

# SEGREGATION AND THE FOUNDING OF ASBURY PARK


Est. Time: 60 minutes

Subjects: History/Social Studies

Age Range: High School


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★ *TEACHROCK* ★



*What does the founding and early history of Asbury Park reveal about practices of segregation in the Northern United States?*

In this lesson you will:

- The definition of “de facto” segregation
  - The importance of Asbury Park to the history of American Popular music
  - The history of segregation in Asbury Park
  - The role music can play in bringing people together
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**Segregation:** The separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group.

**De Jure Segregation:** The enforcement of segregation by governmentally-enacted laws.

**De Facto Segregation:** Practices of segregation that are not enacted or enforced by the law.



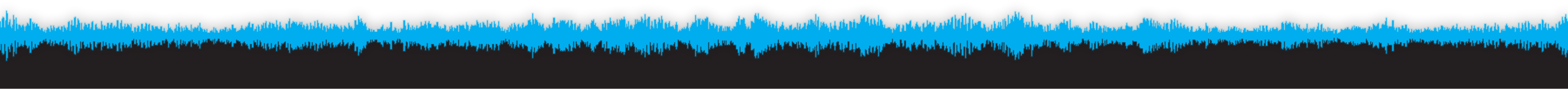
In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech addressing segregation at Monmouth University in West Long Branch, New Jersey.

**Read EXCERPT 1 of Handout** - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King's Speech at Monmouth University





Consider or ask a friend:

- What might Dr. King mean when he says Black people in the United States continue to be lynched “psychologically and spiritually”?
  - What are the major areas of segregation Dr. King is addressing in this excerpt? How might these fall under the idea of “de facto” segregation?
  - What, according to Dr. King, is the result of these aspects of segregation? What “conditions emerge” as a result of these forms of segregation?
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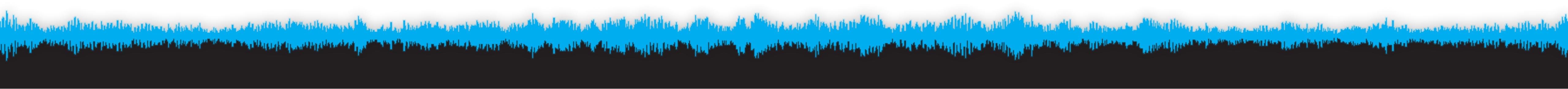
A few miles from where Dr. King delivered his speech at Monmouth University lies Asbury Park, a small city that has its own history of segregation.


**Watch Clip 1** - The Founding of Asbury Park





Then consider or ask a friend:


- Who founded Asbury Park? When was it founded?
  - What was Bradley's original vision for Asbury Park? Why did that vision change?
  - According to the video, why was Asbury Park "A Tale of Two Cities"?
  - Who generally inhabited the east side of the city? Who inhabited the West Side? In what ways might the two sides come into conflict?
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In the late 1800s, there was a debate in Asbury Park over whether the Black community in the city should be able to access the beaches.

Skim through some of the newspaper articles and op-eds in **Handout - Debate over Beach Segregation in Asbury Park, 1887**.

Then consider or ask a friend:

- Who was the primary figure representing Asbury Park in the fight over beach access? Who represented the Black community?
  - What principle arguments did the Black community make in asserting their right to visit Asbury Park beaches?
  - What arguments did officials of Asbury Park make for forbidding the Black community access to Asbury Park beaches?
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As a result of these debates, the city of Asbury Park created beaches reserved for tourists, and those reserved for residents – segregating the beaches of the city along racial lines.

Consider or ask a friend:

- How was the segregation of the beaches in Asbury Park an example of “*de facto*” segregation and not “*de jure*” segregation?






As a resort town, Asbury Park drew a lot of musicians and entertainers, both to the east and west sides of the city.

Watch **Clip 2, Music in Asbury Park**.

Consider or ask a friend:

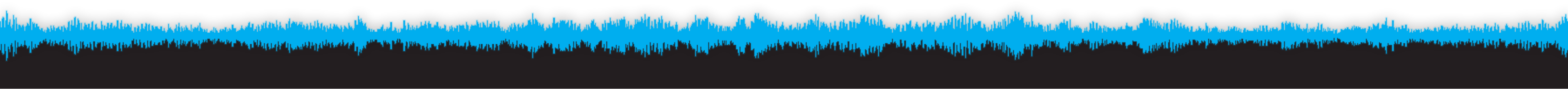
- In what ways, according to the clip, did music help integrate the east and west side of Asbury Park?
  - How might have racially integrated gatherings of musicians and audiences helped to highlight segregation in Asbury Park?
  - What limits do integrated venues have towards confronting segregation? Consider, for example, the price of tickets to get to see one of these concerts: could people on the West Side afford them?
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One of the musicians to come out of Asbury Park is musician, actor, and activist Steven Van Zandt.

Watch **Clip 3, Steven Van Zandt on Music.**


Consider or ask a friend:

- What might Van Zandt mean when he says music is the “universal language”? What example does he give supporting this idea?
  - Van Zandt mentions that music has the ability to communicate outside “government” and “formality.” How might this make music a powerful means of spreading a message?
  - How might music act as a “common ground” for a diversity of audiences?
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Read EXCERPT 2 of **Handout - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King's Speech at Monmouth University.**

Consider or ask a friend:

- What “myth” does Dr. King introduce in this excerpt? Why does he describe it as a “myth”?
  - To Dr. King, what is the purpose of legislation? What is it capable of doing, and what is it incapable of doing?
  - How does Dr. King differentiate between legislation and morality?
  - Consider Van Zandt's comments on music. Where might music fit into Dr. King's thinking in terms of change and legislation?
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# SUMMARY

- “*De jure*” segregation is segregation enforced by governmental law
- “*De facto*” segregation is segregation that occurs without specific governmental law
- While the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s made significant progress in eliminating “*De jure*” segregation, “*de facto*” segregation remains an issue even today
- Asbury Park is a case study of how segregation occurs in the Northern United States, even if there are no laws officially mandating segregation
- Music provides an opportunity of integration, and a criticism of segregation



# BE CREATIVE

Reread excerpt 1 from the **Handout - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King's Speech at Monmouth University**. Choose one of the issues Dr. King mentions in this part of the speech, and write an exploratory essay on the ways music might be a way to positively address it.

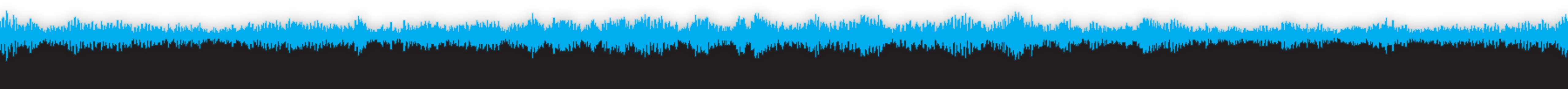


# BE CURIOUS

Asbury Park has been referred to as “the Jim Crow of the North.” Research what “Jim Crow” refers to, and write a short response on why Asbury Park might have been given such a description.

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