

# The civil rights movement: 1920 and 1950

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While there were militant protests, mainly led by the NAACP under the direction of WEB DuBois, much of the movement was directed at celebrating African-American culture. Faced with segregation and the legal denial of the right to vote African-Americans turned to their own community for support. The Harlem Renaissance brought forth writers and artists that defined the African-American culture and popularized black art, music, and literature. This would form the backbone of future organizations that were based on black culture.

The 1920s were ushered in with a nation that was tense from the riots of 1919 and African-American leaders were faced with the task of framing the new movement. The goal of the New Negro movement was to codify a set of ideas that would organize the African-Americans as a group with a common cause. Racism was rampant in many parts of the country as groups such as the Ku Klux Klan violently intimidated African-Americans from gaining any political power. While there were attempts to rise up against the violence, the goal of the movement was to define and organize the African-Americans as a cohesive political and social unit.

During the 1920s a large number of African-Americans migrated from the South to the industrialized North and brought with them the political strength of numbers. While the 1920s focused on defining what it meant to be black in America, by the 1950s, they had gained enough political strength to launch large scale protests and demonstrations. By 1950 the civil rights movement was able to bring the issue of inequality into the justice system resulting in decisions such as Brown vs. Board of Education that overturned a century of injustice. The concentration of black voters in major cities enabled the movement to become more focused and more militant.

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In conclusion, the civil rights movement of the 1920s celebrated African-American culture while the movement in the 1950s emphasized constitutional rights. The artistic movement of the 1920s helped define the race and was instrumental in creating a cohesive group that could organize to work for their rights. The civil rights movement was faced with violent racism in the 1920s and the goals of the movement were to stem the atrocities and organize the race. As the movement evolved into the 1950s, concentrations of black voters in the major cities gave the movement the power to protest, access to the justice system, and a greater commitment to the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the constitution.