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The Stokes Brothers: The Advent of Black Political Power in America

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The Stokes Brothers: The Advent of Black Political Power in America

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Faculty Advisor: Ronnie Dunn

Abstract

Beginning in January of 2017, I conducted research alongside my mentor, Dr. Ronnie Dunn, commemorating the 50-year anniversary of Carl Stokes election as the first African-American mayor of a major US city, and his brother Louis, as the first African-American congressman from the state of Ohio. Our research and the commemoration focused on the political, civil rights, and public policy initiatives and contributions of the Stokes brothers. Our research concentrated specifically on policing during the late 1960's, a period in which many social commentators suggest mirror the racial tensions of today. Mayor Stokes's principal economic development and community revitalization plan, "Cleveland: NOW!" and other governmental documents from the 1960's were used to assess the impact of his public policy initiatives in the area of policing and their implications for public safety today. This research along with that in the areas of housing, education, healthcare, and workforce development will be presented in a report that will be provided to public officials and policy makers to help formulate public policy in these respective fields.