

Prof. James T. Campbell

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**Freedom Now: History, Memory, and the Mississippi Civil Rights
Movement**

Abstract

James T. Campbell, Edgar E. Robinson Professor in United States History at Stanford University, focuses his research on African American history. For the past 20 years he has been studying the memory of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, specifically in the state of Mississippi, by closely observing social trends and by interviewing many participants and witnesses of the historical events.

In his fascinating lecture, Prof. Campbell demonstrated that the popular memory of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi has revolved around the narrative of White participation in the movement while its Black originators have been all but forgotten. Campbell illustrated this point by showing that the national spotlight shined on the violent happenings in Mississippi only after two white (and Jewish) activists from New York were brutally murdered there. Since, he added, the memory of the events has focused on the martyrdom of the white activists, such as in a famous painting by Norman Rockwell.