

Analysis of the river of no return by cleveland sellers

[Politics](#), [Civil Rights](#)



The civil rights movement was a time of great struggle. Struggle for social justice, gain equal rights under the law. The civil war abolished slavery but that did not end segregation. African Americans were just not getting the equal rights as whites, which charged tons of frustrations and a need for change. The racial discrimination, the harsh violent treatment, and the separate but equal, were just more of the reasons for African Americans to fight back for a change. African Americans along with some Caucasians sought to end discrimination by impactful marches and demonstrations for the fight for equality. The River of No Return reveals that segregation has been a dyer issue for decades, the court systems were not taking substantial requirements for equality. The autobiography paves the perspective of a visual of the many struggles faced during the 1960s.

Dr. Cleveland Sellers is a dedicated civil rights activist with strong beliefs, courage and determination. He was a strong part of the civil rights movement. He was extremely instrumental in forming the SNCC, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. This text showed me very horrific an unimaginable time of events. However, there are many ways to experience this text. Some maybe angry, some may be saddened, as for me I have been encouraged. I really hope you enjoy my findings.

From the start of segregation in his hometown movie theater, by becoming segregated to a white section and a black section. Sellers really begins to unfold the harsh and cruel reality of criminal retaliation against African Americans. At this point, Sellers embarks on a devastating and impacting crime injustice, in “ The River of No Return”. The urge grew from the

gruesome death of an African American boy could have easily been another African American child. The death of young African American boy, Emmett Till, just 3 years older than Sellers, became more encourage to know what the segregation made African Americans face at the time. Emmett was a 14 year old African American boy beaten almost tortured. This gruesome crime was committed by the local rednecks, one of which enraged from Emmett's whistle at his wife. When Emmett was visiting a local store in Mississippi, Alabama, he whistled at an attractive Caucasian woman when leaving. White men kidnapped and killed Emmett when they found him walking down the road, later that day. His body was found in a river after being lynched and unmerciful beating, revealing axe-like gashes to the head and face. His death was not justified by the court system. Due to the arresting and releasing of the husband and brother that were guilty of Emmett's death, this quickly was the talk in town. This was explosive and really angered many blacks. This devastated Sellers at a very young age of 11, he began to notice that this uncalled for. The men were not rightly prosecuted for what they had did to this innocent young black boy. Sellers was even exemplified in black classrooms for the despicable hate they facing and that it was wrong. While Sellers was only 11 years old at the time, this was incredible impactful. The connections of being young and black indicated, that could have easily been him. " I wanted to speak out and challenge those who said that blacks were inferior. I wanted to obliterate the " white only" signs that served as event-present reminders of our subjugation. I yearned to live in a world where I would never again be confronted with restroom signs saying, White Ladies To The Right And Colored Women To The Rear." Which only

allowed his courage to become more courageous and his determination became his motivation to stand up and change the wrongful and unfair rules enforced/put upon African Americans. Sellers found it his destiny to address the wrongful violent oppressions that all African Americans were dealing with and have thought out methods to advise the wrongful oppressions.

In February 1960, the first sit-in was in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Conducted by 4 young African American students, which caught sight of television. The heroic approach, by demanding to be served at a white lunch counter, was the enlightenment to draw enough focus to racial discrimination needed to really drive the force of the movement and many more to follow. “ Television was largely responsible for my new perceptions on Denmark and the South. It helped me to see our plight in new ways, helped me to understand that protest was viable, and sometimes successful.” The objective was clear, the activist motives were driven in attempts to inflict a stern change in segregated public facilities. After Greensboro sit-in, weeks later Denmark was ready to have their first sit-in. Planned by Sellers, they did not go unprepared, there was always a good deal of preparation before the demonstrations took place. “ Given all the planning we put into it, the demonstration was anticlimactic. The students marched into the drug store, walked quietly to the lunch counter, took seats and tried to order food.” (Sellers 21) Tactics and ideas were thoroughly discussed in the before sit-ins to prep the students for harsh reactions received from unhappy southerners. The drug store was located in Denmark, North Carolina at an heavily segregated “ whites only” lunch counter, planned by

Sellers. They started calmly seating at the segregated counter, the student insisted on being served before leaving. When refusal to end the protest or leave the primacies, conflicts did arise. The courageous young students involved most likely were arrested or physically removed by whites from the facilities, typically by police. From that point on, this shocked cities all over. African American were not being violent nor outrageous when sit-ins were in place. The sit-ins created tremendous gain in the media and news. Being arrested and forcefully removed from public facilities destined creation for something has to be done in order to make a difference. Not only allowing more protest and active involvement in the civil rights movement, but the beginning the reformation of many struggles. The South was not prepared to see such a sight. Sellers was on a steady incline with active duty for his new organization, he still faced the shame from his father to cease his involvement from all the hard work he has created. While frustrated by the lack of understanding, Sellers listen to his father that time but certainly not for very long. Sellers then applied to a boarding school, to expand his active duty. When the school received his application there was only one issue noted, race was not indicated on his application. Sellers urge to withstand the relevance his ethnic was ultimately, to have a chance of acceptance in the academy. The school was ready to accept Sellers, but once they received his true race as a "Negro" his application meant nothing to them anymore. Sellers was turned away instantly for his true race, primarily promoted by the segregated laws. This racial discrimination only heightened Sellers curiosity to gain ways to be more active in the movement. Still at a very

young age, Sellers never let all hope fail, he continued his activism along with many he met along the way.

During this time standing up to racial discrimination created negative setbacks, yet future positive gains for African Americans. “ Students were conducting kneel-ins, worship-ins, wade-ins and sit-ins in more than 125 Southern cities. Arrest and jailings ran to the thousand”. This blew up completely and made many active supporter worried but also more determined. The committed nonviolent students usually resulted in violent actions from law enforcements. The use of nonviolence was a great tactic for sit-ins demonstrations and peaceful marches. action was caused by the outrageous and unfair segregated laws. Encouraging more and more motivated students to participate in the movement. The media news of the new organization and the demonstrations being held at the time, created risk, but ultimately motivation to make a change. Sellers and members developed meetings and speeches held at churches. Invitations were sent out to get be informed and draw in important speakers. For instance, taking a stand was worth the fight. The continuous activism during this time contained immediate concerns and common goals. Topics and questions of what could and should be done, involving equality for African Americans. “ SNCC had become a way of life. Everything in their lives revolved around the organization and the struggle for racial equality”. While activism to the movement comes with a great deal of risk, Sellers was more than accepting to endure them. That was just his mindset even though he didn’t know exactly what he would face in his wildest dreams. Sellers knew by taking

action, he knew he could not just do nothing. Dr. Cleveland Sellers is an impeccable activist leader, amongst many impactful civil rights activist. His courageous beliefs and strong determination to stand up for what's right, gave many other African Americans the desire to end segregation. At such a young age in such a struggling time in America, Sellers had many tactics to overcome the racial discrimination that many African Americans faced, especially in the South.

Sellers is an activist of many, whom I would be very grateful for. His endless commitment and the risk he took made him the person he is today. I can say that because I know he could have been killed or lynched for his numerous demonstrations thrive for equality. I appreciate his first hand view point as a young African American male during such a challenging time. The uncanny and descriptive truth from a firsthand point of view, spanned from growing up in Denmark, South Carolina and his active involvement in the civil rights movement. Dr. Cleveland Sellers created a revealing seriousness of many struggles faced from segregated law which influenced many reasons for action to reform. The civil rights movement was an empowering time/era time for African Americans. The efforts of civil rights activist and countless protestors of all races brought about legislation to end segregation, black voter suppression, and discriminatory employment and housing practice.