

# Great Migration

## What inspired African Americans to leave their homes during the Great Migration?

Historians often explain migration as some combination of “push-pull” factors. Oppressive conditions at home like poverty, government persecution, military conscription, high taxes, systemic racism or lack of opportunity might be sufficient to persuade people to seek better conditions elsewhere. Likewise, economic opportunity, religious and political freedom, family ties or a desire for adventure could induce some to pack their bags for a new location.

### End of Reconstruction, Rise of the Ku Klux Klan

African Americans in the 50 years after the Civil War responded to both push and pull factors. At the end of Reconstruction and federal oversight of southern states, white majorities resumed control of the government and enacted laws severely discriminating against African Americans. They were denied the right to vote or to serve on juries. Extra-legal, racially-motivated organizations like the Ku Klux Klan terrorized African Americans with threats and incidents of lynchings and other forms of violence. Schools and public accommodations were strictly segregated, and any African American who protested or failed to obey the restrictions ran the risk of retribution, legal or otherwise. The U.S. Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld the principle of “separate but equal” facilities, but the African-American institutions were never “equal.” African-American schools were in poor facilities with inadequate textbooks with poorly paid and prepared teachers.

### The Great Migration

At the turn of the 20th Century, southern African Americans began moving North in larger numbers seeking a better living (pull) and leaving southern segregation (push). The rapid growth of northern cities like Chicago, Philadelphia, New York and Boston opened up new job possibilities and better schools. While they were often segregated, legally or informally, into African-American neighborhoods and denied the opportunity to live elsewhere, those neighborhoods often developed vibrant Black culture. The Harlem Renaissance produced outstanding music, art and literature in the 1920s.

On the other hand, African Americans faced push back from recently arrived immigrant groups who were also seeking jobs. The rapid growth of the cities put a premium on housing, and in this also, African Americans found themselves competing with other ethnic minorities. While African-American professionals might develop successful practices within the Black community, they rarely found their services welcomed in the larger society. As they had done in the South, African-American women found work as domestics, cooks and laundry workers. If white middle-class women rarely worked outside the home, economic necessity forced African-American women, married or not, to seek outside employment.

Labor shortages in World War I created new opportunities for African-American workers, and the Great Migration picked up speed. African-American struggles did not end when they arrived in the North, but they did escape the entrenched segregation of the post-Civil War South.

## Supporting Questions

Why did African Americans migrate?

- [“Lynching Black People Because They Are Black” by Frederick Douglass, April 1894 \(Document\)](#)
- [“What a Colored Man Should Do To Vote” Pamphlet from Virginia, 1900 \(Document\)](#)
- [Illustration from “The Exodus,” 1919 \(Image\)](#)
- [“Great Migration Railroad Strike 100 Years Ago Brought an Influx of African-Americans to Waterloo” Newspaper Article, February 1, 2011 \(Document\)](#)

What issues did African Americans face in the South in the beginning of the 20th century?

- [“Why Disfranchisement is Bad,” 1904 \(Document\)](#)
- [Guinn v. United States, 1914 \(Document\)](#)
- [“A New Reconstruction” Letter, May 1919 \(Document\)](#)
- [“Antilynching Bill” Report, 1921 \(Document\)](#)
- [“Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States, 1900-1931” Map, ca. 1931 \(Map\)](#)

What benefits did African Americans find in northern cities?

- [“Ho for Kansas” Advertising Flyer, March 18, 1878 \(Image\)](#)
- [“National Negro Committee” Platform, 1909 \(Document\)](#)
- [Perfect Eat Shop in Chicago, Illinois, April 1942 \(Image\)](#)
- [Two Women Working in a Factory Making Bedspring Webbing, 1969 \(Image\)](#)
- [Madame C. J. Walker and Her Mansion on the Hudson in New York, ca. 1987 \(Image\)](#)

What difficulties did African Americans find in northern cities?

- [“Chicago Race Riots Spread” Newspaper Article, July 30, 1919 \(Document\)](#)
- [African-American Man Carrying Protest Sign Outside Milk Company in Chicago, Illinois, July 1941 \(Image\)](#)
- [Picket Line at Mid-City Realty Company in Chicago, Illinois, July 1941 \(Image\)](#)
- [“White Tenants in Our White Community” Sign Directed at U.S. Federal Housing Project in Detroit, Michigan, February 1942 \(Image\)](#)
- [Interview with George Jiggetts about Moving North and Finding Work, August 19, 1994 \(Audio\)](#)

## [\\*Printable Image and Document Guide](#)

## Additional Resources

\*Links to additional resources available in the [Great Migration Primary Source Set](#).

### **The African-American Mosaic: Migrations**

This webpage features primary sources in the Library of Congress that highlight African-American journeys during the Great Migration.

### **Population Map**

This map, from the Library of Congress, shows the “Distribution of Negro population by county” in 1950.

### **“The Lynching of Negroes in the South”**

This booklet from Rev. Francis James Grimke focuses on the brutal action of lynching against African Americans in the South.

### **Guinn v. United States**

This webpage is an overview of the U.S. Supreme Court case, *Guinn v. United States*, as presented by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

### **John Baskerville Interview**

This *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier* interview, by Pat Kinney, focuses on the story of John Baskerville, who explains how African Americans migrated to the Waterloo area.

### **Chicago Examiner at the Chicago Public Library**

The *Chicago Examiner* was one of a dozen major newspapers published in Chicago at the turn of the last century. It was known for its sensational news stories.

### **The Black Metropolis Resource Consortium (BMRC)**

The BMRC is a Chicago-based membership organization of libraries, universities and other archival institutions. Its mission is to make broadly accessible its members’ holdings of materials that document African American and African diasporic culture, history and politics, with a specific focus on materials relation to Chicago.

### **DuSable to Obama: Chicago’s Black Metropolis**

From the 1920s through the 1950s, Chicago’s South Side was the center for African-American culture and business. Known as “Bronzeville,” the neighborhood was surprisingly small, but at its peak more than 300,000 lived in the narrow, seven-mile strip.

### **“The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot”**

This 1922 report, “The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot,” was created by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations.

### **Exodus to Kansas**

This is the 1880 Senate investigation of the beginnings of the African-American migration from the South.

### **Historical Census**

This historical census report includes statistics on population totals by race, from 1790 to 1990 in the United States.

### **The Great Migration**

This webpage from History.com provides an overview of the Great Migration in the United States.

### **“The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction”**

This report looks at the statistics, problems and policies relating to the greater inclusion of African-American wage earners in American industry and agriculture.

## Additional Resources

\*Links to additional resources available in the [Great Migration Primary Source Set](#).

### **"Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?"**

This pamphlet from Carl Schurz is entitled, "Can the South Solve the Negro Problem?"

### **"Negro Suffrage: Should the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments be Repealed?"**

This is a speech by Hon. Edward De V. Morrell, a congressman from Pennsylvania, who discusses and refutes the arguments by a Georgia representative that African Americans should be deprived of the franchise.

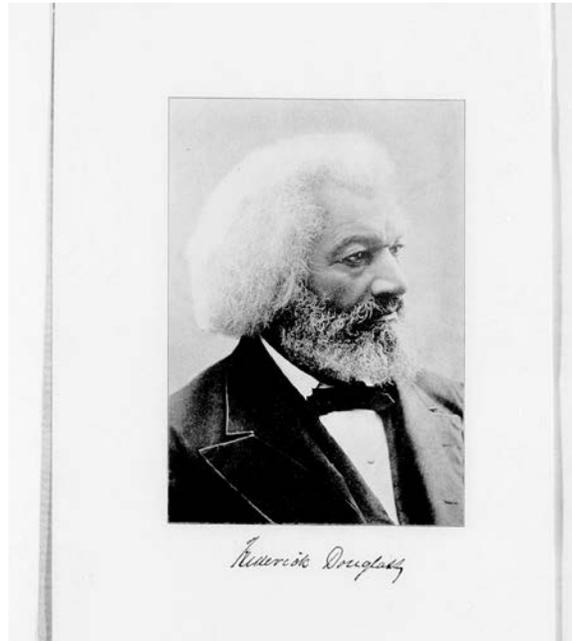
### **The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom**

Starting in 1900, this timeline follows the triumphs and challenges that led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

### **The Red Summer of 1919**

This webpage from History.com focuses on the summer of 1919 across the United States where "race riots" broke out in response to the stoning and drowning of a Black Chicago youth by white people at a segregated beach.

## “Lynching Black People Because They Are Black” by Frederick Douglass, April 1894



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Douglass, Frederick, “Lynching Black People Because They Are Black,” *Christian Educator*, April 1894

### Description

This is an article written by Frederick Douglass and published in *The Christian Educator* in 1894. It focuses on the horrible treatment and violent abuse of African Americans in southern states after the end of legal enslavement in the United States and the Civil War.

[Full Transcript of “Lynching Black People Because They Are Black”](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from “Lynching Black People Because They Are Black”](#)

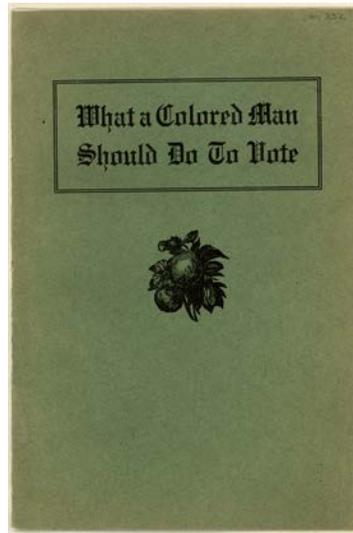
### Source-Dependent Questions

- As you read these excerpts, what do you learn about life for an African American in the South during this time period?
- What evidence does the author share that gave reason why African Americans were pushed to flee the South and migrate North?
- Douglass writes, “I have waited patiently, but anxiously, to see the end of the epidemic of mob law and persecution now prevailing at the South. But the indications are not hopeful... It is no longer local, but national; no longer confined to the South, but has invaded the North.” With this statement in mind, refer back to the [Great Migration Railroad Strike article](#). Why would African Americans migrate north, to cities like Waterloo, when they didn’t know what conditions they were entering into?

### Citation Information

Douglass, Frederick, “Lynching Black People Because They Are Black,” *The Christian Educator*, April 1894. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “What a Colored Man Should Do To Vote” Pamphlet from Virginia, 1900



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “What A Colored Man Should Do To Vote,” E.A. Wright, 1900

### Description

“What a Colored Man Should Do To Vote” was a pamphlet from 1900 that explained what discriminatory restrictions were being implemented against African Americans when they attempted to vote in the states listed. Most of the states in the pamphlet are in the South and had been part of the Confederacy during the Civil War.

[Full Transcript of the Virginia Pamphlet](#)

[Transcribed Excerpt from the Virginia Pamphlet](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- What were some of the requirements African Americans would need to meet to vote in Virginia?
- Why were these requirements difficult to meet for someone who was African American in the South after the end of enslavement?
- Why would this push African Americans to feel the need to migrate to a northern state?

### Citation Information

“What A Colored Man Should Do To Vote,” E.A. Wright, 1900. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Illustration from “The Exodus,” 1919



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Randall, P.J. Clyde, *The Exodus*, pp. 12, 1919

### Description

This is an illustration in the book *The Exodus*, which was written by Clyde Randall and Ed Winn in 1919. The illustration depicts an African-American man who is in debt to a white southern man who is holding him at gunpoint. The image speaks to the ongoing threat of violence imposed on African Americans by the descendants of white enslavers in the United States.

### [Transcript of “The Exodus” Illustration](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Without reading the caption, what do you believe was taking place in this illustration? Why do you think the authors included this in their book?
- After reading the caption, why do you feel this cartoon was a part of a book about African Americans being pushed out of the South and pulled toward the northern states?

### Citation Information

Randall, P.J. Clyde, *The Exodus*, pp. 12, 1919. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “Great Migration Railroad Strike 100 Years Ago Brought an Influx of African-Americans to Waterloo” Newspaper Article, February 1, 2011



Courtesy of Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier, Kinney, Pat, “Great Migration Railroad strike 100 years ago brought an influx of African-Americans to Waterloo,” Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier, 1 February 2011

### Description

This *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier* newspaper article was written by Pat Kinney in 2011 about African Americans who migrated to Waterloo, Iowa, as strikebreakers in the 1911 Railroad Strike. Many had originally been excluded from this line of work by racial discrimination in labor unions. The African Americans who moved to Waterloo during the strike faced danger and animosity but they became an integral part of the community.

### [Transcript of “Great Migration Railroad Strike” Newspaper Article](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- How was Roosevelt Taylor connected to the Great Migration?
- What does this text tell you about the reason(s) why African Americans pulled to move to the North, and in particular, to Waterloo, Iowa?
- How does this source connect to other sources in this source set in providing reasons for African Americans to migrate to northern states? Are these reasons born out of hope, fear or both?

### Citation Information

Kinney, Pat, “Great Migration Railroad strike 100 years ago brought an influx of African-Americans to Waterloo,” *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier*, 1 February 2011. [Courtesy of Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier](#)





## “A New Reconstruction” Letter, May 1919



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “A New Reconstruction,” University Commission on Southern Race Questions, May 1919

### Description

This was a letter drafted by college professors of the University Commission on Southern Race Questions and it was directed to college-age men. The letter discusses a “new reconstruction,” how African Americans are able to contribute to the “Great War” and that relations between African Americans and whites should be respectful.

### Transcript of “A New Reconstruction” Letter

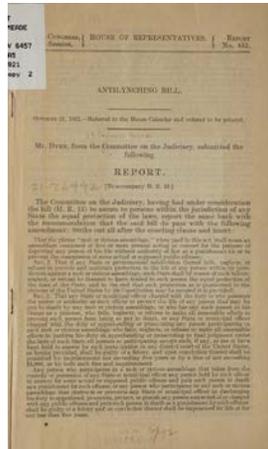
### Source-Dependent Questions

- What was the main point of the University Commission on Southern Race Questions letter?
- What portions of this source inspired hope for African Americans living in the South during this time period? What portions inspired fear of the South during this time? Cite evidence to support your claim.
- The letter states, “The Negroes’ contribution to the welfare of the nation has never been more clearly indicated than by his services during the Great War [World War I]. When the call to arms was sounded his country expected him to do his duty, and he did not fail.” Why would the letter writers include passages such as this in the letter?
- How was the message in this source different from the message in [“Why Disfranchisement is Bad” pamphlet?](#)

### Citation Information

“A New Reconstruction,” University Commission on Southern Race Questions, May 1919. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “Antilynching Bill” Report, 1921



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “Antilynching Bill,” 1921

### Description

This was a report submitted by the Committee on the Judiciary to accompany House Bill 13, “The Antilynching Bill,” which details research and support for passing the bill into law that would make illegal the practice of lynching.

### [Full Transcript of “Antilynching Bill” Report](#)

### [Transcribed Excerpts from “Antilynching Bill” Report](#)

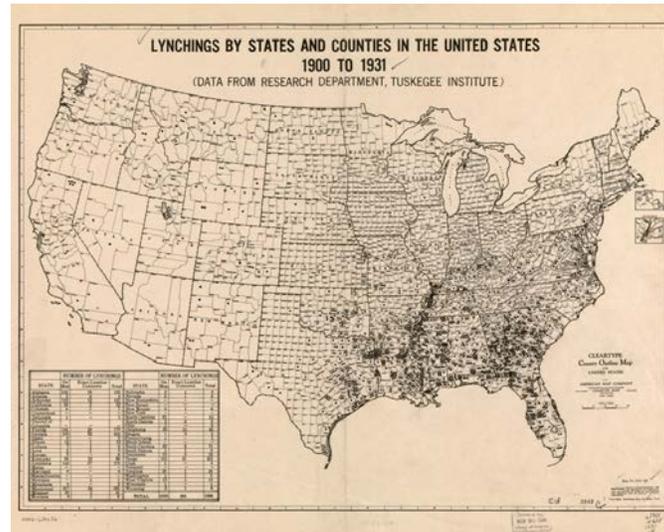
### Source-Dependent Questions

- What evidence did this report provide for the need to end the practice of lynching?
- What is the connection between this source and the [“Lynchings by State” map](#)?
- How did this report demonstrate the conditions in the South for African Americans? Did this report inspire hope, fear or both for African Americans during the Great Migration?

### Citation Information

“Antilynching Bill,” 1921. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States, 1900-1931” Map, ca. 1931



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States, 1900-1931,” ca. 1931

### Description

This was a map depicting the number of lynchings by state and county in the United States from 1900 to 1931. The map shows the heaviest concentration of lynchings occurring in southern states.

### [Transcript of the “Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States” Map](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Look at the transcribed key and the map, what did each dot on the map represent? Which states had the most number of lynchings? Where were those states located?
- How does this map support the need for the [Antilynching Bill](#)?
- Would this map inspire hope, fear or both? Cite evidence to support your claim.

### Citation Information

“Lynchings by States and Counties in the United States, 1900-1931,” ca. 1931. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “Ho for Kansas” Advertising Flyer, March 18, 1878



Courtesy of Kansas Historical Society, Singleton, Benjamin, “Ho for Kansas!,” 18 March 1878

### Description

This is a flyer advertising land available in Kansas for African Americans leaving the south and traveling to the southwest as a part of the Real Estate and Homestead Association in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1878.

### [Transcript of “How for Kansas!”](#)

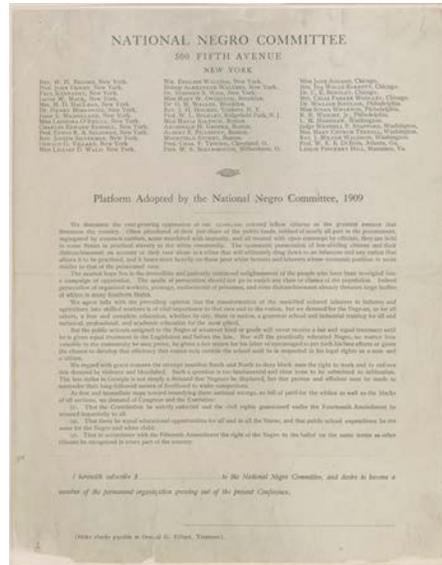
### Source-Dependent Questions

- What did this flyer advertise to African Americans?
- Why would land ownership be important for African Americans? Why would Benjamin “Pap” Singleton provide transportation during this expedition?
- Would a flyer such as this one give hope, fear or both to African Americans wanting to flee the southern states? Cite evidence from the source.

### Citation Information

Singleton, Benjamin, “Ho for Kansas!,” 18 March 1878. [Courtesy of Kansas Historical Society](#)

## “National Negro Committee” Platform, 1909



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “Platform Adopted by the National Negro Committee,” 1909

### Description

William English Walling’s exposé about a bloody race riot in Springfield, Illinois, Abraham Lincoln’s hometown and burial site, resulted in the assembly of an interracial group to discuss proposals for an organization that would advocate the civil and political rights of African Americans in January 1909. The group issued a “call” resulting in the first National Negro Conference held in New York on May 31 and June 1, 1909. At the second annual meeting on May 12, 1910, the Committee adopted the formal name of the organization — the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP’s goals were the abolition of segregation, discrimination, disenfranchisement and racial violence, particularly lynching.

### [Transcript of the 1909 National Negro Committee Platform](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Compare this document to other documents in this source set, such as [Why Disfranchisement is Bad \(1904\)](#), [Guinn v. United States \(1914\)](#) or [A New Reconstruction Letter \(1919\)](#). What message do these documents share that is similar? What messages are different?
- How was this document’s message unique compared to other sources in this source set?
- How did this document and the organization’s platform give African Americans hope?

### Citation Information

“Platform Adopted by the National Negro Committee,” 1909. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Perfect Eat Shop in Chicago, Illinois, April 1942



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Delano, Jack, "In the Perfect Eat Shop, a restaurant on 47th Street near South Park, owned by Mr. E. Norris (Negro). Chicago, Illinois," April 1942

### Description

The photograph shows African Americans eating at a local, Black-owned Chicago restaurant in 1942. Most diners and employees are African American, and several small businesses in this area of Chicago were owned and operated by African Americans who had migrated north during the Great Migration.

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Look closely at the photo and describe what you see.
- This photo was taken at a Black-owned restaurant in Chicago, Illinois. How would seeing an image like this give African Americans wanting to leave the South hope for migrating to Northern cities like Chicago?

### Citation Information

Delano, Jack, "In the Perfect Eat Shop, a restaurant on 47th Street near South Park, owned by Mr. E. Norris (Negro). Chicago, Illinois," April 1942. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Two Women Working in a Factory Making Bedspring Webbing, 1969



Courtesy of Library of Congress, "The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction: Statistics, Problems, and Policies Relating to the Greater Inclusion of Negro Wage Earners in American Industry and Agriculture," 1969

### Description

During World War I, industrial opportunities became available to women when workers were needed to replace men drafted into military service. Black women responded to the demand by leaving their homes and domestic jobs. These two African-American women are seen working in a factory making bedspring wedding.

### Source-Dependent Questions

- The two women in the photo are working at a factory during World War II. Using your historical knowledge, why were women, including African-American women, needed to work in factories during this time period?
- Look closely at the image, would this photo give hope, fear or both as an African American thought about migrating to the North? Explain your answer.

### Citation Information

"The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction: Statistics, Problems, and Policies Relating to the Greater Inclusion of Negro Wage Earners in American Industry and Agriculture," 1969. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Madame C. J. Walker and Her Mansion on the Hudson in New York, ca. 1987



Courtesy of Library of Congress, "Madame C. J. Walker" / "Madame C. J. Walker's House (Villa Lewaro). Irvington-on-the-Hudson, New York," ca. 1987

### Description

This mansion drafted in 1918 was designed by an African American architect, Vertner Woodson Tandy, for African-American cosmetics magnate Madame C. J. Walker. Madame Walker was the first African-American woman to become a self-made millionaire. Madam Walker invented a line of African-American hair products, which she promoted by traveling around the country giving lectures followed by demonstrations. She eventually established Madame C.J. Walker Laboratories to manufacture cosmetics and train sales beauticians.

Her lavish home, named Villa Lewaro, was built along the Hudson River north of New York City. She built the home not for herself, but so that "Blacks could see what could be accomplished with hard work and determination."

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Madame C.J. Walker was the first African-American woman to become a self-made millionaire and was known for her philanthropic endeavors. Discuss the significance of Madame Walker giving back to her community.
- The plans for this mansion were drawn in 1918. Madam Walker built the home not for herself, but so that "Blacks could see what could be accomplished with hard work and determination." Discuss the significance of this act and statement.

### Citation Information

**Photo 1:** "Madame C. J. Walker." [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

**Photo 2:** "Madame C. J. Walker's House (Villa Lewaro). Irvington-on-the-Hudson, New York," ca. 1987. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “Chicago Race Riots Spread” Newspaper Article, July 30, 1919



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “Chicago Race Riots Spread, 27 Dead, 244 Injured; President Demands Ratification of French Treaty,” *New York Tribune*, pp. 1, 7, 30 July 1919

### Description

This *New York Tribune* article written in July of 1919 during the “Chicago Race Riots.” On July 27, 1919, an African-American teenager drowned in Lake Michigan after violating the unofficial segregation of Chicago’s beaches and being stoned by a group of white youths. His death, and the police’s refusal to arrest the white man whom eyewitnesses identified as causing it, sparked a week of rioting between gangs of Black and white Chicagoans, concentrated on the South Side neighborhood surrounding the stockyards. When the riots ended on August 3, 15 white and 23 Black people had been killed and more than 500 people injured; an additional 1,000 Black families had lost their homes when they were torched by rioters.

[Full Transcript of “Chicago Race Riots Spread” Newspaper Article](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from “Chicago Race Riots Spread” Newspaper Article](#)

[Printable Excerpt of “Chicago Race Riots Spread” Newspaper Article](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- As you read the excerpts, what did this article tell you about the race relations in Chicago during the riot? What were the two groups fighting about?
- What specific events did the article mention would cause fear and/or hope in migrating to Chicago if an African American read this article during the time period?
- How does this source match up to other sources from this text set in displaying the difficulties for African Americans during the Great Migration?

### Citation Information

“Chicago Race Riots Spread, 27 Dead, 244 Injured; President Demands Ratification of French Treaty,” *New York Tribune*, pp. 1, 7, 30 July 1919. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## African-American Man Carrying Protest Sign Outside Milk Company in Chicago, Illinois, July 1941



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Vachon, John, "Negro Carrying Sign in Front of Milk Company. Chicago, Illinois," July 1941

### Description

This photograph shows an African-American man standing in a picket line for the Negro Labor Relation League with a sign protesting Bowman Dairy in Chicago, Illinois.

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Look closely at the photo and specifically read the sign the man is holding. Refer back to [A New Reconstruction Letter](#). While this letter was written to "Men of the South," what similarities can be drawn between this protest and the letter?
- Northern states provided economic opportunities for African Americans that they had no access to in the South. Do you feel, based on this and other sources in this set, like this these opportunities were truly legitimate?
- Think about a time where you protested the way people were treating you or someone you know. Was that experience similar or different than the one you see in the photo?

### Citation Information

Vachon, John, "Negro Carrying Sign in Front of Milk Company. Chicago, Illinois," July 1941. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Picket Line at Mid-City Realty Company in Chicago, Illinois, July 1941



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Vachon, John, "Picket Line at Mid-City Realty Company, South Chicago, Illinois," July 1941

### Description

This photograph shows African Americans standing in a picket line outside a midtown business in Chicago, Illinois, in 1941 protesting the discriminatory wage gap between African Americans and white people in the workforce.

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Why were African Americans protesting outside this business in Chicago? What do you think was the intended message of the picket sign?
- Compare this photo to photo of an [African-American man carrying a protest sign outside of a milk company in Chicago](#). What is similar between the messages for these protests or picket lines? What is different?
- Do these photos, and others like it, inspire hope, fear or both for African Americans as they considered migrating to northern cities like Chicago? Point to specific evidence in the photos to support your claim.

### Citation Information

Vachon, John, "Picket Line at Mid-City Realty Company, South Chicago, Illinois," July 1941. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## “White Tenants in Our White Community” Sign Directed at U.S. Federal Housing Project in Detroit, Michigan, February 1942



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Siegel, Arthur S., “Detroit, Michigan. Riot at the Sojourner Truth homes...” February 1942

### Description

This is a photograph of a protest sign placed outside a housing project for African Americans in Detroit, Michigan. Detroit was one of many northern cities African Americans migrated to from the South during the Great Migration.

### Source-Dependent Questions

- What do you think was the purpose of this sign?
- Think back to a time where you felt personally excluded from a group or made to believe you weren’t wanted or accepted. How would your emotions be similar or different to those of African Americans who viewed this sign in Detroit?

### Citation Information

Siegel, Arthur S., “Detroit, Michigan. Riot at the Sojourner Truth homes, a new U.S. federal housing project, caused by white neighbors’ attempt to prevent Negro tenants from moving in. Sign with American flag “We want white tenants in our white community,” directly opposite the housing project,” February 1942. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

## Interview with George Jiggetts about Moving North and Finding Work, August 19, 1994



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Jiggetts, George, and Susan Levitas, "There was nothing you could do to make a dollar unless it was work on someone else's farm," 19 August 1994

### Description

This is an audio segment of an oral history interview with George Jiggetts. He discusses making no money in the South, so he sought work in the North in places like Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore. While he found "freedom" in some locations, he explains that he had trouble finding work in other cities.

### [Transcript of the Interview of George Jiggetts](#)

### Source-Dependent Questions

- Describe what working life was like according to Jiggetts' experience when he migrated North.
- Compare his story to other sources in this source set. Do you feel his experience was similar to other African Americans or different? Cite evidence to support your claim.

### Citation Information

Jiggetts, George, and Susan Levitas, "There was nothing you could do to make a dollar unless it was work on someone else's farm," 19 August 1994. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)