

GMP Dynamic Sourcebook, version 2.1 - Appendix F: Alternatives

F.1 Examples of Alternative Concepts Emphasizing Various Interpretive Themes

Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site

Interpretive Themes	
<p>Interpretation is an educational activity that is designed to provoke thought and curiosity, convey messages, encourage emotional connections, and help people enjoy, appreciate, and protect park resources and values. Interpretive planning includes determining what are the key messages, stories, concepts, and experiences associated with a park site, and recommending the best ways to communicate those messages and stories and provide those experiences. Interpretive themes are those key messages, stories, and concepts that are important for visitors to understand. They provide the foundation for interpretive programs and media (although they need not include everything that is interpreted in the park). Six primary interpretive themes were developed for the National Historic Site.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The Event</u>: The integration of Central High was a landmark battle in the struggle for civil rights. It forced the people of a city and a nation to confront themselves on the issue of discrimination, created an international problem for the country by exposing racism in American society, pitted federal upholding of constitutional civil rights against states rights of self-governance, and provided a foundation for supporting and forging new attitudes of racial tolerance. 2. <u>Civil Rights Movement</u>: The 1957-58 events at Central High School constituted one of many battles in the ongoing struggle for equal rights for all. The integration of Central High School was the first prominent implementation of the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court. Subsequent events have demonstrated that racial discrimination would not be obliterated quickly or easily. 3. <u>Use of Executive Power</u>: President Eisenhower's issued Executive Order 10730, which provided "Assistance for the Removal of an Obstruction of Justice within the State of Arkansas" — a national commitment to enforce civil rights. It was one of the few times that a president has exercised his right to use executive power to contravene state authority on behalf of African-Americans' civil rights. 4. <u>Equal Rights</u>: In the Declaration of Independence, the United States proclaimed as its founding philosophy a commitment to certain "self evident truths," including the assertion that "all men are created equal." Almost 200 years later, and after several Constitutional amendments that strengthened and clarified that commitment, events at Little Rock Central High would put it to a monumental test. 5. <u>The School</u>: Central High is more than a building. It is a symbol of excellence in education, an architectural achievement, the end of a segregated school system, and humanity at its best and worst. 6. <u>The City and the State</u>: As the relatively progressive capital of a southern state — with several integrated institutions including the library, public buses, parks, and the University of Arkansas Graduate Center — Little Rock seemed an unlikely site for civil unrest over the issue of school integration. However, a series of events in the state exposed significant white opposition to desegregation and created an explosive situation.
Alternative Concepts Based on Interpretive Themes	
<p>Several alternative concepts emphasizing different themes were developed for consideration and analysis before selecting a preferred alternative. In each alternative the interpretive program would cover all of the themes; however, some themes would be emphasized over others, with implications for resource management and visitor experience opportunities. The preferred alternative emphasizes "The School" and "Equal Rights," and proposed a large visitor center on location; another alternative emphasizes "the City and the State," and proposed a joint visitor center with the city.</p>	<p><u>Alternative 2 — The Site (Preferred Alternative)</u>: The Central High School and its historic scene would be the focal point of this concept. Visitors would be provided with a full range of orientation and interpretive services to understand the events of 1957 and how those events influence today's educational system.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Theme 5: The School Theme 4: Equal Rights</p> <p><u>Alternative 3 — The City</u>: This alternative provides an overview of the 1957 events at the high school and the relationship of these events to other Civil Rights sites located in and around the City of Little Rock. Visitors would have the opportunity to learn about the events that took place not only at the high school but also at related sites throughout the City of Little Rock.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Theme 6: The city and the State Theme 3: Use of Executive Power</p> <p><u>Alternative 4 — The Legacy</u>: This alternative includes elements of traditional on-site visitation combined with emphasis on scholarly study of the events at Central High School, the Civil Rights movement in the United States, and their effect on the national and international Civil Rights movement.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Theme 1: The Event Theme 2: Civil Rights Movement</p>