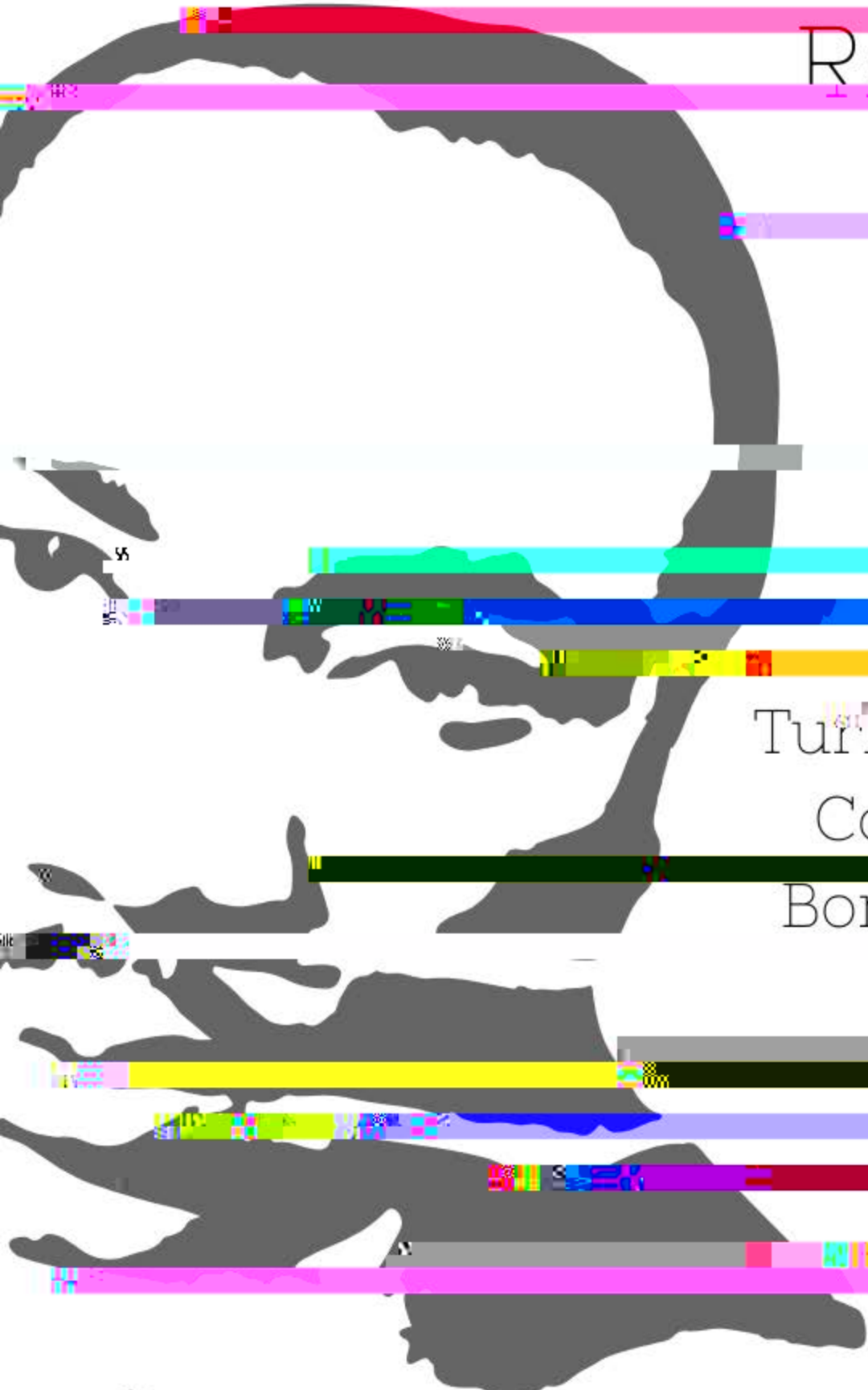


MEMPHIS CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH DAY

Reflection Guide



Rhodes College

Turley Memphis Center for

Community Engagement

Bonner Center for Service

January 20, 2020



THE LYTTLE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH



SEAL OF RHODES COLLEGE

A black and white photograph of two women with curly hair, one holding a large bouquet of flowers, with a quote overlaid. The image is partially obscured by a series of horizontal, multi-colored digital glitch lines.

**IN THE END
WE WILL REMEMBER
NOT THE WORDS
OF OUR ENEMIES
BUT THE SILENCE
OF OUR FRIENDS**

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR

THE MAN

Today Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is remembered and studied for his leadership in the equality movement. Stating for all people regardless of "race, color, creed, or national origin" he is remembered worldwide for his speeches like the "I Have a Dream" speech and his assassination.

Dr. King was a highly contentious figure and nearly 75% of Americans polled disapproved of him at the time of his assassination April 4, 1968. The 1968 Civil Rights Act was the last major piece of legislation guaranteeing equal protection to all. King's assassination prompted widespread riots that pressured the government to sign the bill into law.

Dr. King's platform of nonviolence was a major component of his heroization in an era of frequent public unrest, violent riots, and lethal racial violence against Black communities. That ideology was and is utilized to push the moral majority for nonreactive, nonradical activism.

While Dr. King was nonviolent he was not non-disruptive which can be displayed by his 29 arrests. He was able to accomplish much through his style of operationalized activism across Southern states and into a national platform, meeting with leaders at home and abroad to discuss race relations, nonviolence, and liberation struggles around the world.



”

The ultimate measure of a man is not
where he sits or stands or how he
comfort and convenience, but
he stands at times of challenge
and controversy.

THE HISTORY

15 years following the murder of Dr. King, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill into law making the third Monday of January a national holiday to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The original campaign started just four days after his death, proposed as a bill that was rejected by the House. It would take several more years before Congress would reintroduce the bill. In the meantime, states decreed the holiday on their own. A bill was finally passed by both the House and Senate on November 8, 1983, the first national celebration took place on January 20, 1986 although some states continued to boycott the holiday.

In 1994, the holiday became the King Holiday and Service Act, designating the King Holiday as a national day of volunteer service. Instead of a day off from work or school, Congress asked Americans of all backgrounds and ages to celebrate Dr. King's legacy by turning community concerns into citizen action.

Rhodes College mirrors this concept and supports a day of community action to bring together people from all walks of life, breaking down walls, building bridges, and serving the communities that surround us everyday.



True appearance is not merely the absence
of tension, it is a *twofold* joy

THE LEGACY TODAY

2023 Pew Research suggests that just over 80% of adults polled in the United States say that Martin Luther King Jr. has had a positive impact on the country, with 47% saying Dr. King has had a very positive impact. 38% suggests their own views on equality have been shaped by King's legacy.

On this MLK Jr. Day of service consider not only why you serve but what your commitment to service will be for the remainder of this year. Consider making a pledge to continue to serve individually or with a group for ongoing civic engagement while at Rhodes and at home.

Consider Dr. King's principles of unity, respect, service, peace, and justice during a service project for the day/week.

Talk about the community need that your service addressed and how it's impacted by systems around it.

Consider how misinformation to that need has impacted your own ideas and awareness prior to it.

Seek continued growth in your own understanding of the complexities of those ideas.

Utilize your awareness, education, and experience to dismantle and disrupt through civic engagement

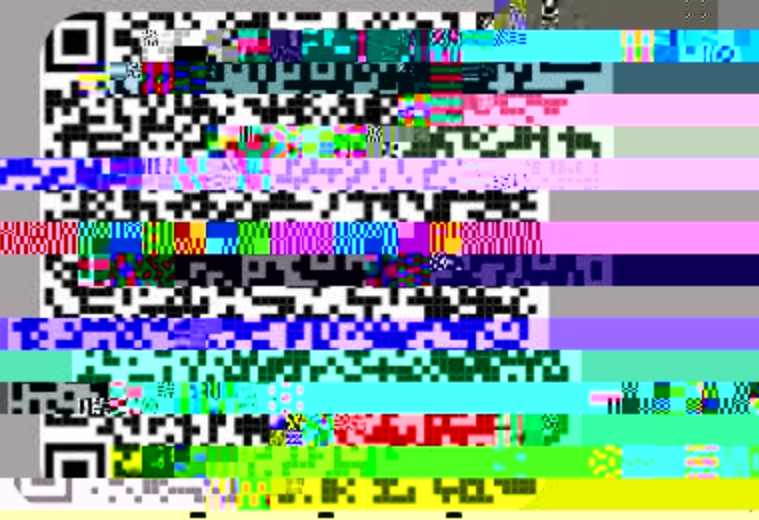
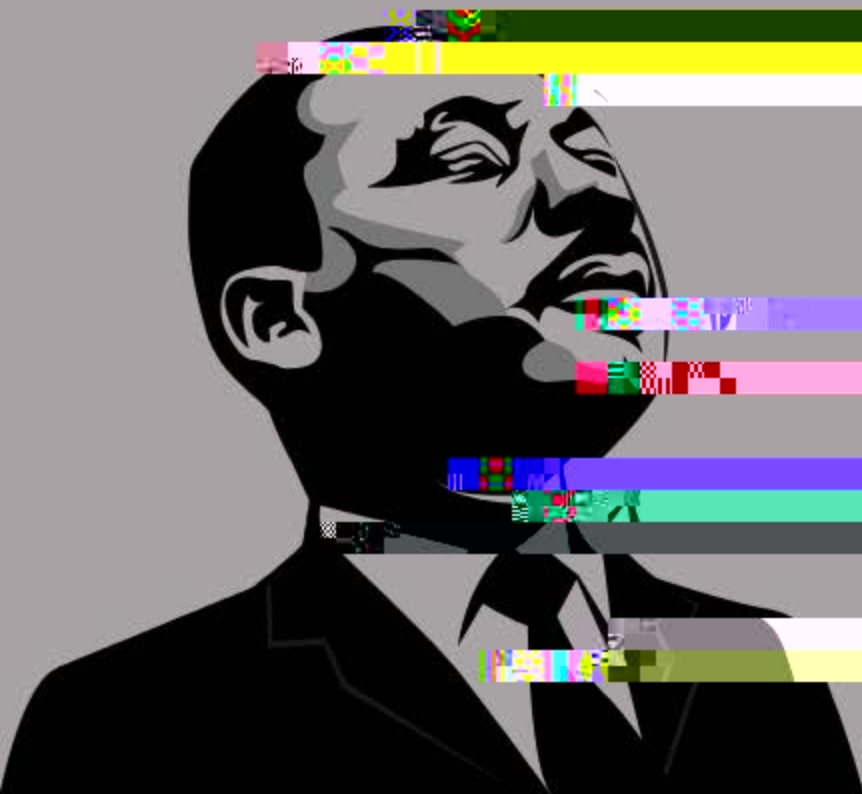
GETTING INVOLVED

Show up for the city! There are **multiple** ways to get involved. Start today and **make a difference.**

For more MLK Day resources, visit <http://www.mlkday.gov/>

Review local opportunities through Volunteer Odyssey [here](#), or use the code below.

You can also visit Rhodes Engage all [day long](#) and upcoming opportunities to stay engaged. Contact Service@rhodes.edu



POST-SERVICE REFLECTIONS

- How were your assumptions and biases challenged?
- How do you think differently about our societal justice?
- Who did you meet today? What did you learn from them?
 - What did you learn about yourself today?
 - What was one high/low moment for today?
- What was signed on you in an unexpected way today?
 - How were you inspired today?
 - What are you grateful for?
- What did you learn about the community?
 - How did your experience change/grow your understanding of solidarity?

How can you create opportunities for solidarity on campus?

How do you plan to take what you've learned into your peer groups?