About SIRS Decades™

The use of primary source documents offers students a direct glimpse into the past. But without context, these sources can confuse as often as illuminate. SIRS Decades: 20th Century American Sources places these resources into a relevant framework for understanding that enriches both the content and students’ experiences with the material. This solution features nearly 5,000 hand-selected primary and secondary source articles highlighting key events, movements, people, and places in 20th-century America. Coverage includes documents, letters/memos, editorial cartoons, streaming video, websites, photographs, maps, advertisements, and published articles—some available from the UMI® microfilm vault for the first time in digital format.

SIRS® editorial staff carefully selects material based on its relevancy to the topic, range of viewpoints, authoritativeness, readability, and extent of coverage to ensure that users receive best-of-content. The compilation of these often hard-to-find resources into one integrated source lets students spend more time using content, not finding it. The colorful, user-friendly interface makes it easy to locate information. Users can browse by decade, topic, or timeline, or they can use keyword, subject, and advanced search features to develop targeted queries. Plus, regularly updated editorial features like the Cartoon Gallery bring to light documents on interesting and timely topics.

Each decade features an overview essay, spotlighted images, and list of related topics. By selecting a topic, students can access specific primary and secondary sources associated with the topic and further background essays that place the sources into context. All documents include a summary, which provides brief contextual information and description of the source. In addition, Document Based Questions and So What? callouts for most topics help students work with the sources and better understand the modern implications of historical events.

Part 1: Basic Search Techniques

All SIRS Decades research begins at the main search page. You can search this resource by clicking a decade (A), conduct a search (B), or use the timeline (C) to expose related topics.
Decades bar search
To start a basic search utilizing the Decades bar, we clicked the 1960s link at the top (D).

Each decade home page displays a unique, SIRS-written introduction, which includes in-line hyperlinks (F) to related source documents, along with a complete list of topic links (E).

To continue, we clicked the Civil Rights topics link (E).

Timeline search
To conduct a similar search, we clicked the Timeline button on the main search page.

To continue, click a decade near the top, or select an individual overarching topic. We clicked 1960.
Click a topic to continue. In this case, selecting *African-American Civil Rights Movement* will lead us to the same topic as in the previous example.
Part 2: Working with a Topic Result

After clicking an individual topic, the results appear.
Each topic offers an in-depth overview essay which includes in-line hyperlinks (H) to related source documents. You'll also find our So What? (I) feature, which offers links to current articles that show a connection with a contemporary issue.

You can also click the call out photograph (G) to view a larger version. You can select individual resource documents (J) to continue. Note that each result includes small icons to the right of its title. Those small icons denote the type of source, as shown in the key above the first result. Finally you can click on the Web sites tab (K) to view featured web sites on the topic.

Teachers, take note of the Document Based Questions (L) button near the top. Clicking this link will display a question related to the topic, along with an editorially-selected list of primary source documents that will help students research and answer the question.

Identify minority grievances during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement; then classify protest strategies and evaluate their effectiveness in achieving government relief of minority grievances.

**Primary Source Documents**

**Army Troops in Capital As Racial Riot**

*New York Times (New York, NY)* April 6, 1968

Almost immediately after the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., riots broke out in Washington, D.C., Detroit, Chicago, Boston, Jackson, Raleigh, and Tallahassee. Looters, mostly young African-American males, burned buildings, burglarized stores, and destroyed property. The National Guard was called in to calm the disorder. In a Washington, D.C., rally, former chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee declared that "white America has declared war on black America" because of the murder of Dr. King. He also urged African-Americans to "go home and get your guns."

**Black Panthers March in Rally to "Free Huey"**

*Nation Archive by Getty Images* circa 1969

These members of the Black Panther movement are wearing black berets, and they carry banners with an image of a panther above the slogan "Free Huey." The Black Panther Party was a black nationalist organization with Marxist revolutionary leanings, strongly influenced together with the other Black Power movements by the writings of Marcus Garvey. It was founded in 1966 by bobby seale and Bobby Seale. The Panthers worked to improve the social and political conditions of the black community and had over 2,000 members in the major American cities in the 1950s. The Panthers supported physical force and armed confrontation for black liberation; they carried guns, which they believed were necessary to protect their communities from police brutality. They often became involved in confrontations with the police and in 1967 Newton was tried for the murder of an Oakland policeman and found guilty. The conviction was overturned two years later after massive protests from his supporters. Seale was also arrested and imprisoned before being later released. Both leaders declared after their release that they renounced political violence.

**Black Power Salute at 1960 Olympics**

*Nation Archive by Getty Images* Oct. 16, 1968

Athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos, winners of the gold and bronze medals in the 200 meters event in the 1968 Mexico Olympics, used the medal ceremony to promote the cause of black equality in the United States. They bowed their heads and raised their gloved fists in a "Black Power" salute during the American national anthem. Smith has a black scarf around his neck to represent black pride and the athletes are wearing black socks without shoes as a symbol of black poverty. After the medal presentation, Smith and Carlos were expelled from both the Olympic village and the American team. Smith later said, "We were there to stand up for human rights and to stand up for black Americans."
Part 3: Keyword/subject heading search

To conduct a basic keyword or subject heading search, simply enter your keywords into the search box (X), and choose whether you want the results returned in relevance or date order. You may choose to conduct a keyword/natural language search, or a subject heading search. Click a radio button to choose the query type.

Next, you may also limit your query to a specific decade or a date range (Y), then place checks next to the types of source documents to be returned (Z). Click SEARCH to continue.

A subject heading search returns a concise list of topics that can be clicked to continue.

You searched for: submarine*  
Search

Refine Search

Alvin (Submarine)  
Diving, Submarine  
Nuclear submarines  
Submarine diving  
Submarine forces  
Submarine research stations, Manned  
Submarine warfare  
Submarines (Ships)  
Submarines (Ships), Germany  
Submarines (Ships), Japan  
Topography, Submarine  
Warfare, Submarine
A keyword/natural language search will return a set of sources that can be browsed, along with relevant topic matches in the upper right-hand corner that can lead students to additional materials of interest.
**Part 4: Working with a Source Document**

After clicking a source title in the results list, the full text, image, cartoon, etc. appears.

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Doughnuts and Democracy

Marion A. Wright speaks about the sit-in at the Woolworth’s in Greensboro, North Carolina, against segregation as an inevitable fight for human rights. As a white man, he argues that the are not as much a difference between black and white but between intelligence and decency of depravity. He states that our nation is connected and behavior in one state will affect others in Detroit to be moral citizens who support the civil rights movement especially in their private life their fellow human beings. Photos are added along with the text of the speech.

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At the top, you can return to the Decades main search page by clicking the banner (M), or select a new decade (N).

Under the navigation elements, you can click Source (O) to view detailed information about the displayed resource, or click Printable PDF (P) to load the source into Adobe Acrobat Reader for easy output to your local printing device. You can also send the source document to someone via email (Q).

Finally, you’ll find the full text or image of the source document, along with an editorially written introduction.