Down in Mississippi
by Carlyle Brown
directed by Emil Thomas

CAST
Patrick Romano (MFA 2)
Michela Murray (BFA 4)
Destin Teamer (BFA 3)

PRODUCTION STAFF
Zoe Foster (BFA 1) Stage Manager
Isabelle Cheng (BFA 2) Dramaturg
Charlotte Meffe (BFA 4) Dramaturg
Bair Warburton-Brown (BFA 3) Dramaturg

Down in Mississippi is presented by special arrangement

A Carlyle Brown & Company Production
Presented at the East Side Freedom Library
Developed by Playwrights' Center
On June 14, 1964 three college students really did go missing in Neshoba county, Mississippi, while volunteering in the Freedom Summer program. On August 4, 1964, after a 200-agent FBI investigation, their bodies were found burned alive in a roadside ditch. In January of 1965, eighteen Neshoba county police officers and Klu Klux Klan members were indicted for the murders (including the local sheriff). However, at that point, it was too late to save the program.

This gross miscarriage of justice had flown in the face of fundamentally non-violent civil rights organizations such as SNCC, and extremely undermined Martin Luther King Jr’s calls for non-violence. The destruction of SNCC, and the growing racial division within the democratic party, gave birth to the separatist Black Power movement, as well as The Black Panther party. The decade ended with the assassinations of civil rights leaders such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Junior, as well as leaders of The Black Panther Party, such as Fred Hampton.

The Klu Klux Klan and their supremacist ideologies have not only violently taken the lives of millions of innocent young Americans such as James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. They have also perpetuated the continued subjugation of black and brown bodies in America by dismantling any civil rights efforts in modern American history. Even the recent “Black Lives Matter” movement was semantically undermined by it’s impotent “All Lives Matter” counterpart.

Black and brown Americans are continuously the mortal sacrifice for civil rights reform, which is why it is essential that all others continue to aid the fight for social justice in the polls on their own. The reason the democratic party became divided in 1964 is because everyone started fighting for their own demographic instead of each other’s. In order to defeat the most supremacist president in modern history this year, it is essential that democrats unify across demographics and turn out the vote.