

**The Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections has a variety of primary sources relating to the 2014 History Day theme “Rights and Responsibilities.” Below are a sampling of topics and corresponding resources available online and in person at the MSU Archives in East Lansing, Michigan.**

### **U.S. Commission on Civil Rights**

*The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is responsible for investigating and making recommendations regarding civil rights issues. President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed MSU President John A. Hannah as the first chairman of the Commission on Civil Rights. In a January 14, 1958 letter to Michigan Governor G. Mennen Williams, President Hannah gave an explanation for accepting the position:*

*“Eventually I assented because of the conviction that this is the most important single problem facing our country both from the standpoint of our domestic tranquility and from the standpoint of long-time relationships with the uncommitted areas of the world that are so vital to the long-time well-being of our country.”*

*During Hannah’s tenure, the Commission investigated voter registration and elections in Montgomery, Alabama, education for Mexican Americans in San Antonio, Texas, and housing conditions of African Americans in Cleveland, Ohio, to name a few. Although the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights had no enforcement powers, it did have a significant impact on public opinion.*

Online resources:

Photographs -

[Civil Rights Commission meeting with President John F. Kennedy, 1961](#)

[Civil Rights Commission meeting, August 1961](#)

[Civil Rights Commission posing with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1959](#)

[John A. Hannah at Civil Rights Commission meeting, undated](#)

[Robert Kennedy speaking at Civil Rights Commission meeting, undated](#)

[Civil Rights Commission members posing with maps, undated](#)

Resources at MSU Archives:

John A. Hannah papers (UA 2.1.12), boxes 100-111

“John Hannah’s Historic Role in Advancing Civil Rights,” by Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, *MSU Alumni Magazine*, Winter 1989 (Serial #18)

Civil Rights Commission materials, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0), box 378, folders 91-103

United States Commission on Civil Rights Hearings - photographs, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0)

### **Student protests - Civil Rights - 1989 Administration Building occupation**

*In May of 1989 approximately 300 students occupied the Hannah Administration Building for eight days. The students submitted a list of demands regarding issues such as racism on campus, hiring Black faculty and staff, and graduation rates of African American students. Many of these demands paralleled MSU Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action (MSU-IDEA), a plan for advancing excellence through diversity within the MSU community, which was created by the Office of the Provost and submitted to the Board of Trustees in April 1989. Negotiations between the student protesters and MSU President John DiBiaggio resulted in cultural training for MSU Police officers, more scholarship money based on need, and the creation of a minority advisor to the Provost.*

Online resources:

Photographs:

[Female student styles hair of another student during the 1989 Hannah Building occupation](#)

[Two students sit together during the 1989 Hannah Building student sit in](#)

[Group of students during the 1989 student occupation of Hannah Building](#)

[Female student signs a card during the 1989 Hannah Building student occupation](#)

[Students making a protest banner during the 1989 student occupation of the Hannah Building](#)

[Female student looking at newspaper during 1989 student occupation of the Hannah Building](#)

[Student led away by police during the 1989 student occupation of the Hannah Building](#)

[Students in a doorway during the 1989 student occupation of the Hannah Building](#)

[Five students stand in front of the doors to the Hannah Building during the 1989 student occupation](#)

Resources at MSU Archives:

*Red Cedar Log* yearbook, 1989

Media Communication records (UA 8.1.1), box 1809, folder 8

### **Student protests – Compulsory ROTC**

*For many years, men enrolled at Michigan State University were required to participate in Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), a training program for commissioned officers of the U.S. Armed Forces. In 1960, students protested against the compulsory ROTC program. ROTC became an elective (optional) in 1962. The ROTC program came under fire again in 1967 and 1969, as students questioned the role of the military at MSU.*

Online resources:

Photographs:

[March against compulsory ROTC, 1960](#)

[1960 March to protest compulsory ROTC](#)

[Protest against compulsory ROTC, 1960](#)

[Protest against compulsory ROTC, 1960](#)

Resources at MSU Archives:

Vice President for Student Affairs Student Protest files (UA 7.0), box 1050H, folder 3-5

“Academic Freedom Report,” Don Stevens papers (UA 1.1.2), box 6, folder 90

“The Case for the Required ROTC Programs,” 1959, Department of Military Science/ ROTC records, file drawer, folder 8

“Telegram – Department of Army position on compulsory ROTC training, 1959,” Department of Military Science/ ROTC records, file drawer, folder 15

Newspaper clippings and statements, 1970, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0), box 3040, folders 60-63

### **Student protests – Vietnam War**

*During the Vietnam War, students at Michigan State University held protests and marches to show their disapproval of the war. In 1965 a “teach in” was held at MSU to examine and critique American policy in Vietnam.*

Online resources:

Photographs -

[Students gather to protest the Vietnam War, October 15, 1969](#)

[MSU president Walter Adams marches with protesters for peace, 1969](#)

[The March for Peace, October 15, 1969](#)

Interviews -

[Transcript of interview with Steve Meuche](#) (including remarks about Vietnam War protests)

[Transcript of interview with Philip Korth](#) (including remarks about Vietnam War protests)

Resources at MSU Archives:

Vice President for Student Affairs Student Protest files (UA 7.0), box 1050H, folder 6-9

Thomas Greer papers (UA 17.21), box 2907, folders 32-41

Michigan State University Student Strike 1970 records (UA 26.1)

Petitions for Protest against Expansion of War in Laos and Cambodia, 1971-1972, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0), box 3040, folder 50

Protests Spring 1970, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0), box 3040, folder 56

Responses to Requests about Memorials, Strikes, and Protests, 1971, Vice President for University Relations records (UA 8.0), box 3040 folder 59

## **American Civil War**

Online resources:

Digitized letters, diaries and photographs from our Civil War collections -

<http://civilwar.archives.msu.edu/>

Resources at MSU Archives:

[A guide to our Civil War collections](#)

## **Operation Crossroads (nuclear bomb tests)**

*Operation Crossroads was a series of nuclear bomb tests by the United States in the Bikini Atoll in 1946. Residents of Bikini were relocated to other parts of the Marshall Islands prior to the tests. The Bikini Atoll remains uninhabited because of high levels of radiation.*

Online resources:

Background information about Operation Crossroads and biographical information about Perry M. Thomas. Also includes images from the scrapbook -

[http://archives.msu.edu/documents/PerryMThomas\\_exhibit\\_web.pdf](http://archives.msu.edu/documents/PerryMThomas_exhibit_web.pdf)

Resources at MSU Archives:

Perry M. Thomas collection (00227) - contains a scrapbook about Operation Crossroads, a 1946 nuclear bomb test in the Bikini Atoll, and a DVD of a newsreel about the tests on the Bikini Atoll.

## **Disability Rights**

*Students and staff at Michigan State University held protests and marches, and worked with MSU administrators to make the campus accessible for the disabled.*

Resources at MSU Archives:

Associate Provost records (UA 3.4), box 1332, folder 17, box 1359, folders 1-9, box 1363, folder 23, box 1403, folder 38, box 1424, folder 14

John A. DiBiaggio papers (UA 2.1.17), box 3098, folder 13

Clifton R. Wharton papers (UA 2.1.14), box 625, folder 19-24

Office of Facilities, Planning, and Space Management records (UA 4.7), box 2581, folders 1-33

*Red Cedar Log* yearbook, 1977

## **Title IX and women's athletics at MSU**

*In 1972 Title IX legislation was approved prohibiting the exclusion of individuals from full participation in educational programs on the basis of sex or gender. Despite this new legislation, unequal funding for female and male athletes was still the rule. In the 1977-78 season funds allocated for men amounted to \$776,000, while women received less than \$85,000.*

*In 1978 a formal complaint was filed on behalf of the MSU women's basketball team before the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Office of Civil Rights. This lawsuit precipitated a significant transformation in the support for female athletes at Michigan State University.*

Online resources:

[Transcript of interview with Karen Langeland](#), MSU Women's Basketball coach

Resources at MSU Archives:

Title IX Audit, 1976, Edgar L. Harden papers (UA 2.1.15), Box 914, Folder 3

Title IX Information folder

**Questions, comments, concerns? Contact the archivists at the MSU Archives!**

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