



National History Day 2017

Taking a Stand in History with The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza

[Clarence Broadnax](#) - [Reverend William A. Holmes](#) - [Reverend William McElvaney](#) - [Millie Seltzer](#)

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Clarence Broadnax

In June 1964, Mr. Broadnax had just joined the Air Force and decided to have a meal at the Piccadilly Cafeteria on Commerce Street in downtown Dallas. He was refused service and taken to jail. He and other members of the community, including the Reverend Earl Allen, then took a stand against such racial discrimination by organizing a peaceful protest at the Piccadilly. The protest went on for 28 days and concluded when the new Civil Rights Act went into effect.

Books

Schutze, Jim. *The Accommodation: The Politics of Race in an American City*. Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1986.

Phillips, Michael. *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006.

Collections

Oral history interviews

[Clarence Broadnax](#)

A dedicated civil rights activist, Broadnax was the first African-American hairstylist hired to work at the Neiman Marcus department store in Dallas. A member of the NAACP and the Nation of Islam, he was one of the key organizers of the prominent 1964 protest at the downtown Piccadilly Cafeteria, and he was arrested on several different occasions during the civil rights movement.

[Reverend Earl Allen](#)

A local civil rights activist, Allen was pastor of the Highland Hills Methodist Church in Dallas in 1963. A leader with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), he helped organize a prominent 28-day civil rights protest at the downtown Piccadilly Cafeteria in 1964.

Surveillance photographs taken by the Dallas County Sheriff's Department during the 28-day protest

Clarence Broadnax holding a sign with the hand-lettered words "DID JFK DIE IN VAIN"

Protestors and the Piccadilly Cafeteria sign

Piccadilly Cafeteria employees

Reverend Earl Allen participating in the Piccadilly Cafeteria protest

A woman entering courtroom with a "whites only" sign on her purse during a hearing about the protest

People in a Dallas courthouse during hearings about the protest

YouTube

Living History with Clarence Broadnax

The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza presented an interview with Clarence Broadnax, a civil rights activist involved in a 1964 civil rights protest at Dallas' Piccadilly Cafeteria.

28 Days at the Piccadilly

In June 2008, The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza presented a panel discussion with participants in a 1964 civil rights protest at Dallas' Piccadilly Cafeteria. The program featured Fort Worth Star-Telegram columnist Bob Ray Sanders and civil rights activists Clarence Broadnax and the Reverend Earl Allen.

Websites

Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project – Interview with Clarence Broadnax

The Civil Rights in Black and Brown Interview Database is a publicly accessible, free, and user-friendly multimedia digital humanities website managed by Texas Christian University that provides digital video clips from oral history interviews to researchers as well as teachers, journalists, and the general public.

Reverend William A. Holmes

As minister of Northaven Methodist Church in Dallas, Reverend Holmes took a stand against political extremism and incivility with a powerful and controversial sermon the Sunday after the assassination of President Kennedy. Later that week parts of his sermon were broadcast nationally. He and his family received many letters in response to his sermon, some in support and many against.

Books

Fine, William M. *That Day with God*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

Holmes, William A. *Mature Christianity: For the Come-of-Age Christians in a Come-of-Age World*. Resurgence Pub Corp, 2010.

Collections

Oral history interview

[Reverend William A. Holmes](#)

Videotaped oral history interview with Reverend William A. Holmes. As minister of Northaven Methodist Church in Dallas, Holmes gave a powerful and controversial sermon on Sunday, November 24, 1963, in which he mentioned that some local schoolchildren cheered upon learning of President Kennedy's death. Portions of the sermon were later broadcast nationally on CBS, bringing international attention to both Holmes and the city of Dallas.

Letters sent to Reverend William A. Holmes after delivering his sermon

[Gloria Johnston Wise commends the sermon and hopes for action against extremists in Dallas](#)

[James E. Sheldon, Jr. commends the sermon and the Reverend's courage for speaking out despite the possible backlash](#)

[Harry J. Garrett, Jr. disapproves of the sermon and criticisms of Dallas](#)

[Mr. & Mrs. Ed Curran disapprove of the Reverend's statements](#)

[M.A. Moore disagrees with the sermon](#)

YouTube

[An Evening with Rev. William A. Holmes](#)

The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza presented a lecture and discussion with the Reverend William A. Holmes. He used his notes from his 1963 sermon to deliver it again to this 2008 audience, exactly as he had to his congregation 45 years before.

Reverend William McElvaney

As the founding pastor of St. Stephen Methodist Church, Reverend McElvaney took a stand against racial discrimination by assisting in the 1960s desegregation of the Mesquite Independent School District in Dallas County. He then dedicated himself to peace activism throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Books/Articles

Fagin, Stephen. *Reverend McElvaney's Unjust War: Vietnam*. Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas, Fall 2008, pp. 44-53.

Linden, Glenn M. *Desegregating Schools in Dallas: Four Decades in the Federal Courts*. Dallas: Three Forks Press. 1995.

McElvaney, William K. *Becoming a Justice Seeking Congregation: Responding to God's Justice Initiative*. New York; Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc., 2009.

McElvaney, William K. & Bailey, Wilfred M. *Christ's Suburban Body*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970.

Phillips, Michael. *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006.

Schutze, Jim. *The Accommodation: The Politics of Race in an American City*. Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1986.

Collections

Reverend Bill McElvaney oral history

Videotaped oral history interview with Reverend Bill McElvaney. The founding pastor of St. Stephen Methodist Church in Mesquite, Texas, McElvaney was involved in the 1960s desegregation of the Mesquite Independent School District in Dallas County. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he was a vocal peace activist and participated in silent protests in Dealey Plaza and other local sites.

YouTube

Living History with the Reverend William McElvaney

The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza presented an interview between Associate Curator Stephen Fagin and Dallas-area pastor Reverend William McElvaney, who speaks about his involvement in the 1960s desegregation of schools in Mesquite, Texas and his participation in Vietnam War protests that took place in Dealey Plaza.

Millie Seltzer

As a longtime pacifist and leader with the First Unitarian Church in Dallas, Millie Seltzer took a stand against the Vietnam War through her social activism in the 1960s. Along with her husband, Dr. Holbrooke Seltzer, she organized weekly silent protests in Dealey Plaza as a key part of the local peace movement.

Books

Anderson, Walt. *The Age of Protest*. Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Pub Co., 1969.

Miles, Barry. *Peace: 50 Years of Protest*. Pleasantville, N.Y.: Readers Digest Association, 2010.

Zaroulis, N.L. & Sullivan, Gerald. *Who Spoke Up?: American Protest Against the War in Vietnam, 1963-1975*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1985.

Collections

Millie Seltzer oral history

Videotaped oral history interview with Millie Seltzer. On November 22, 1963, Seltzer took her six children to Dallas Love Field to see President Kennedy's arrival. Beginning in 1966, she and her husband, Dr. Holbrooke Seltzer, became prominent anti-Vietnam War activists in Dallas and participated in weekly silent protests in Dealey Plaza.

1960s Peace Movement “Why Not Both” bumper sticker

1960s Peace Movement “We Have Declared Peace with the Vietnamese” bumper sticker