Civil rights activist Joyce Ladner (b. 1943) discusses post-war Southern black youth in the movement in an interview conducted by Joseph Mosnier (b. 1962) for the Civil Rights History Project in 2011. Civil Rights History Project Collection (AFC 2010/039), American Folklife Center.

Medgar Evers and the Jackson Movement: “Until Freedom Comes...”

Medgar Evers (1925–1963) was assassinated at his home in Jackson, Mississippi, a few hours after President Kennedy made a nationally televised speech in which he announced he soon would ask Congress to enact civil rights legislation. The original English language comic book, published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1957, was discovered by Egyptian activist Dalia Ziada in 2006. The book “Red Activists and Black Freedom” is a series of essays by a number of scholars and activists based on a symposium titled, “James and Esther Jackson, the American Left and the Origins of the Modern Civil Rights Movement” held at the Tamiment on Oct. 28, 2006. With the success of that event it was decided to publish the presentations in book form. The book was edited by historian David Levering Lewis with Michael Nash and Daniel Leab.

Participating in Tuesday’s event, which drew a packed house, were a number of panelists including the book’s editors and some of its contributing author Civil Rights Journey recounts the coming of age of a young man shaped early by the crucibles of polio and segregation (both by decree and by custom) and later by that of the civil rights movement. Joe Howells story depicts the effects of human vulnerability and of human cruelty. The lingering effects of polio made him at times the object of bullying and derision, perhaps thus increasing his sensitivity to such cruelties manifest in the system of segregation. He takes us on a journey to rural Georgia at the height of the civil rights movement and the rise of black power. His account of his struggles to work with black activists to make change in communities deeply marred by entrenched issues of racism and social injustice is honest and passionate.