Research Paper: Analysis of a Civil Rights Movement prayer event
AAS/HSTA 417 Prayer and Civil Rights
Tobin Miller Shearer

Assignment
Write a 20-page research paper that explains the significance of a public prayer event (or events) during the civil rights movement between 1948 and 1976.

Thesis
The paper must defend a thesis that explains why the prayer(s) mattered arising from analysis of how the civil rights activists prayed, the historical, cultural and social forces that shaped their prayers, and the historical significance of their prayers.

Evidence
The thesis must be based on analysis of
• primary evidence about the prayer event (i.e. newspaper accounts, photographs, video footage, audio recordings, oral histories, etc.);
• each paper needs to reference a minimum of two new primary sources of prayer in civil rights settings (in addition to those provided by the course instructor);
• a minimum of ten secondary sources (ex.: only peer-reviewed academic journals, books, and book chapters allowed – no Wikipedia, encyclopedia entries, or magazines allowed). Students may include up to three secondary sources from assigned readings as part of the ten minimum secondary sources.

Organization
The paper should be presented with clear and appropriate ordering of information, analysis, and narrative.

Prose
The paper should be written in clear, well-structured prose.

Grammar and mechanics
The paper should employ correct grammar and punctuation.

Citation
The paper should document research findings according to the Chicago Manual of Style and/or the Seven-step Footnoting Process handout.

Formatting
The paper should
• use double space, 12 point font, and be twenty pages in length (with a half-page allowance over or under the assigned length) with numbered pages and one inch margins all around. No additional spaces should be added between paragraphs;
• include an unnumbered cover page with student’s name and title of paper.

Submission
The paper must be uploaded to the class website as a Microsoft Word “.doc” or “.docx” file by the announced due date(s) and time(s) and saved with the following name form: student lastname–research.doc. See the class syllabus for a description of the points awarded at each draft stage.
Research paper rubric: Analysis of a Civil Rights Movement prayer event
AAS/HSTA 417 Prayer and Civil Rights
Tobin Miller Shearer

An A paper will:
- present a clearly articulated, creative, interpretive thesis arising from rigorous analysis of a civil rights movement prayer event between 1948 and 1976. An A level thesis will explain not just that the prayer event succeed or failed but will instead make an argument arising from study of how the civil rights activists prayed, the historical, cultural and social forces that shaped their prayers, and/or the significance of their prayers. In short, an excellent thesis explains why the prayer(s) mattered;
- defend the thesis by drawing on primary evidence about the prayer event (i.e. newspaper accounts, photographs, video footage, audio recordings, oral histories, etc.). Students need a minimum of two new primary instances of prayer in civil rights settings (in addition to those provided by the course instructor) and a minimum of ten secondary sources (ex: only peer-reviewed academic journals, books, and book chapters allowed – no Wikipedia, encyclopedia entries, or magazines allowed). Students may include up to three sources from assigned readings as part of the ten minimum secondary sources;
- present the argument in a logically organized fashion;
- use Chicago Manual of Style footnoting form without a bibliography;
- contain no errors in standard edited English grammar, punctuation, spelling, or paragraph form;
- use double space, 12 point font, and be twenty pages in length (with a half-page allowance over or under the assigned length) with numbered pages and one inch margins all around. No additional spaces should be added between paragraphs;
- include an unnumbered cover page with student’s name and title of paper;
- be uploaded to the class website as a Microsoft Word “.doc” or “.docx” file by the announced due date and time and saved with the following name form: student lastname-research.doc

A B paper will:
- include but fail to develop a clearly articulated central thesis;
- fail to defend the thesis with sufficient primary and secondary evidence as described above;
- lack a coherent and logical structure;
- include inaccurate or inconsistent use of Chicago Manual of Style footnote form;
- contain several errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, or paragraph form;
- be over the maximum or under the minimum page assignment by more than half a page.
- fail to meet the announced deadline.

A C paper will:
- lack a clearly discernable thesis;
- contain only scant evidence from primary and secondary sources;
- provide insufficient or inaccurate analysis;
- contain significant errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, or paragraph form.

A D paper will:
- fail to include central elements of thesis, evidence, argument, and conclusion;
- be disorganized;
- contain poor and inexcusable use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, or paragraph form.

A F paper will:
- fail to take the assignment seriously and display no evidence of work or attention to the assignment.