always seemed more appealing to the young southerner than to people in other sections. Only in this latter sense can one perhaps speak of the “southernization” of America as a whole. There seems to be a resurgence of American reverence for a wild, interior frontier, for a purer naturalism; this too has its southern roots as surely as the mythical cowboy of the West.

See also HISTORICAL AND MANNERS: Frontier Heritage, Military Tradition, LAW: Criminal Justice; Criminal Law, Police Forces, RECREATION: Football

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That caution of three successive presidential administrations—Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson—was strongly condemned by civil rights movement participants and supporters. At the same time, most white southerners failed to appreciate that the degree of federal action and intervention was much lower than could well have been the case, given the formal powers available to the federal authorities.

Critics of these administrations consistently pointed out that federal authorities were making only the most limited use of certain powers at their disposal: the voting rights provisions of the 1957 and 1960 civil rights acts, the Reconstruction-era criminal statutes codified as 18 U.S.C. 241 and 243; the statute giving the president very expansive federal police powers in any circumstance where state authorities are unable or unwilling to protect constitutional rights (10 U.S.C. 333); and the provisions authorizing all FBI agents and U.S. marshals to make warrantless arrests for any violation of a federal statute that they witnessed (18 U.S.C. 3051, 3053).

The degree of federal restraint was not a matter of happenstance, nor, as some have surmised, was it simply a result of presidential inability to mobilize the resources and energies of the FBI, whose longtime director, J. Edgar Hoover, was accurately regarded as an extreme conservative in matters of race. Instead, in all three areas—schools, voting, and violence—limited federal intervention was based on a straightforward policy supported by all the presidents and attorneys general who were involved: that the racial transformation of southern society would proceed furthest, fastest, and with the fewest scars if federal authorities encouraged maximum voluntary compliance by southern officials and resorted to the coercive use of federal remedies and manpower as little as possible.

Throughout the 1957-64 period Justice Department officials seeking to eliminate racial discrimination from southern voter registration offices made persuasion their first and foremost tool. Only in counties or parishes where registrars rebuffed such approaches and continued to discriminate were federal civil suits brought. Similarly, even in such widely heralded federal-state confrontations as the integration of the University of Mississippi in 1962 and the University of Alabama in 1963, federal officials relied upon private conversations and negotiation and employed actual force only when all other means of obtaining obedience to the law had failed. Furthermore, even in instances where the very lives of civil rights activists were in danger, Justice Department officials moved with caution rather than alacrity. Many movement workers became deeply embittered at the lack of federal response to the shootings, burnings, and beatings that occurred throughout the Deep South between 1961 and 1965.

The summer of 1964 witnessed both a new assertion of federal power in the most violent of the southern states, Mississippi, and passage of the comprehensive Civil Rights Act. Prodded by the murder of three civil rights workers in June 1964, the Johnson Administration established a substantial FBI presence in the state. At the same time, passage of the new law gave the government a powerful new tool for combating racial discrimination.
Justice Department hierarchy in the 1960s—believe that what many view as the South’s tremendous racial progress since the late 1960s would not have occurred and that much of the previous bitterness would not have subsided had not the federal executive branch followed the moderate and restrained path that it did. Had federal authorities employed more heavily the coercive and punitive powers at their disposal, deep racial divisions might well have been further deepened and also prolonged. One’s view of how sufficient the changes in southern race relations over the past 15 years have been will in large part determine whether one judges the federal law enforcement stance of the 1960s to have been intelligent or inadequate.

See also Black Life: Freedom Movement, Black; Law: Civil Rights Movement; Media: Civil Rights and Media

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Cockfighting

Ritualized violence is an integral aspect of many sports, and the extreme of recreational violence can be found in the so-called blood sports. In these activities animals are pitted against each other, usually with fatal consequences for the loser, while spectators wager on the outcome. Cockfighting, dogfighting, and bearbaiting were brought to the United States by early settlers from the British Isles where such activities have a long tradition. Cockfighting is the most common organized blood sport in America and may have as many as several hundred thousand devotees. Fights are regularly scheduled at hundreds of permanent arenas or “pits.” Many cockfights are quite elaborate and may be equipped with refreshment stands, public address systems, and tiers of bleachers. There are three national publications for “cockers,” as cockfighters call themselves, including the oldest, Grit and Steel, founded in 1890. They even have a lobbying group, the United Gamebird Breeders Association.

Though cockfights occur throughout the country, a disproportionate number of fans are found in the rural South. A recent survey of cockers (Bryant and Capel,