

# **“OF ALL THE FORMS OF INEQUALITY”: HEALTH CARE AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

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**Farmingdale State College (SUNY)**

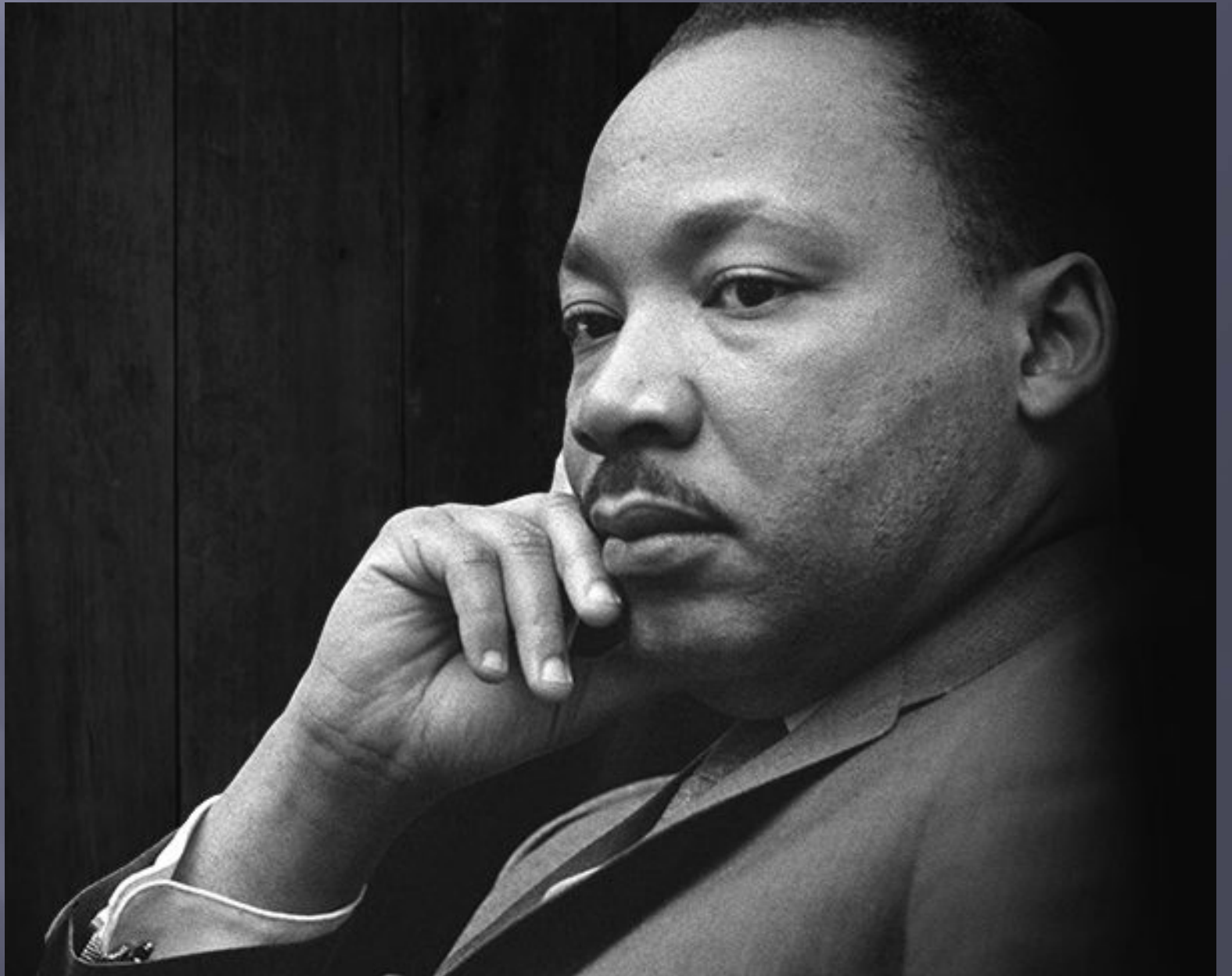
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*Of all the forms of  
inequality,  
injustice in health  
care is the most  
shocking and  
inhumane.*





# Health Care in the Jim Crow South



THE FLINT-GOODRIDGE HOSPITAL AND  
NURSE-TRAINING SCHOOL.









 *Medical Committee for Human Rights*  
**Newsletter**  
211 West 56 St. New York, N. Y. 10019 582-1661 and 1662  
NUMBER 4 MARCH 1965

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## MCHR RESPONDS TO SOUTHERN CRISIS



*I understood for the first time what it truly meant to be black in Mississippi, and underprivileged, and poor and without medical care, and saw people by the hundreds, and really by the thousands, go without medical care.... People had been denied benefits under Social Security. People had been denied benefits for welfare.... Thirty to 40 percent of children had intestinal parasites.... The maternal mortality rate was out of this world*

**Dr. Bob Smith**





# War on Poverty/Medicare and Medicaid

*Very often the lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but a symptom. The cause may lie in our failure to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities, in a lack of education and training, in a lack of medical care and housing, in a lack of decent communities in which to live and bring up their children.*

Lyndon B. Johnson



# Health Clinics/Community Health Centers



THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY

*ANNOUNCES.....*

**THE GRAND OPENING OF**

**THE  
BOBBY SEALE  
PEOPLE'S  
FREE  
HEALTH CLINIC**



**SATURDAY  
APRIL 24th 1971  
2:00 P.M.**

**3236 Adeline St. Berkeley**

A persons' health is their most valuable possession. Improper health care and inadequate facilities can be used to perpetrate genocide on a people. The present racist, racist government used its facilities for that purpose -- the genocide of poor and oppressed people. The people must create institutions within our communities that are controlled and run by the people in order to insure our survival. With this in mind, the Black Panther Party announces the opening of our first Free Health Clinic in the Bay Area.

**ALSO.....FREE FOOD & CLOTHING ON OPENING DAY**

*For further information contact*

*Black Panther Party...Berkeley Branch  
2230 10th St. Berkeley...Phone 848-7740*

*SERVING THE PEOPLE BODY AND SOUL*





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# Nursing During the Movement

- ▣ *After I get all my materials together, I leave about 9:30, sometimes 10 o'clock – this is after I've checked with the doctors concerning their patients. Getting the equipment out... carrying pads, perhaps wheelchairs provided to some of the patients, carrying the medications.... I usually have certain days that I see certain patients. I see from five to six patients a day...it depends on the condition of the patient. I spend from 15 minutes to sometimes three hours with the patient in the home, teaching and instructing [such as how to take care for a sick child, how to administer medicine, etc.], and assisting them with their needs....*

**Nurse White**







# Malnutrition

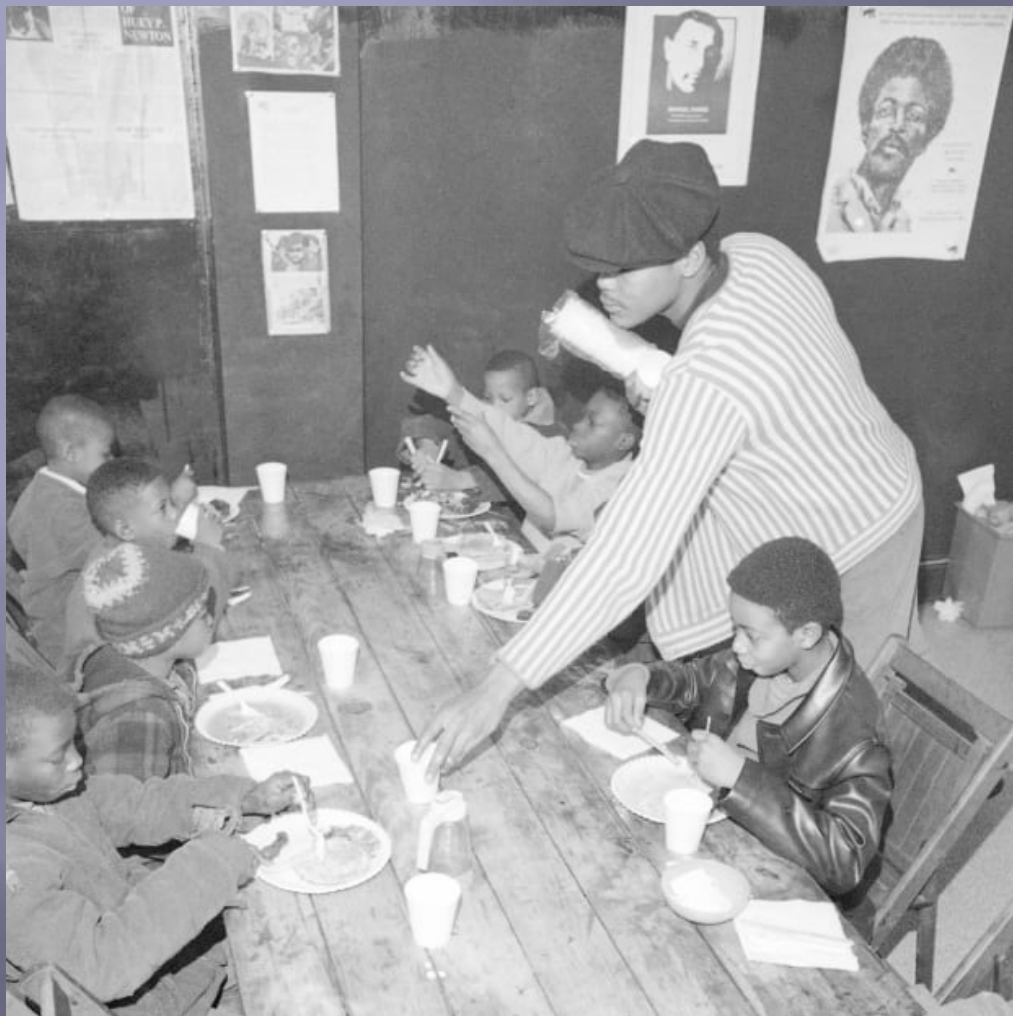
- ▣ *“These children in Mississippi live on a diet of cornbread, grits, and Kool-aid,” and “the effects of malnutrition are staggering.... Skin disease is rampant with...children suffering from rashes, boils, dryness and shrinkage” as “prolonged protein deficiency in some children has caused the body to consume its own protein tissue.”*

**St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, March 30, 1968**

*We decided that wherever we saw [malnourished] children...we would provide them with food: so much milk, so much eggs, so much meat, so much vegetables. We'd do it by writing them a prescription for food.*

**Jack Geiger**

# Food assistance





# Food Co-ops







# Housing

- It's not unusual in Mississippi...for a family with six or nine children to live in a three room house with a pump in the backyard near a three-sided toilet that has no roof.... The roofs of corrugated metal or tarpaper leak, the sides are patched with roadside advertising signs, screens are missing from windows and often lack panes, and flies and mosquitoes find easy entry, as do the field rats that come through the holes in walls and floors.

**Arizona Republic, Sept 5, 1971**

- Penicillin may be indicated to cure pneumonia, but it alone will not stop the roof from leaking.

**Dr. Roy Brown**



# Water





# Sanitation



- *The entire town is serviced by a water system under pressure. The White community is sewered by discharging untreated septic tank effluents, collected in an underground sewage system, into one of the two streams running through the town. The Black community relies on outdoor pit privies or, for those with indoor toilets, on discharging septic tank effluents into street quarters.*

**Paul Francis Howard, S.J.**





## *Hawkins v. Shaw (Miss.), 1971*

Here the Town of Shaw furnishes services without regard to assessment or property ownership and there is no basis in the record for the failure to have equalized many of the services in question. For example, there is no conceivable reason for placing all of the modern street lights in the areas of the city occupied by white residents and none in the areas occupied by Negro residents. Nor does the record demonstrate why it happens that the inadequate water pressure exists largely in the Negro areas. There is also a clear disparity in the areas of sanitary sewers, storm drainage, paving, fire hydrants and traffic control signs, all of which can be and were traced to racial considerations simply by virtue of the division of the town into Negro and white areas and the fact of the services and facilities available to each.

# Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement on Health Care

- ▣ Medicare and Medicaid
- ▣ Community Health Centers
- ▣ Water and Sewage improvements
- ▣ Food assistance
- ▣ Environmental Health activism

