

Week 4 - Chapters 6 & 7

Group Discussions

Names: Cameron Walsh, Carmella Iacovetta, Claire
Leitner

Most interesting thing this week:

JFk: It is interesting to note that he learned how to expect extreme allegiance when the Defense Secretary's staff at the Pentagon under Defense Secretary McNamara would check the hood of cars to see how early they arrived at work.

Question for Discussion: Why aren't Native Americans/Mexican American rights not as focused on as African American rights in Chapter 6?

Names: Nick, Barrett, Sarah, William

Most interesting thing this week: The one thing that our group came up with was the sit-ins and protests during the Civil Rights Movements, and how it was one of the many things that brought people together to battle the ideas of segregation, and the rights that the citizens had versus what the government was giving to them, essentially fighting for the right thing, and trying to change the things for not just local citizens, but the broader American people, and how, going forward, would change the United States.

Question for Discussion: Why did it take college students sitting at a lunch counter to spark a movement in the South instead of older civil rights leaders?

Names: Dorothy, Eileen, Gabby

Planning before the Rosa Parks arrest and resulting actions.:

When regular people conduct a boycott such as a sit-down, is it the fastest way to change policy?

Names: Rye Mullins, Hana Gebretsadik, Laith Schroeder, Priscilla Pena

Most interesting thing this week:

We all thought that the scale of the Little Rock 9 was interesting. The textbook stated that thousands of troops were deployed to the city all because some kids wanted to go to school. Even today in 2026, Little Rock has under 1 million people, much less back then. However, that didn't stop a small town from making a big scene all because it wouldn't let kids learn.

We found that Kennedy's influence and involvement in the civil rights movement didn't start until the later end of his presidency, which was interesting because his legacy is mostly filled with praise for his actions to support the NAACP and other Black activists. His early presidency was mostly economic focused, and according to a British journalist in chapter seven, was dubbed "an absolute failure".

Question for Discussion:

Does the end result of Kennedy's presidency makeup for his inaction at the beginning of it? How much progress could have occurred if Kennedy did more at the start?

Names: Matthew Price, Christopher Woodbridge, Nathan Gounongbe, Finley Osborne

Most interesting thing this week: Something I find interesting is that the reason Kennedy started to focus on civil rights issues was to bolster the US economy rather than actually care for Black American Citizens. The economy that Kennedy inherited was rough. With the US only having a 2.5% GNP increase each year while the USSR was reported to be at 7%. Kennedy decided that he was going to “create a higher standard of living for our less fortunate citizens”. It feels as if Kennedy used Black Americans as tools for success.

Question for Discussion: Why is JFK seen as such a good president by the general public, when in reality he held back the civil rights movement, and seemed to use Black Americans as mere tools?

Names: John H, Mariah A, Noor G, Omar A

Most interesting thing this week: The amount of political violence and negative reactions to that violence from the American people. It is also interesting to think about how the government was not pushing for the support of the civil rights movement.

Question for Discussion: How are the American people able to separate their agreements with a president's policies and their disagreements with their moral values?