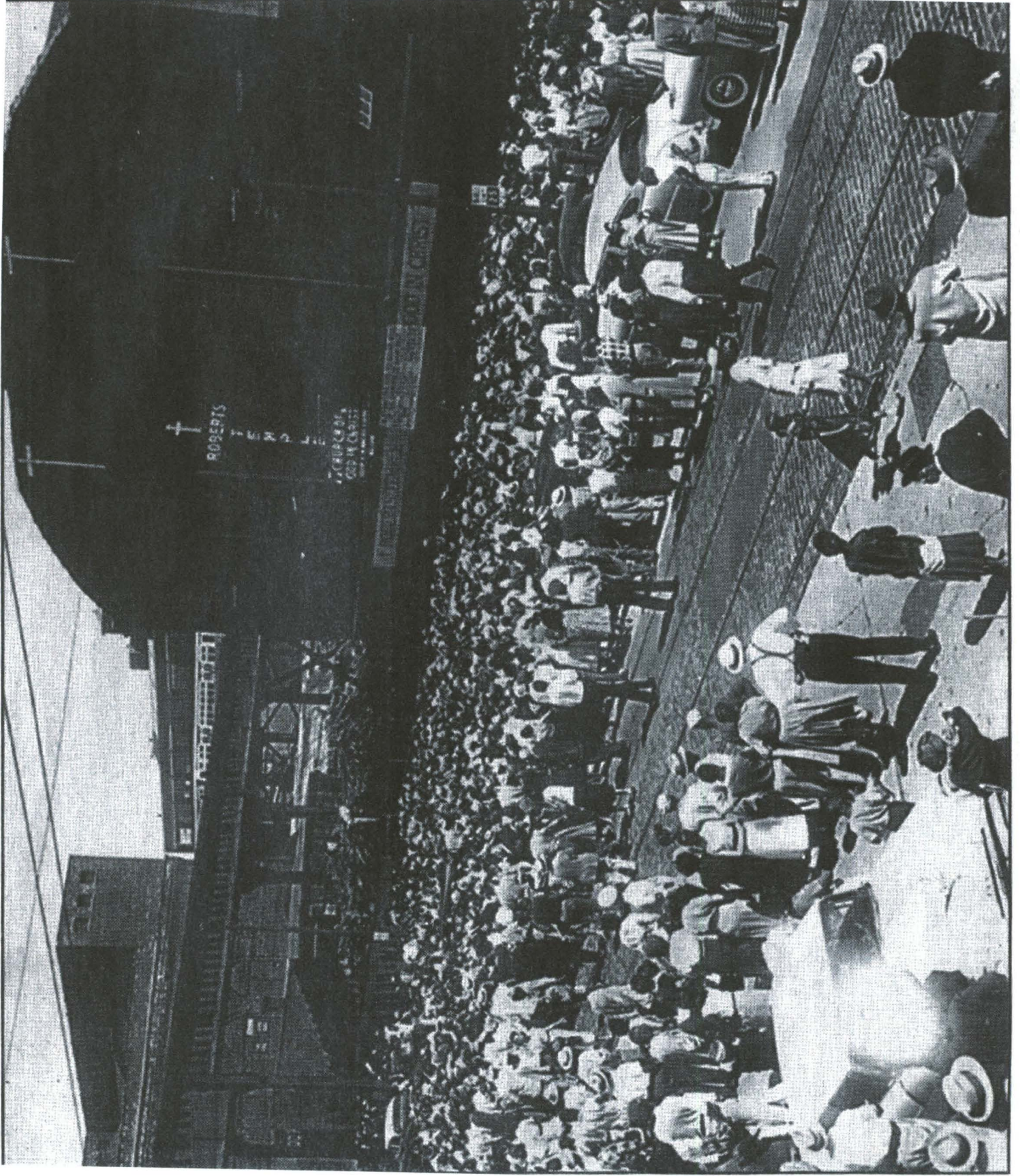
MISSISSIPPI

Atlantic Ocean

LOUISIANA

Gulf of Mexico





Hundreds of people from across the nation attended Emmett Till's funeral.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1955

APPEAL

FINAL

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PRICE 5 CENTS

Two Mississippians Acquitted In Slaying Of Chicago Negro; Jurors Out Only 67 Minutes

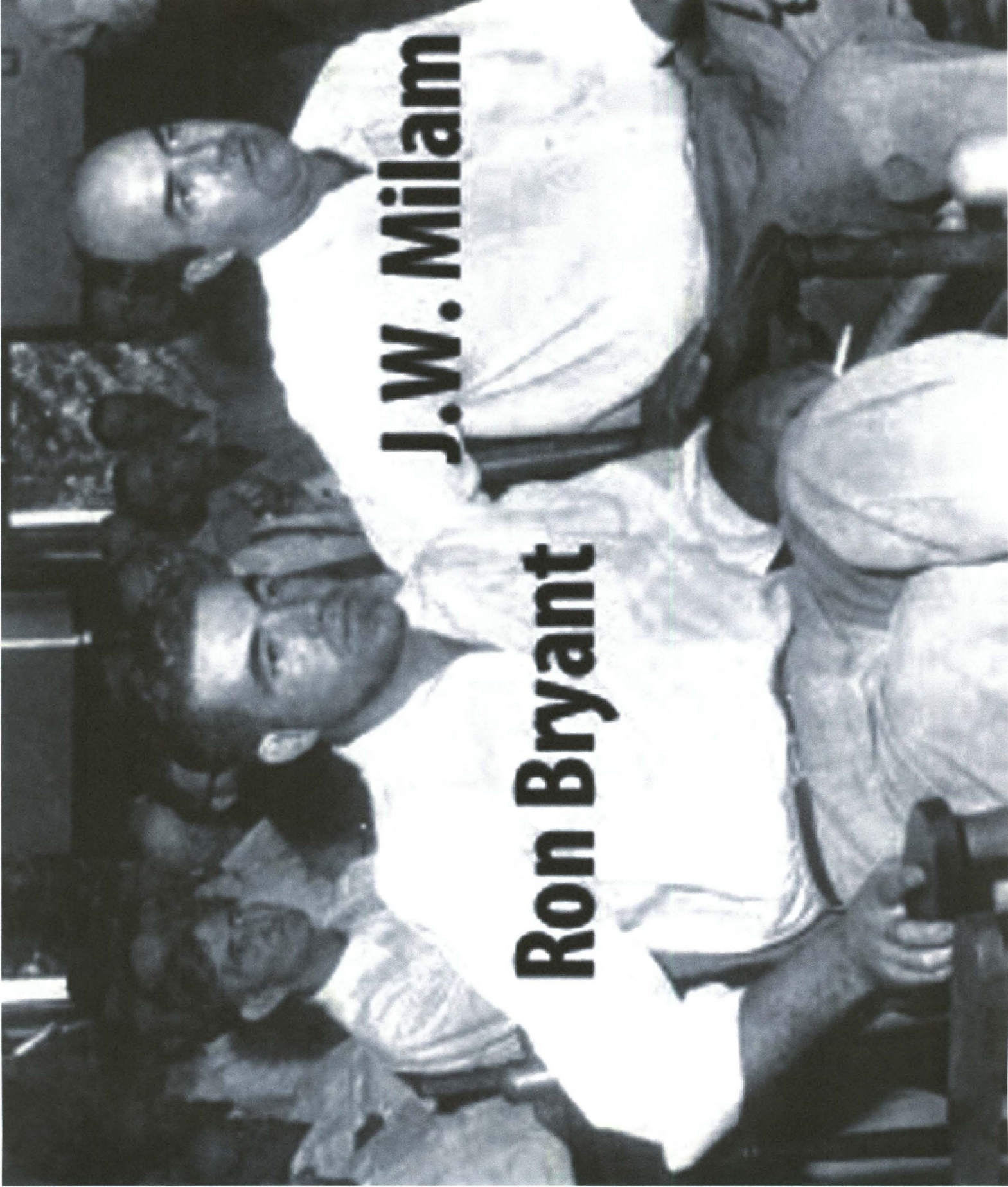
THREE VOTES TAKEN

Jury Members Say State
Failed To Establish
Identity Of Body

By WILLIAM SORRELS
Staff Writer

SUNNER, Miss., Says





J.W. Milam

Ron Bryant

Death in Delta, trial gave life to rights movement

By Bartholomew Sullivan
The Commercial Appeal

MONEY, Miss. — Emmett Louis Till would have been 54 this year if he hadn't been abducted from here one Sunday morning 40 years ago, then beaten to death for wolf-whistling at a white woman.

Whole histories, plays and documentaries have memorialized the life of the 14-year-old Chicago kid doomed for breaching Southern



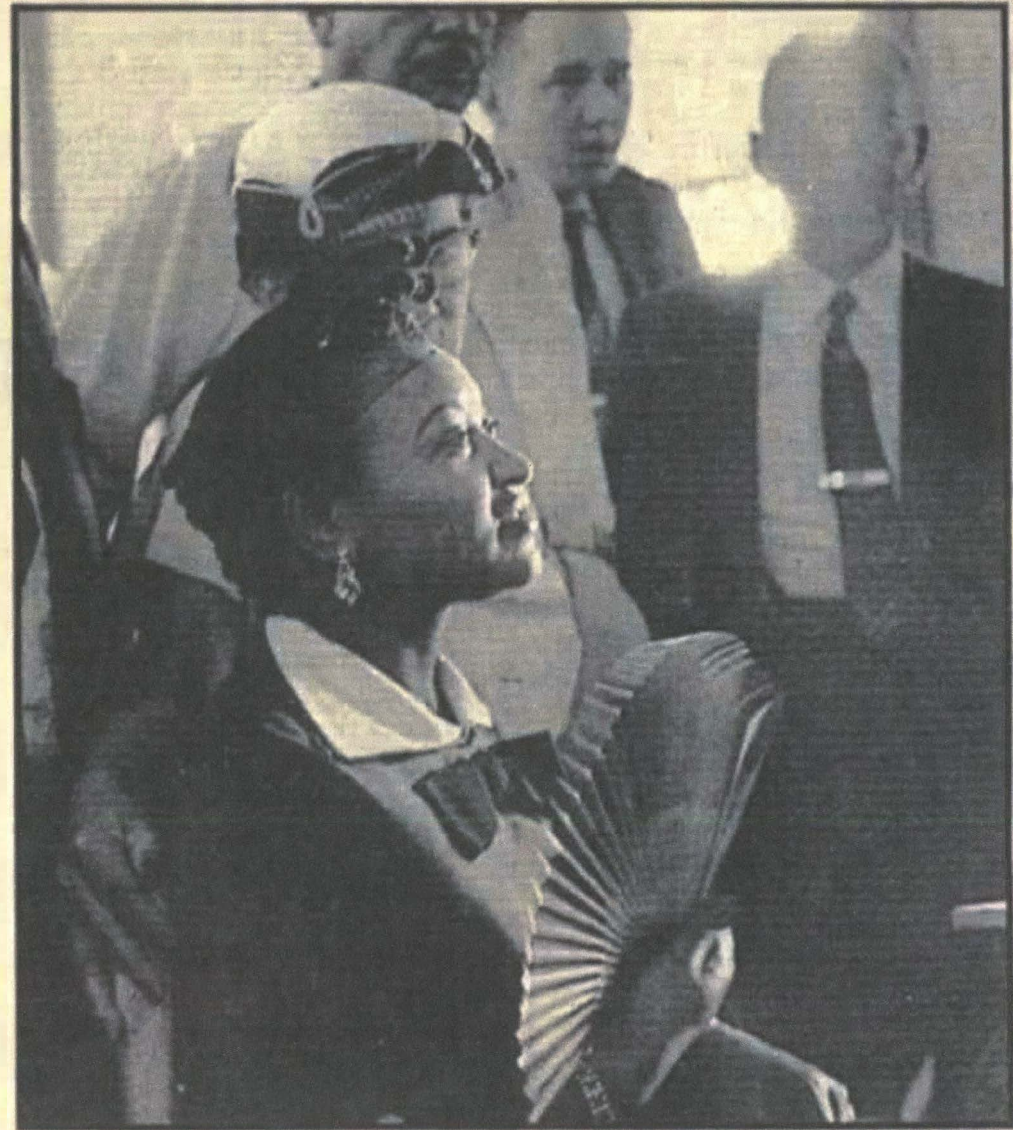
Emmett

knew from the words of the spirit that . . . the world would never stop crying for Emmett Till."

Former Memphian Clenora Hudson-Weems, an English professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia and author of *Emmett Till: Sacrificial Lamb of the Civil Rights Movement*, said the child-killing case was the catalyst for the whole movement.

As a child of 10, she remembered, she saw the pictures of the bloated corpse. "It was so horrific, I didn't want to remember it, but it kept resurfacing," she said.

Hudson-Weems has organized this week's four-day conference on the civil and human rights of African-Americans that begins Thurs-





in this Oct. 24, 1955, file photo, officers stand by as black religious leaders from Chicago demonstrate outside the White House in Washington against the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Louis Tili. (Associated Press)

THE AFTER EFFECT

- Emmett is found in the river by two fishermen
- He was identified by his father's ring that he was wearing
- Bryant and Milan go to court but are acquitted by an all white jury
- Later they tell their story to a magazine reporter
- Mamie Till: "The black people were afraid to talk about it because they knew that if they opened their big mouths, they would disappear as well."

Jim Crow Laws

- The origin of "Jim Crow" belongs to a song named "Jump Jim Crow"
- Segregation between the Dark-Skinned and the White-Skinned
 - Blacks had to go to separate schools, use separate sections on buses, trains and restaurants
- Whites felt that it was "separate but equal" treatment for the Blacks
- The Blacks were angered as it went against everything they believed in as a race and were discriminated by the Whites

Racism

Believing one race is better than another.

Discrimination

Treating people unequally

Segregation

Separation by race.

Jim Crow Laws

Laws that took away rights of African Americans had gained during Reconstruction.

Disenfranchisement

To take away the right to vote.