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Most Southern Place on Earth  
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**Subject Topic:** The Mississippi Sovereignty Commission and the Civil Rights Movement

**Grade Level:** 12

**Length of Lesson:** 2-3 class periods (50 min each)

**Guiding Question:**

What can the documents of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission archives tell us about how the Commission used its power to curtail the rights of African Americans in Mississippi?

**Procedures:**

1. Teacher will give students a copy of “Mississippi Sovereignty Commission Document” and a [Written Document Analysis](#) sheet. Have the students read the document. Complete the document sheet with the students.
2. Teacher will demonstrate how to conduct a search, identify an appropriate document using [Sovereignty Commission Online](#). (Note: Individual names may have multiple spellings and that the document may have multiple pages.)
3. Using the website [Sovereignty Commission Online](#), students will locate documents relating to an individual who was an active participant in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, including, but not limited to:

Amzie Moore	Aaron Henry	Fannie Lou Hamer
Bob Moses	Charles McLaurin	Edwin King
Lafayette Surney	Willis Wright	Sam Block
Medger Evers	Hartman Turnbow	Victoria Gray
Annie Devine	Willie Peacock	Charles Cobb
Ida Mae Holland	Curtis Hayes	Robert (R.L.) Drew
Unita Blackwell	Theodore (T.R.M) Howard	Dorie Ladner
J.H. White	Mendy Samstein	George Green(e)

4. Students will select an individual and locate three appropriate documents using [Sovereignty Commission Online](#).
5. Students will complete a [Written Document Analysis](#) sheet for each document (three document minimum).

6. Students will assemble in groups of three and share their findings, identifying similarities and differences in the documents they located.
7. Students will participate in a whole group discussion of the guiding question and identify the prevailing themes from the documents.
8. Students will view the documentary, *History Undercover: Mississippi State Secrets* from *Voices of Civil Rights*.

**Wisconsin Social Studies Standards Addressed:**

- B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches
- B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion
- B.12.4 Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events
- B.12.5 Gather various types of historical evidence, including visual and quantitative data, to analyze issues of freedom and equality, liberty and order, region and nation, individual and community, law and conscience, diversity and civic duty; form a reasoned conclusion in the light of other possible conclusions; and develop a coherent argument in the light of other possible arguments

**Links to Resources:**

Mississippi Sovereignty Commission:

[http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital\\_archives/sovcom/index.php](http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/sovcom/index.php)

Written Document Analysis Sheet:

[http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written\\_document\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheet.pdf)