

Highlander Folk School: The Sit-In Movement of the 1960s

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The Sit-In Movement of the 1960s came to be recognized as the movement that not only stirred the conscience of the South but the North as well. The sit-ins attracted the involvement of more people, both black and white, than any other civil rights activity. These activities had over 70,000 participants demonstrating in over 100 communities throughout the South and the North. Much of the success of these demonstrations derives from the involvement of the Highlander Folk School, headed and founded by Myles Horton. Horton established the school in the Appalachian Mountain region of Tennessee in 1932 in order to help the oppressed and poor, both black and white, combat their problems throughout the South. Highlander played a pivotal role in both the development of the civil rights leadership and the strategy those leaders implemented in the Sit-In Movement.

The Sit-In Movement of the 1960s played an important role in the civil rights movement, but the question remains who should be credited with the success of the sit-ins. Louis Lomax and Jo Freeman claim the Sit-In Movement comprised one of the two most important events of the civil rights movement. According to Lomax in his book *The Negro Revolt*, the civil rights movement comprises two "Negro Revolts" the Montgomery Bus Boycott in December of 1955 and the Sit-In Movement of the 1960s.¹

thought largely in terms of practical results. Interestingly, and sadly, Martin Luther King felt the tug of both traditions, much to the umbrage of one-time allies who thought him either too cautious or too utopian. That, however, is another chapter in the history of the civil rights crusade.

¹ Louis E. Lomax, *The Negro Revolt* (New York, 1962), 121.

Freeman, in his book *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies: On the Origins of Social Movements*, agrees with Lomax that the civil rights movement had two origins, the December 7, 1955, arrest of Rosa Parks that led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the February 1, 1960, sit-in at Greensboro, North Carolina.² Both major events, however, trace their roots back to Highlander. Many of the inspirational civil rights leaders and participants involved in both events had either attended Highlander before or during these controversial events.³

Historians have long recorded the first sit-in of the modern civil rights movement to have occurred on February 1, 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, when four college students, all freshmen who attended the Agriculture and Technical College in North Carolina, used the technique.⁴ The practice of sit-ins, however, had a far longer history. As early as 1871 in Louisville, Kentucky, blacks protested the institution of segregated seating in horse-drawn streetcars, later called the "ride-in" campaign of 1871. Black Kentuckians refused to accept segregation after Reconstruction and brought national attention to their cause by refusing to ride in segregated streetcars. In the end, officials of the horse-drawn streetcars, due to economic reasons, gave in to the blacks' demand, and the company integrated the horse drawn streetcars with mixed seating. After Reconstruction the black population also demonstrated and protested against the segregation of theaters by taking seats in the all white sections of the theaters.⁵

The sit-in technique continued in the early twentieth century, especially in the union movements. During the 1930s, the rubber industry experienced a series of labor sit-downs instrumental in bringing about change for union workers and unions throughout America. The rubber workers initiated the sit-down strike method in Akron, Ohio, in June, 1934. Between 1936 and 1937, the rubber workers staged sixty-two sit-downs. Their pioneering efforts

laid the groundwork for future generations to adopt a strategy aimed at bringing about change through both unification and economic means.⁶

Myles Horton, who founded Highlander Folk School (HFS) in 1932 near the small Cumberland Plateau town of Monteagle, Tennessee, knew the importance of unification and economics in a social movement.⁷ Horton, a visionary and scholar, saw segregation as hindering society as a whole. He fought bitterly to establish a school that could bring about a new social order, a color-blind society that would tear down the barriers that limited the poor and the oppressed of the South to such a meager existence.⁸

Horton originally started his school by working with labor unions with the belief that only through integration of both blacks and whites could the people overcome the injustices placed upon them by the richer white establishment throughout the South. He held workshops throughout the 1930s and 1940s, teaching and assisting labor members to confront their problems first and then to work on devising their own solutions to act upon. Horton based his philosophy on the idea that the individual or group must first identify the problem, accept its outcome, and then confront it head-on with a well organized plan formulated from within. Horton's only problem lay with the union leaders who refused to cooperate or participate with blacks and even refused to allow blacks at their workshops during the 1930s.⁹

Horton then made one of the most important decisions in the school's history. He decided to break off all labor-related workshops in the 1940s unless the unions integrated blacks into the labor workshops.¹⁰ That move became a significant turning point for the school. The United Auto Workers Union, a member of

⁶ Daniel Nelson, "Origins of the Sit-Down Era: Worker Militancy and Innovation in the Rubber Industry, 1934-38," *Labor History* 23 (1982): 198-225.

⁷ Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 143.

⁸ John M. Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School* (Knoxville, 1996), 2.

⁹ Morris, *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 143-144.

¹⁰ Aimee Isgrig Horton, *The Highlander Folk School - A History of Its Major Programs, 1932-1961* (New York, 1989), 96-97.

² Jo Freeman, ed., *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies* (New York, 1983).

³ Aikin D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York, 1984), 146.

⁴ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America* (New York, 1969), 252-11.

⁵ Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 252.

the CIO, agreed to Horton's demands of integration in 1944.¹¹ Paul Christopher helped bring about the change of heart in the union. Christopher, regional CIO director and a member of Highlander's board, organized the first workshop that included both blacks and whites. Horton, for the first time, saw the racial barrier start to crumble. With help and guidance from HFS, the unions came to see the importance of unification. Highlander not only helped the unions but became the rock upon which the 1960s sit-in movement would build its foundation.¹²

Highlander's role in the early labor struggles of the 1930s prepared it for the next challenge the civil rights movement. HFS played a major role in preparing leaders. HFS held numerous workshops instructing participants on the proper techniques to be used in order to achieve their goals of desegregation. Martin Luther King, Jr., a personal friend of Horton's, often called upon Horton for advice. In 1961, King asked Horton to devise a method in which the black population could be reached, educated, and mobilized. Horton recommended a strategy he had devised along with Septima Clark, Esua Jenkins, and Bernice Robinsons called the Citizenship Education Program, which had proven successful in the past. King after long deliberation accepted the Citizenship Education Program, and the Southern Christian Leadership Council took over the Citizenship Schools. The schools, which taught citizenship throughout the South, were operated by HFS.¹³

King continued to converse with Highlander officials throughout the civil rights era. He attended the twenty-fifth anniversary of the school in 1957 on Labor Day weekend and gave a major address congratulating HFS for its "noble purpose and creative work" and for giving the South sixty-four of its most responsible leaders.¹⁴ King and the Highlander School both came under attack after the anniversary weekend. Abner Berry, a member of the Communist party and a journalist, concealed his true identity and attended the Labor Day weekend anniversary event, taking

pictures of key figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., Aubrey Williams, Rosa Parks, and Myles Horton. These pictures, which included Berry, later appeared on billboards throughout the South during the 1960s with the caption, "Martin Luther King at Communist Training School."¹⁵ The billboard slogans damaged but did not destroy the reputations of both.

Leaders of the movement as well as Highlander would rebound from several such attacks aimed at bringing down the activities sweeping the South. Highlander continued to pose a threat to segregationists throughout its existence. HFS became known for its active role in major civil rights events. The school itself came under such heavy attack for its involvement in the desegregation campaign between 1953 and 1957 that HFS had its tax exempt status revoked. Later in 1960, HFS lost its charter because of its activities in civil rights.¹⁶ Those aiming to close down the school opposed the workshops held there because they trained civil rights leaders. One of those leaders became very important in the first major event of the civil rights movement, Rosa Parks, who brought national attention to the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Rosa Parks attended HFS in the summer of 1955 at the request of Virginia Durr, a long time supporter of HFS. Durr later responded, "When she [Parks] came back she was so happy and felt liberated and then as time went on she said the discrimination got worse and worse to bear AFTER having, for the first time in her life, been free of it at Highlander. I am sure that had a lot to do with her daring to risk arrest as she is naturally a very quiet and retiring person although she has a fierce sense of pride and is in my opinion a really noble woman."¹⁷ On December 1, 1955, police arrested Parks for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a fellow white passenger. She broke one of the major laws of the South the law of segregation and set the stage for the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Parks' actions and protest resembled the strategies taught at HFS work-

¹¹ Horton, *Highlander Folk School*, 197.

¹² Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 144.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 236-237.

¹⁴ Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 213-214.

¹⁵ Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 217-20.

¹⁶ Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 242.

¹⁷ Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 162.

shops.¹⁸ Parks returned to HFS and continued to work with groups formulating techniques on how to dissolve segregation. She spoke specifically on the technique she had implemented at the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Parks became an intricate part of HFS after her return in 1956. Along with the HFS Executive Council members and teaching staff, she devised a radically new agenda. The new agenda included passive resistance, voter registration, transportation, housing, public facilities, church intervention, and school intergration once again signifying HFS as a leader in the civil rights movement.¹⁹

Highlander also tutored E.D. Nixon, president of the Alabama National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and a veteran member of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Nixon, who played a major part in backing Rosa Parks, attended HFS during the 1940s and 1950s workshops. He persuaded many prominent black leaders to support Parks' actions and then founded the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). The organization unanimously elected the largely unknown Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. as its president. Horton asked Nixon during his attendance at HFS to organize black workers and black community leaders against desegregation.²⁰

HFS also played a significant role in the sit-in movement itself. HFS trained over 1,000 blacks and whites during the 1950s in its residence program on integration.²¹ Although HFS did not organize or implement the first sit-in, HFS became the instructional institution on which the movement depended for its tutorial guidance and survival.²² Other organizations such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the NAACP, and the SCLC played a part in the Sit-In Movement and also came to the aid of the college students who initiated and participated in the actual

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁹ Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 209.

²⁰ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 144; and Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 163.

²¹ Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 172-173.

²² *Ibid.*, 173.

sit-ins. But HFS became key to the sit-ins continued survival and played a proportional role in the eventual birth of Students Non-violent Coordination Committee (SNCC).²³

The other three organizations, CORE, NAACP, and SCLC, also interacted with the Sit-In Movement, each with the intention of having the movement join its organization exclusively. All three of the organizations had come to see the importance of the revitalizing effect the sit-ins brought back into the civil rights movement, not to mention the vast amounts of energy the college students supplied.²⁴ If not for the intervention and input of HFS, these three organizations eventually would have unraveled the threads that held the sit-ins together because their methodologies differed.

CORE, an organization founded in 1942 by James Farmer, received a letter from Dr. George C. Simpkins, president of the NAACP chapter located at Greensboro, South Carolina, asking for assistance after the initial sit-in took place in Greensboro. Dr. Simpkins received a call for legal help from the four students after they had staged their sit-in at the Woolworth's Department Store lunch counter. Simpkins had read pamphlets on how CORE had handled segregation in Baltimore, Maryland, and had successfully desegregated a restaurant by using techniques it called "non-violent protest," later known as "non-violent direct action."²⁵

CORE, an interracial, predominately white organization, had originated at Chicago University and established its headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, in 1942 and moved to New York City in 1946. CORE had tried to recruit students from the South into the organization since the 1950s.²⁶ It saw the sit-ins as not only an opportunity to combat segregation but also as a foot hold at gaining membership in the South, a region considered still virgin to its grasp. CORE immediately, upon Dr. Simpkins request, dispatched their field secretary, Gordon R. Carey, from New York on Febru-

²³ *Ibid.*, 177.

²⁴ Quates, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 252.

²⁵ *The New York Times*, 15 February 1960.

²⁶ Quates, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 253.

ary 7, 1960, to assist in the training techniques of the college students for future sit-in protests.²⁷

The NAACP also responded to the sit-in movement. The NAACP had its headquarters in New York City. The NAACP, more noted for fighting the battle for equality through the legal system, sent Herbert Wright, its youth secretary, to Greensboro. Wright had conducted similar sit-in demonstrations in Albuquerque, New Mexico, several years before the 1960 sit-ins. Wright became known for instigating the first Civil Rights Ordinance to be adopted by any city in the nation. Wright backed what he called "direct mass action" even though the NAACP had not adopted this type of method as one of its own.²⁸ Also, documentation indicates the NAACP youth groups received credit for being one of the first to use the sit-in method. This has been attributed to the fact that all four A & T College freshmen at one time had been involved with a NAACP leader through their local churches.²⁹ The NAACP, much like CORE, could not organize or control the college student's sit-in movement.

The SCLC also played a role in the sit-in movement through one of its founders, Ella Baker. Baker, along with King in 1957, helped found the SCLC. She, however, opposed King's idea of having the students become a wing of SCLC. She believed the students' survival depended on their forming an independent organization. Baker helped to inspire students to create their own organization, the Students Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) at an April 15-17, 1961, Raleigh, North Carolina, conference, a meeting she set up with this purpose in mind. According to Myles Horton, the students "had begun to feel their oats."³⁰ Baker, as E.D. Nixon, attended HFS workshops in the 1950s. Baker knew, from HFS teachings that the students needed to break away and form their own organization in order to insure

their momentum and survival.³¹ Baker understood that her organization, the SCLC, primarily represented the black churches and their conservative values and attitudes. She realized early on in the Sit-In Movement that the SCLC would only hinder the progression of the more liberal minded youth staging the sit-ins.³²

Although each of the groups contributed to the sit-in movement, they each lacked what the students required most: immediate action. The students saw the NAACP as too slow to bring about change. When it won major legal battles such as *Brown v. the Topeka Board of Education* in 1954, the students saw no real change come about, only the continuation of segregation. The students knew the conservative approach the NAACP took would only seek to control their movement with a slow thought out process that stayed within the contingencies of the law. Although the students took the approach of nonviolent direct mass action, the law would not stop them from achieving their ultimate goal: the right to be treated with dignity and respect in public facilities.³³

The students did not trust CORE because of so much racial fighting within its own ranks, and the organization appeared to be a predominately white northern organization who had come to their aid with the intentions of taking over and overshadowing the importance of the movement itself. Farmer, CORE'S National Director said, "There are many Negroes who will not work with an interracial organization because of their suspicion of whites.... White liberals must be willing to work in roles of secondary leadership and as technicians."³⁴ This idea countered the need of the black youths to take charge of their own lives and to organize and make the decisions on how to confront the atrocities that compounded their lives. The students who attended HFS had learned they would have to fight for themselves to gain their self-dignity. The students had learned the importance of Myles

²⁷ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 132.

²⁸ Thomas R. Brooks, *Waltz Come Tumbling Down: A History of the Civil Rights Movement 1940-1970* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1974), 152.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 152-53.

³⁰ Lonax, *The Negro Revolt*, 97.

³¹ *The New York Times*, 15 February 1960.

³² Lonax, *The Negro Revolt*, 124.

³³ *Ibid.*, 123.

³⁴ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 215-16.

Horton's lesson at Highlander: the need to be self governed and the need for the individual to take charge of his or her own situation. The students understood the steps of Horton's philosophy: the need of the individual to acknowledge the problem that existed; the acceptance of the responsibility of the problem; taking charge and formulating a plan of action and acting upon that plan solution. Horton knew that only the individual with the problem could find the right solution to his or her problem, and in order to achieve his final solution, he would have to discuss his related problems with other members of society, people fighting the same injustices of society. Horton had taught them well that they could not expect the oppressor to make right what he had done wrong for so long. Horton continued to stress the importance of non-violence as the way to combat the issue of segregation.³⁵ The major short-coming of SCLC that helped to lead to the formation of SNCC came about due to the financial rift between the two groups. SCLC in the early 1960s sit-ins handled all the money collected from community members who supported the sit-ins. In turn, SCLC provided bail money for the arrested student participants but failed to provide the students with the majority of the collected money. The SCLC used much of the funds gathered for the sit-in movement to support its own causes and argued they had a justifiable right to it. SCLC contended it had fulfilled its obligation by providing the bail bonds for students arrested in sit-in demonstrations. They argued that SCLC's leader Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking at college campuses across the South at the request of the college students participating in the sit-ins entitled SCLC to the majority of the funds raised around the sit-in activities, further unraveling the threads that held the students together. Reverend Wyatt T. Walker, the executive director of SCLC in 1960, said:

The SNCC people felt that the money that came to SCLC should have come to them. First of all, at that time, they didn't have an organization, so where was it gonna go?

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 146.

*The students who got in jail, we went around the South hailing them out, and, you know, I never bit my tongue, but we had a right to the money. And, it was the people who made up the constituency of SCLC who were the back-up source... the kids didn't have nothing to lose but their time in school. They had no mortgage to pay, no car payments, no nothing, they'd just go out and get arrested.*³⁶

This was a further indication to the more conservative attitude sustained by the SCLC.

If not for Highlander's guidance in the early beginning of the Sit-In Movement, the movement would have been stifled before it ever achieved its greatest goals brought about by the Sit-In Movement of the 1960s, the desegregation of public facilities. The other three organizations of CORE, NAACP, and the SCLC became too rigid in their ideologies for the college students. The college students tended to reject authority figures and leaders. They more related to acting on impulse, and as Emily Stoper said, the college students held "a belief in the equality of all members, which leads to the rejection of bureaucracy and of all formal leadership structures."³⁷ By forming their own organization that answered the needs of the student, the momentum of the movement kept rolling forward.

Highlander is rarely credited for playing a significant role in the civil rights movement. The link between the school and the momentum of the movement cannot be seen on the surface; however, most of the leaders that did have significant roles in the movement attended the school either before their involvement in the movement or during the demonstrations of the 1960s. Because these same leaders were linked to nationally known organizations such as the NAACP, Highlander's role became overshadowed by the notoriety of those organizations on the front line.

HFS not only guided the student movement, it also helped the

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 214.

³⁷ Freeman, *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, 10.

older leaders of the movement develop their strategies. Many civil rights leaders passed through HFS's doors and attended many of the school's workshops during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, including E.D. Nixon; Rosa Parks; Septima Clark, director of workshops in 1955 and a long time school teacher who became instrumental in working with Rosa Parks while at Highlander and who worked diligently with the sit-in students; Reverend C.T. Vivian, leader of the Nashville sit-ins who brought to the attention of the students the need for conservative members of the black community to instill the use of economic pressure along with the sit-in movement; Esau Jenkins, who served as coordinator of Highlander's Citizenship School Program in the Sea Islands of South Carolina; Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, a well known pioneer of nonviolent direct action and the leader of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR); and Ella Baker, cofounder and executive secretary to SCLC who called for a conference for April 15-17, 1960, and encouraged the formation of SNCC at her old alma mater, Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. All of the above implemented strategies learned during their stay at Highlander.³⁸

Highlander not only helped provide the young black leadership that evolved as sit-in leaders but as civic leaders later in life. Marion Barry, who graduated from Fisk University, attended HFS workshops in the early 1960s. Barry became the first SNCC chairman and today serves as mayor of Washington, DC. John Lewis, an American Baptist Seminary student also of Nashville, Tennessee, became the third chairman of SNCC between 1963 and 1966 and later became a congressman from Georgia. He too attended HFS in the years of 1959 and 1960. James Bevel and Bernard Lafayette, former HFS students, both attended American Baptist Seminary and then served on SNCC's steering committee.³⁹

Myles Horton and the HFS staff, while attending a sit-in work-

shop two weeks before the SCLC convention at Raleigh, NC, recommended that the young leaders create their own organization. Many of the SNCC early inner leadership had attended the April 1960 HFS college workshop. HFS saw the importance of the students governing themselves in order to keep the sit-in movement alive.⁴⁰ Although CORE, SCLC and the NAACP wanted to control the students to better serve their own interests, a few gifted individuals such as Myles Horton and one of his former workshop students, Ella Baker, both saw the in-fighting between the three groups and knew this would likely be the demise of the student movement. After the founding of SNCC in 1960, HFS instructed the sit-in students in the early 1960s that they needed to formulate various kinds of new and continued action in order to guarantee the survival of SNCC for the next five years. Both SNCC leaders and the HFS staff formulated four major steps to be taken. The first was better planned sit-in demonstrations so long as they were useful. The second was participation in economic boycotts when practical. The third was picketing where most effective. The fourth was the need for a religious basis for the protest.⁴¹ Not all activists attended HFS workshops on desegregation and sit-in strategies. Anne Moody had been one of those participants in the 1960s that received her training in the sit-in techniques from John Slater, who was in charge of the NAACP at Tougaloo. She questioned the leadership provided by the NAACP. While awaiting to be bailed out of jail for an arrest during a sit-in demonstration, she stated, "I just got my kicks out of sitting there [Jail] looking at the ministers. Some of them looked so pitiful, I thought they would cry any minute, and here they were, supposed to be our leaders."⁴² However, Moody never became a leader of the movement, only a follower as thousands of others involved in the actual demonstrations.

The Sit-In Movement that began February 1, 1960, grew by the

⁴⁰ Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 245-46.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 245.

⁴² Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi: An Autobiography* (New York, 1968), 272.

³⁸ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 146. Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 179.

³⁹ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 147.

The Role of the Church in the Civil Rights Movement

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he civil rights era of the 1950s-1960s was a turbulent time for the entire United States, (but the South, as it had always been, was certainly the most tumultuous). In the early fifties, plagued by unfair voter registration practices, segregation and Jim Crow laws, African-Americans in the South began to take a stand for their rights. To do this, they looked to the one foundation which had stood strong for them throughout their entire existence in this country—the church. Though there has been little dispute that the church was an irreplaceable part of the black family's life, historians have debated the church's role in the civil rights movement. Historian Adam Fairclough contends that it was laymen rather than men of the cloth who spearheaded the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. However, many other historians disagree, putting the church at the head of most, if not all, civil rights activities. The church had been an integral part of the African-American family life from the beginning, religion being their only solace from the horror and unjust treatment they had succumbed to since slavery. The church preached freedom, liberation, and equality which is exactly what they desired, and precisely what they sought. In the fifties and sixties the church was still a driving force in the African-American agenda. Freedom had been granted, but equality stood yet unforseen as a reachable goal in the distance, but not without the help of God and the church. By instilling motivation, providing

end of February to thirty cities and seven states. By mid-April 1960, 100 communities and over 50,000 blacks and whites had participated in some sort of sit-in demonstration.⁴³ Within 18 months, 70,000 people had participated in sit-ins, according to the Southern Regional Council.⁴⁴ The sit-ins spread to every state in the deep South and several border states including Ohio, Illinois and Nevada. Sit-ins involved more people than any other civil rights movement in its history: 70,000 blacks and whites in more than 800 sit-in demonstrations in over 100 communities.⁴⁵ No previous activities of the southern civil rights movement had generated this widespread activism among whites across the nation.⁴⁶

Highlander began utilizing strategies developed at its school in 1932 and remained a solid foundation on which many civil rights leaders built. HFS provided insight to the sit-in protesters and leaders. With the guidance of HFS, the sit-ins, along with the economic boycott, ended the desegregation of public facilities. Sit-ins only worked when the adult black population within the communities boycotted the same premises. This brought the white establishments to their knees. The first fell on May 10, 1960, in Nashville, Tennessee. The black population provided twenty percent of all downtown business. With ninety-eight percent of all blacks cooperating in the Nashville boycott, the white business owners opted to raise the white flag and surrender. Lunch counters also desegregated throughout Nashville. The same happened in Savannah, Georgia in 1961.⁴⁷ The sit-in movement of the 1960s achieved a major victory for the civil rights movement thanks to the guidance and help from Highlander Folk School. The driving force behind the sit-in movement, obviously, was the passionate individuals who believed skin color should not inhibit any person's rights. Although the real fire started within the people, HFS kept the embers burning.

⁴³ Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School*, 145.

⁴⁴ Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 257.

⁴⁵ Lomax, *The Negro Revolt*, 124.

⁴⁶ Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, 222.

⁴⁷ Lomax, *The Negro Revolt*, 129-31.