

# GHOSTS OF SEGREGATION

A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION BY RICH FRISHMAN



All human landscape has cultural meaning. Because we rarely consider our constructions as evidence of our priorities, beliefs and desires, the testimony our landscape tells is perhaps more honest than anything we might intentionally present. Our built environment is society's autobiography writ large.

Ghosts of Segregation photographically explores the vestiges of America's racism as seen in the vernacular landscape: Schools for "colored" children, theatre entrances and restrooms for "colored people," lynching sites, juke joints, jails, hotels and bus stations. What is past is prologue.

While the images presented are focused on the Deep South, prejudice has no geographic boundaries; I have all of America to explore. The ghosts of segregation haunt us.

*Rich Frishman*

LANGLEY, WASHINGTON, JULY 2018







The image shows the interior of a rustic saloon. In the center, a large, faded mural of a Dr. Pepper bottle is painted on a wall that served as a segregation barrier. The room is filled with wooden tables and chairs. The walls are decorated with various items, including mounted animal heads, framed pictures, and neon signs. A television is visible in the background. The lighting is warm and the atmosphere is historical.

# SEGREGATION WALL AT TEMPLIN'S SALOON

GONZALES, TEXAS

This segregation wall was constructed in 1906 and is decorated with an original pre-1929 Dr. Pepper logo. During Jim Crow only Caucasian customers were allowed to sit in the front of the saloon. All others had to sit behind the wall. When the saloon was remodeled and re-opened in 2014 the wall, no longer used for its original purpose, was retained as a historical reminder of those dark days.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2016







# PO' MONKEY'S JUKE JOINT

MERIGOLD, MISSISSIPPI

Located in the Mississippi Delta outside the tiny town of Merigold, Po' Monkey's is located in cotton fields in a sharecropper's shack. It opened in 1961 and is the last rural juke joint in the Mississippi Delta. During the era of Jim Crow, people "of color" and Caucasians were largely prohibited from socializing, let alone dance or make music together. The juke joint, an evolution of African American plantation musical customs, provided a space for Black people to play music and socialize. Over time, these musical oases became desegregated. "Po' Monkey" was the nickname given to the owner of the establishment, William Seaberry. He explained the name: "Po' Monkey is all anybody ever called me since I was little," he said. "I don't know why, except I was poor for sure." He died in 2016. The term "juke" is thought to derive from the Gullah dialect of south-east Africa, where it means "boisterous."

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018









# VESTIGE OF COLORED ENTRANCE OF SAENGER THEATRE

HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI

Years after the end of Jim Crow segregation, many architectural vestiges remain. This curious palimpsest of bricks covers the entrance for “Colored People” at the Saenger Theatre, a once-grand movie house in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Often these entrances were down an alley away from the glittering lights of the main entrance. Usually they led directly to a set of stairs ascending to a segregated portion of the balcony.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018









# 16TH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

On September 15, 1963, the congregation of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama greeted each other before the start of Sunday service. In the basement of the church, five young girls, two of them sisters, gathered in the ladies room in their best dresses, happily chatting about the first days of the new school year. It was Youth Day and excitement filled the air, they were going to take part in the Sunday adult service.

Just before 11 o'clock, instead of rising to begin prayers the congregation was knocked to the ground. As a bomb exploded under the steps of the church, they sought safety under the pews and shielded each other from falling debris. In the basement, four little girls, 14-year-olds Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and 11-year-old Cynthia Wesley, were killed. Addie's sister Susan survived, but was permanently blinded.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018





怒雪塔



# MONUMENT TO THE DEAD

MANZANAR, CALIFORNIA

Over 135 internees died during their incarceration at Manzanar, one of 10 concentration camps built in the United States to house Japanese people, most of them US citizens. Their ashes were buried in this small cemetery outside the barbed wire perimeter. In 1943 some of the Japanese prisoners built this obelisk. The inscription translates as “Monument to comfort the souls of the dead.” It is one of the few remaining structures from the Manzanar concentration camp.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2008







# 29TH STREET BEACH

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

On July 27, 1919 when large crowds of white and black patrons went to the Lake Michigan beach in Chicago, Illinois to seek relief from the 96° heat, an angry dispute erupted over the stoning of Eugene Williams, a young African American swimmer who inadvertently crossed a segregated boundary into the “white” swimming area by 29th Street Beach. White beachgoers hailed stones at the young man causing him to drown. When police refused to arrest any whites, who were accused by black bystanders of having thrown the stones and instead arrested a black beachgoer on a white’s complaint of some minor offense, the blacks began to attack the white policeman. Reports of the incident spread throughout Chicago igniting a clash of white and black rioters across the city’s South Side. 38 people were killed and over 500 injured.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# REMAINS OF NEGRO LEAGUE STADIUM

HAMTRAMCK, MICHIGAN

Hamtramck Stadium, home of the Negro League's Detroit Stars from 1930 to 1937, is a reminder of the Jim Crow era of segregation, a time when Blacks were not only forced to use separate drinking fountains, bathrooms and bus seats from whites, but had separate professional baseball leagues as well.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# SHILOH ROSENWALD SCHOOL

WHITE OAKS, TEXAS

The newly freed African Americans of Shiloh established a school for their children shortly after the Civil War. With financial assistance from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, a new two-room school was erected in 1920. It was replaced by a large brick building in the 1930's. The High School was closed in 1949; the end of segregation closed the rest of the Shiloh School in 1966. All that remains is the brick front wall.

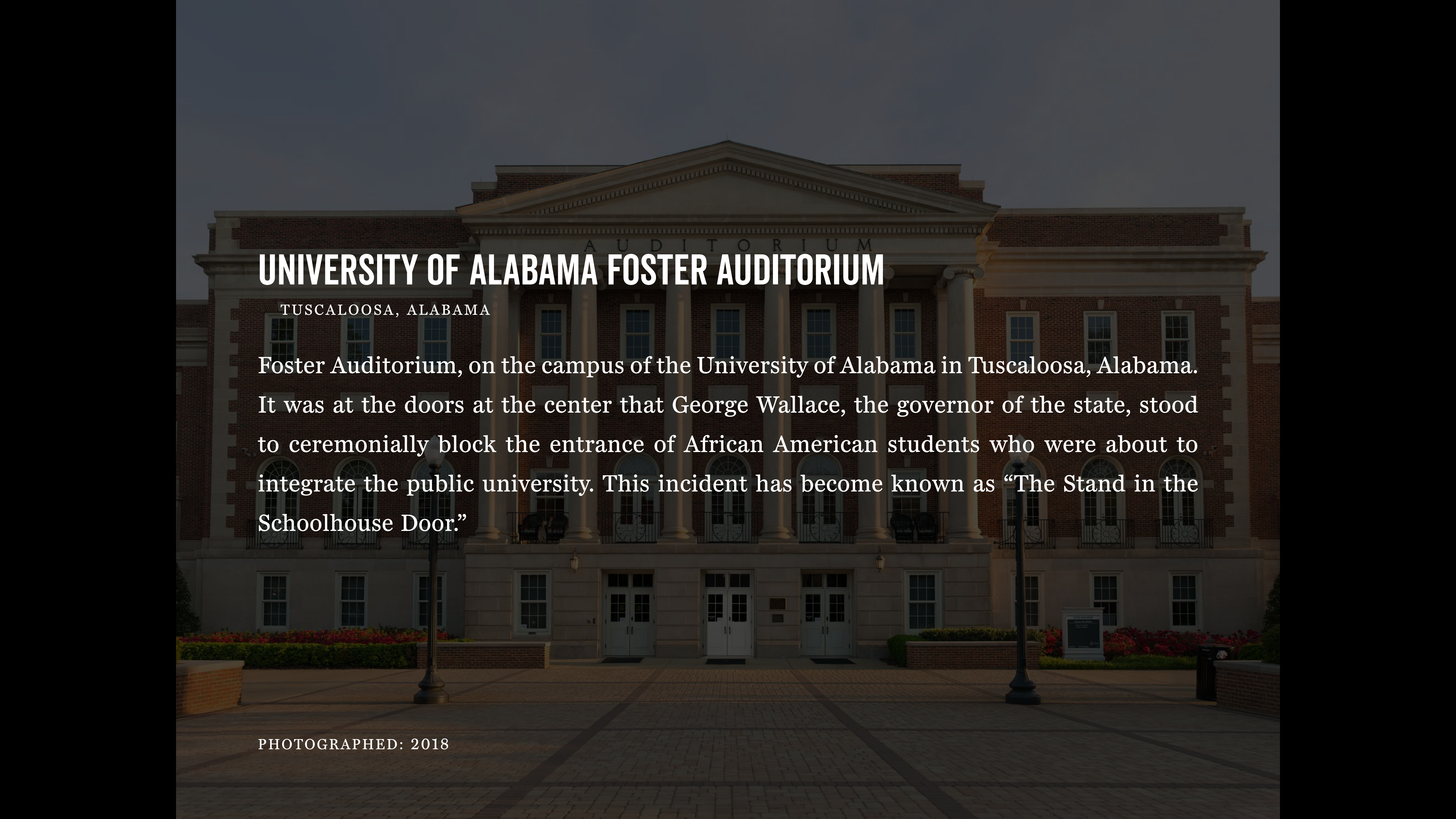
The Rosenwald Fund was established in 1917 by Julius Rosenwald for “the well-being of mankind.” Rosenwald was president and chairman of Sears, Roebuck and Company. He became interested in social issues, especially education for African Americans in the rural South, which was segregated and chronically underfunded. He provided funding to build hundreds of rural schools for black children, primarily in the South. These schools became known as Rosenwald Schools. Few remain.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







A photograph of the University of Alabama Foster Auditorium, a large, classical-style building with a prominent portico supported by columns. The word "AUDITORIUM" is inscribed above the columns. The building is made of red brick with white stone accents. In front of the building is a paved plaza with two black lampposts. The sky is overcast.

# UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA FOSTER AUDITORIUM

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

Foster Auditorium, on the campus of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It was at the doors at the center that George Wallace, the governor of the state, stood to ceremonially block the entrance of African American students who were about to integrate the public university. This incident has become known as “The Stand in the Schoolhouse Door.”

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018





HOUSTON NEGRO HOSPITAL  
SCHOOL OF NURSING



# HOUSTON NEGRO HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Houston Negro Hospital School of Nursing, built in 1931, now stands abandoned along with the hospital with which it once was associated. The hospital was created five years earlier when the black Union-Jeremiah Hospital was no longer capable of accommodating the rapidly growing black population of Houston. It was dedicated on June 19, 1926, a major local holiday in Texas known as “Juneteenth,” which commemorates the day Emancipation occurred in the state.

The medical facility became the first non-profit hospital for black patients in Houston. It also provided work for black physicians, who were not allowed to admit patients in the “black wards” of other Houston hospitals.

The Houston Negro Hospital School of Nursing was established next to the hospital and was the first educational institution created for the training of black nurses in Houston.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# ROOM #10, VICTORIA COLORED SCHOOL

VICTORIA, TEXAS

The Victoria Colored School, built in 1901, continued to act as an exclusively black school until 1966. At the outbreak of the Civil War, slaves equaled more than half of Victoria County's population, brought there by expansionist cotton farmers from other areas of the South. The influx of Southerners surpassed the influx of the strict-abolitionist German immigrants and Victoria County voted overwhelmingly for the secession of Texas from the Union.

The war eventually destroyed the market for cotton. Former slaves either became sharecroppers or drifted into the city, establishing a community and social infrastructure. After the war, area leaders wanted to establish schools for emancipated Blacks that would channel them into vocational training for the kind of workforce area businesses demanded.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







A photograph of a brick building with a concrete entrance and steps. The image is dark and moody, with a brick wall on the right and a concrete structure in the foreground. Text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# COLORED ENTRANCE

TYLERTOWN, MISSISSIPPI

The bricked palimpsest of a “colored entrance” to a movie theatre in Tylertown, Mississippi is an obscure reminder of Jim Crow-era segregation. Often situated in an alley, these entrances led to a segregated section of the balcony. In the case of this Tylertown, Mississippi theatre, further down the alley is a steel door to the colored restroom.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# COLORED ENTRANCE TO PARAMOUNT THEATRE

CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

The Paramount Theatre, which opened as the Marion Theatre in 1918, was one of the first purpose-built movie theatres in Mississippi. While white patrons entered under neon lights on Yazoo Street, “colored” people had to purchase their tickets around back and trudge up these stairs to the segregated sections of the upper and lower balcony.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# COLORED ENTRANCE

PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI

The Ellis Theatre in Philadelphia, Mississippi had a “colored entrance” tucked to the left of the ticket booth. It led directly up stairway to the segregated section of the balcony.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018





ELLIS

49TH ANNUAL  
CROSSIE ARTS & JAZZ FESTIVAL  
SATURDAY APRIL 7

THANK YOU  
DELTA REGIONAL FOUNDATION  
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# ELLIS THEATRE

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

On the left is the Ellis Theatre's entrance for "colored people." On the right is the colored restroom entrance. Buddy Jennings writes: "The one thing that sticks out most in my mind about the Ellis is the Saturday June Smith (a black friend of mine who also lived on Kennedy's farm) and I walked all the way there to see a Tarzan movie and they would not let us sit together. June had to sit up in the balcony and they would not let me sit up there with him. The movie cost me a quarter and cost June fifteen cents. We were only nine or ten years old at the time and had our parents' permission to walk all the way to Cleveland and back, even though it would be close to midnight before we were back home."

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# COLORED ENTRANCE TO TEXAN THEATRE

KILGORE, TEXAS

The enigmatic door atop the stairway on the south side of the Texan Theatre, long locked and largely overlooked, is the “colored entrance,” a vestige of Jim Crow-era segregation. In Kilgore, Texas, the term “colored” extended to anyone not Caucasian, including Hispanics and the occasional Asian.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# COLORED ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE THEATRE

MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

The magnificent Temple Theatre in Meridian, Mississippi required “colored” guests to enter by a side entrance down an alley, away from the “whites only” main entrance. The brickwork and metal reinforcements above the doorway indicate an overhanging marquee once decorated this side entrance. The theatre was built in 1921.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







The background image shows the interior of a building under renovation. It features a high ceiling with exposed wooden beams and skylights. The walls are a mottled yellowish-brown. In the center, there is a doorway leading to another room. To the right, another doorway shows a room with wooden planks stacked on the floor. The overall atmosphere is one of historical decay and ongoing work.

# RAILROAD HOTEL

CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

In the 1920s, The Travelers was a bare-bones 13-room, second-story hotel that accommodated colored railroad workers. It is located at 212 Third Street, in an area of Clarksdale once referred to as “The New World,” the belly of the blues and red light district. It was commonly referred to as a “railroad hotel” because its guests were mostly rail workers. As of March 2018 it was undergoing restoration to become a boutique hotel.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# SEGREGATION WALL

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Constructed as a physical barrier between a Black neighborhood and a housing development for whites, 8-Mile Wall was built in 1941. Extending a half-mile, it was the embodiment of redlining, the restrictive real estate practice that marked neighborhoods as undesirable based upon racial composition. The Federal Housing Authority would not underwrite home loans in such red-lined areas.

As a consequence of redlining, neighborhoods that local banks deemed unfit for investment were left underdeveloped or in disrepair. Attempts to improve these neighborhoods with even relatively small-scale business ventures were commonly obstructed by financial institutions that continued to label the underwriting as too risky or simply rejected them outright. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 theoretically ended such discriminatory lending, but its effects continue today.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018









# MEDGAR EVERS' HOUSE

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

The first Mississippi state field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Medgar Evers was shot in the back in the carport of his humble home in Jackson, Mississippi, shortly after midnight on June 12, 1963. He died less than a hour later at a nearby hospital.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# NESHOPA COUNTY JAIL (FORMER)

PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI

During the Freedom Summer of 1964 three civil rights activists were jailed briefly in this small Neshoba County jail on trumped up charges. When Mickey Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney were released that night, they were followed by Ku Klux Klan members tipped off by the sheriff's office. They were forced off the road en route to their office in Meridian, taken to a remote backroads location and bludgeoned.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# MURDER SITE OF JAMES CHANEY, ANDREW GOODMAN AND MICKEY SCHWERNER

NEAR PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI

During the Freedom Summer of 1964 three civil rights activists were jailed briefly in the small Neshoba County jail on trumped up charges. When Mickey Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney were released that night, they were followed by Ku Klux Klan members tipped off by the sheriff's office. They were forced off the road en route to their office in Meridian, taken to this remote backroads location and bludgeoned to death. Their bodies were later found in an earthen dam.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018









# HANGING TREE

GOLIAD, TEXAS

The Goliad Hanging Tree is a symbol of justice, Texas-style. For 24 years the court trials of Goliad County were held under this big oak tree. Death sentences were carried out promptly, usually within a few minutes, courtesy of the tree's many handy noose-worthy branches. The tree also served as a gallows for approximately 75 lynchings, many during the 1857 "Cart War" between Texans and Mexicans.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# BRYANT'S GENERAL STORE

MONEY, MISSISSIPPI

In August 1955, 14-year old Emmett Till, visiting from Chicago, walked into Bryant's General Store in Money, Mississippi with his cousins, innocently whistling to control his stutter. The young white woman tending the store, Carolyn Bryant, told her husband that Emmett Till had whistled at her and made flirtatious advances. Several nights after the store incident, Bryant's husband Roy and his half-brother J.W. Milam went to Till's great-uncle's house and abducted the boy. They beat and mutilated him before shooting him in the head and throwing his body into Black Bayou. In 2007 Carolyn Bryant admitted her accusations had been false.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# BLACK BAYOU BRIDGE

GLENDORA, MISSISSIPPI

In 1955, when Emmett Till was fourteen, his mother put him on a train from Chicago to spend the summer visiting his cousins in Money, Mississippi. She never saw him alive again. Her son was abducted and brutally murdered on August 28, 1955, after being falsely accused of interacting inappropriately with a white woman. His body was dumped into the muddy waters below Black Bayou bridge.

The following month, Roy Bryant and his half-brother J.W. Milam faced trial for Till's kidnapping and murder but were acquitted by the all-white jury after a five-day trial and a 67-minute deliberation. One juror said, "If we hadn't stopped to drink pop, it wouldn't have taken that long." Only months later, in an interview with Look magazine in 1956, protected against double jeopardy, Bryant and Milam admitted to killing Emmett Till.

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018







# BORDER WALL

BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS

The United States government has recently begun fortifying the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Nearby, in a former Walmart store, nearly 1500 immigrant children separated from their parents are incarcerated (as of July 2018.)

PHOTOGRAPHED: 2018



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