

Recommended Works about the May 4, 1970, Kent State Shootings & Related History (with annotations)

Compiled by Shannon Christen-Syed, Laura Davis, Mark Seeman & Idris Kabir Syed
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What Happened on May 1–4, 1970

Barbato, Carole A., Laura L. Davis, and Mark F. Seeman. *This We Know: A Chronology of the Shootings at Kent State, May 1970*. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 2012. (book) [Concise, reliable chronology of May 1–4, 1970]

The Day the '60s Died. Dir. Jonathan Halperin. 2015. (TV documentary) [Visit PBS.org for purchase and viewing information. Contains a variety of voices. Offers a good chronology of May 1–4, except for ROTC burning. In addition, that the Kent State Shootings marked the beginning of the end of student activism is refuted in Chapter 14 of Thomas Grace's *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties*]

The Day the War Came Home: How the Shooting of Students on a US Campus Impacted the Course of the Vietnam War. AlJazeera News. May 5, 2010. (news video)
<https://www.aljazeera.com/videos/2010/5/5/the-day-the-war-came-home>. [Straightforward coverage of the shootings at Kent State and who was responsible. Features Elaine Holstein, mother of Jeff Miller, and others]

Davis, Laura L., Mark F. Seeman, Bradley S. Keefer, Mindy J. Farmer, and Lori A. Boes. May 4, 1970, Kent State Shootings Site. National Historic Landmark Nomination. 2016. (unpublished document) [Addresses comparable events in American history, the national student protest movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, comparable shootings at Orangeburg & Jackson State, significance and lasting impact of May 4]

Fire in the Heartland: Kent State, May 4, and Student Protest in America. Directed by Daniel L. Miller. Produced by Suzanne Clark, et al. Fire River Pictures, 2021; forthcoming on DVD. (documentary film) <https://www.fireintheheartland.tv> [Comprehensive and accurate portrait of student activism at Kent State, culminating on May 4, 1970, and set in the context of the Civil Rights, Black Student, and Student Antiwar Movements. Check at the website above for forthcoming DVD and for film excerpts that can be used now]

Grace, Thomas M. *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties*. Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2016. (book) [Definitive and meticulously researched and documented full-length study of student activism at Kent State, including May 1–4, 1970, and its aftermath]

Kent State: A Turning Point. Written by Carole Barbato, Mike Buday, and Laura Davis. Dir. Mike Buday. Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center. 2012. (video) [Viewable in the Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center, Kent, Ohio]

May 4: Our Place in History (Documentary on the Kent State Shootings). Dir. Dustin Lee. Video footage by Dustin Lee and Jon Jivan. Maple Films, 2016. (video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJYSSJQmVE8> [May 4, 1970, and its aftermath. Features

those on site in 1970, Ohio State Preservation Office director Franco Ruffini, sculptor Don Drumm, David Crosby, Gwen Ifill, and Oliver Stone]

President Nixon's Cambodia Incursion Address. Richard Nixon Foundation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cAAnoqmksg>. (video) [Nixon's April 30, 1970, announcement of the invasion of Cambodia during the U.S. Vietnam War that caused campus protests across America, including at Kent State]

The Vietnam War. Dir. Ken Burns and Lynn Novick. Florentine Films. 2017.

<https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-vietnam-war/>. (TV documentary series) [Coverage of the Kent State shootings begins episode 8]

Key May 4 Sources from 1970s

Davies, Peter, and the Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church. *The Truth About Kent State: A Challenge to the American Conscience*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1973. [Written to convince the U.S. Department of Justice to authorize a federal grand jury]

Eszterhas, Joe, and Michael D. Roberts. *Thirteen Seconds: Confrontation at Kent State*. 1970. Reprinted with preface by Joe Eszterhas and preface by Michael D. Roberts. Cleveland, OH: Gray & Company, 2012. (book) [Concludes with portraits of Allison Krause, Jeff Miller, Bill Schroeder, and Sandy Scheuer]

Scranton, William W., et al. *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970. (published gov't report) [Outstanding first publication on May 4, covering student protest in America and what happened at Jackson State and Kent State]

Stone, I. F. *The Killings at Kent State: How Murder Went Unpunished*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970. (book) [Early source publishing the Justice Department's summary of the FBI's Kent State investigation]

First-Person Points of View

Appy, Christian. *Patriots: The Vietnam War Viewed from All Sides*. New York: Viking, 2003. (book) [135 original interviews offering as many perspectives as one can imagine on the Vietnam War]

Canfora, Roseann, and Alan Canfora. "The Shootings at Kent State." In *The Price of Dissent: Testimonials to Political Repression in America*, edited by Bud Schultz and Ruth Schultz. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2001. 347–67. (book chapter) [Interview with Chic Canfora and Alan Canfora who suffered repercussions for their dissent]

Erenrich, Susan J., ed. *The Cost of Freedom: Voicing a Movement after Kent State 1970*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2020. (book anthology) [Enlightening and moving new book collecting first person accounts, songs, photographs, and essays about May 4 and its aftermath]

Charles R. Fassinger Interviews. 2007. Laura Davis May 4 Papers. May 4 Collection.

<https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/kent-state-shootings-digital-archive/browse-by-sub-collection#Laura%20Davis%20May%204%20papers>. (videos) [Thirteen hours of interviews]

with the highest-ranking uniformed officer on Blanket Hill during the May 4, 1970, Kent State shootings]

“Kent State Anniversary.” *News 5 Cleveland*, ABC. April 30, 2010.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1goFFv3VaOk>. (news video) [Excerpt from Ohio Gov. Rhodes May 3, 1970, press conference]

Kent State Guardsmen Oral History Project: Keith Crilow. Ohio Northern University.

<https://www.kentguardvoices1970.com/keith-crilow.html> (video and transcript) [Selected interview from ONU’s project interviewing members of the Ohio National Guard deployed to Kent, Ohio, in May 1970]

The Oral History Project of the Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive. Texas Tech University, Lubbock TX.

<https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/oralhistory/>. [Extensive project still collecting oral histories representing all perspectives on the Vietnam War. Find 7M scanned pages showing related artifacts in TTU’s Virtual Vietnam Archive <https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/#in>]

Ruffner, Howard. *Moments of Truth: A Photographer’s Experience of Kent State 1970*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2019. (book) [One of the KSU student photographers crucial to preserving history, Ruffner discusses his experience and his photographs]

Simpson, Craig, and Gregory S. Wilson. *Above the Shots: An Oral History of the Kent State Shootings*. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 2016. (book) [Contains oral history theory and models best practices regarding use of oral histories]

Mangels, John. “Snyder Recounts Tactics and Preparation for Kent State Protests.” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 30, 2010.

https://www.cleveland.com/pdextra/2010/04/former_ohio_national_guard_off.html (news article) [Interview with Ohio National Guard Captain (ret.) J. Ronald Snyder, on site May 3–4, 1970]

“Reflections on May 4 and the Vietnam War: Tom Saal.” KentStateTV, Kent State University.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7debn9tbv_0 (video) [Vietnam Veteran and Kent State graduate Tom Saal talks about his evolving view on the Vietnam War. Saal is a retired English teacher and poet; his poetry also can be found online]

Smith, Karen Manners, and Tim Koster, eds. *Time It Was: American Stories from the Sixties*. (collection of memoirs) [Stories from everyday people affected by the Vietnam War and social-political-cultural changes during the *long sixties*]

“Tragedy in Our Midst: A Special Report.” *Akron Beacon Journal*, May 24, 1970. (news special report)

[Newspaper reporting citing remarks from a wide range of individuals who experienced May 4]

May 4, 1970, Kent State Shootings Site

Kent State Shootings: An Appeal to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior to Designate a Portion of the Kent State University Campus in Ohio a National Historic Landmark. Kent State University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives, box 20, folder 31, Jerry M. Lewis Papers. (unpublished document) [Response of the May 4 families to National Park Service study failing to recommend National Historic Landmark status for May 4 site in 1978]

- Davis, Laura L., Mark F. Seeman, Bradley S. Keefer, Mindy J. Farmer, and Lori A. Boes. May 4, 1970, Kent State Shootings Site. National Historic Landmark Nomination. 2016. (unpublished document) [Addresses comparable events in American history, the national student protest movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, comparable shootings at Orangeburg & Jackson State, significance of May 4 lasting impact. Educators have permission to use and share this document]
- Hensley, Thomas R. "The Struggle to Move the Gym." In Thomas R. Hensley and Jerry M. Lewis, eds., *Kent State and May 4th: A Social Science Perspective*. 3rd ed. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press. 140–67. (scholarly article) [Comprehensive account of the 1977–78 Tent City protest to move construction of new annex that would sit within the May 4 site]
- Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center. Kent, OH, 2012. (museum) [Tells the story of what happened on May 4 and its aftermath, set in the context of the long sixties]
- Kent State University May 4 Walking Tour. Kent, OH, 2010. (outdoor educational installation) [Self-guided tour of the May 4 site featuring seven interpretive trail markers, educational map brochure, and documentary film, *Someone to Tell the Story*, narrated by Julian Bond]
- Mapping May 4*. Cur. Jennifer Mapes and Sara Koopman. Kent State University, 2020. <https://mappingmay4.kent.edu/about> (website) [Kent State Shootings site and greater area virtual tours linking locations and selections from Kent State University Special Collections & Archives' Kent State Shootings: Oral Histories project, <https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/kent-state-shootings-oral-histories>]
- May 4, 1970: Someone to Tell the Story*. Dir. Steve Zapytowski. Written and prod. Carole Barbato and Laura Davis. Narr. Julian Bond. <https://www.kent.edu/may4visitorscenter/may-4-walking-tour> (documentary video) [Component of Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center Walking Tour of the May 4 site. The video, which employs 400 archival May 4 photos, is viewable within the site; the soundtrack may be listened to online at the link above, or by phoning 330-672-MAY4 (6294)]
- The May 4th Augmented Reality Experience*. Kent State University, 2020. <https://may4thxr.kent.edu/index.html>. (website and app) [Then and now images of points within the Kent State Shootings site illustrating what happened on May 4]

Orangeburg, Kent State & Jackson State

- Bass, Jack, and Jack Nelson. *The Orangeburg Massacre*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002. [Definitive account of the shootings and the aftermath at South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, SC; includes interviews with survivors and witnesses]
- Black Student Movements: Orangeburg, Kent and Jackson State 1968-1970*. Cur. Idris Kabir Syed. Kent State University, Department of Africana Studies. 2020. <https://isyed1.wixsite.com/mysite-1/kent-state-university>. (exhibit) [Photo exhibit illustrating activism at South Carolina University in Orangeburg, Kent State University, and Jackson State University, 1968-70]
- Bristow, Nancy. *Steeped in the Blood of Racism: Black Power, Law and Order, and the 1970 Shootings at Jackson State College*. New York: Oxford University, 2020. (book) [Definitive account of the shootings and the aftermath at Jackson State; includes interviews with survivors and witnesses]

- Erenrich, Susan J., ed. (1999). *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: An Anthology of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement*. Montgomery, AL: New South Books, 2021. First published 1999. (book) [80+ first-person accounts delivered in narrative, song, drawings, photos; includes Ben Chaney, Bob Dylan, Myrlie Evers, John Lewis, Bob Moses, and many more]
- Erenrich, Susan J., ed. *Kent and Jackson State, 1970–1990*. 2nd ed. Woodbridge, CT: Viet Nam Generation, 1995. (book anthology) [First-person accounts by those who witnessed and were affected by the shootings]
- Etheridge, Eric. *Breach of Peace: Portraits of the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 2018. First published in 2008. (book) [Photos and text recounting Freedom Riders arrested in Jackson, MS. View Etheridge’s companion educational blog at <https://breachofpeace.com/blog/>]
- Freedom Riders*. Dir. Stanley Nelson. Firelight Media for PBS’s *American Experience*, 2010. (film) [Released for the 50th anniversary of the first 1961 Freedom Ride. Viewable at <https://www.pbs.org/video/american-experience-freedom-riders/>]
- Heineman, Kenneth J. *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era*. New York: New York Univ. Press, 1992. (book) [Examines the civil rights and antiwar movements at Kent State, Michigan State, SUNY, and Penn State, late 1960s to early 1970s]
- Hine, Darlene Clark. “The Greater Kent State Era, 1968–1970: Legacies of Student Rebellions and State Repression.” *Peace & Change* 21 (2009): 157–168. [Personal reaction to Kent State shootings and account of scholarship produced by the “greater Kent State generation”]
- Hine, William C. (1996). “Civil Rights and Campus Wrongs: South Carolina State College Students Protest, 1955–1968.” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 97, no. 4 (Oct. 1996): 310–331. [Chronicles student civil rights protests on the South Carolina State campus and in the city of Orangeburg, SC]
- Hughes-Watkins, Lae’l. “Beyond Two Worlds: A Look at the Impact of the Black Campus Movement on the Antiwar Era of 1968–1970 at Kent State University.” *Ohio History* 124 (2017): 41–64. [Adds perspective on the relationship between Kent State Black United Students and Students for a Democratic Society]
- May 4 50: Long Live the Memory, Civil Rights, Black Power, and Anti-War Actions: Orangeburg, Kent, and Jackson, 1960-1967*. Cur. Cara Gilgenbach. Kent State University Special Collections & Archives, 2020. <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives/may-4-50-long-live-memory>. (exhibit)
- Parker, Adam. *Outside Agitator: The Civil Rights Struggle of Cleveland Sellers Jr.* Spartanburg, SC: Hub City Press, 2018. [Written after his conviction was overturned, Sellers reflects in depth on the Orangeburg shooting and the aftermath of his conviction]
- Rogers, Ibram H. (now Ibram X. Kendi). *The Black Campus Movement: Black Students and the Racial Reconstruction of Higher Education, 1965–1972*. (book) New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. [Rogers’ early research looks at the growth of the Black Campus and Black Studies Movement across the mid-sixties to early 1970s at both Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and predominantly White institutions (PWI) of higher learning in the United States. A

video of the author discussing his book in 2012 is posted by the Library of Congress at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xJ6cLKoyy4>

Sellers, Cleveland. *The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC*. Jackson, MS: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1990. (book) [A leader in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Sellers was the only person who was arrested and convicted for participating in protests at Orangeburg in 1968]

Wilson, Milton E. *Involvement/2 Years Later: A Report on Programming in the Area of Black Concerns at Kent State University, 1968–1970*. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 1970. (book) [Account of Kent State's Black United Students' articulated demands]

Archives & Websites

Audio Recording: Raw Tape and Edited Actualities, May 4, 1970. Kent State University Special Collections & Archives, <https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/items/show/6411>, accessed July 14, 2021. (primary audio sources) [Includes Prof. Seymour Baron reasoning with students as he tried to save them from further harm after the shootings and Prof. Glenn Frank's emotional plea that convinced students staging a sit-in after the shootings to leave the Commons]

Daily Kent Stater Digital Archive. Kent State University Special Collections & Archives. <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives/daily-kent-stater-digital-archive>. (website) [Online copies of Kent State's school newspaper from the May 4 era]

Kent State Collection. Call no. MS 804. Yale University Library Manuscripts & Archives. <https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/12/resources/4471>. (website finding aid) [Second-largest collection of archival May 4 sources, including trial documents and photographs]

Governor Rhodes Speech on Campus Disorders in Kent, May 3, 1970. Kent State University, Radio–TV Information. May 4 Collection, box 70, folder 27. (transcript) [Rhodes' press conference in which he vows to “eradicate the problem” of student protestors at Kent State and elsewhere]

Kent State Shootings: May 4 Collection. Kent State University Special Collections & Archives. <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives/kent-state-shootings-may-4-collection>. (website) [Largest existing collection of May 4 archival sources, 50,000 items from which are digitized—including photographs and oral histories]

Photographs in the May 4 Collection: Home. Kent State University, Special Collections & Archives. <https://libguides.library.kent.edu/May4Photographs>. (website finding aid) [Guidance in finding, downloading, and protocols for using archival May 4 photos]

Historical Contexts

The 20th Century with Mike Wallace: The Legacy of Kent State. Produced by Janis Klein. CBS News/The History Channel, 1996. (video) [Illustrates cultural change and includes moving footage of Allison Krause's father defending her right to dissent]

Gitlin, Todd. *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*. Rev. ed. New York: Bantam, 1993. (book) [Comprehensive, engaging study of political and cultural changes of the sixties]

- Grace, Thomas M. "Kent State and Historical Memory." In Carole A. Barbato and Laura L. Davis, eds., *Democratic Narrative, History, and Memory*. Kent State Univ. Press: Kent, OH, 2012. 8-29. [Chronicles efforts of Kent State students during first five years after the shootings to sustain awareness of the killings and build lasting understanding of their significance in American history]
- Herring, George C. *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950–1975*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2020. First published 1979. (history textbook) [Continuously updated and understandable account of the Vietnam War and its lasting impact]
- Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1999. (political history)
- Mapping American Social Movements Project. Dir. James N. Gregory. ©University of Washington, 2015–present. <https://depts.washington.edu/moves/index.shtml> [Website description: "This project produces and displays free interactive maps showing the historical geography of dozens of social movements that have influenced American life and politics since the late 19th century"]
- Port Huron Statement. SDS-1960s.org. <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PortHuronStatement-OCR.pdf>. [Foundation document of Students for a Democratic Society]
- Tyner, James A., and Mindy Farmer. *Cambodia and Kent State: In the Aftermath of Nixon's Expansion of the Vietnam War*. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 2020. [A concise study of the student movement against the Vietnam War and the place of Cambodia and Kent State]

Legal Aftermath of May 4, 1970, Kent State Shootings

- Hensley, Thomas R. "The May 4 Trials." In Thomas R. Hensley and Jerry M. Lewis, eds. *Kent State and May 4th: A Social Science Perspective*. 3rd ed. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2010. 64–86. [Thorough, balanced account of the ten-year legal aftermath of the shootings on May 4]
- Kelner, Joseph, and James Munves. *The Kent State Coverup*. New York: Harper and Row, 1980. [Account by a lawyer for the May 4 families and surviving casualties of the 1975 federal civil trial]

May 4 Memorialization & Remembrance

- Allison, Bill, Sandy, and Jeff*. Dir. Lori Boes. Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center, 2021. (video) [new link coming soon] [Remembers the lives of the four Kent State students killed by guardsmen on May 4, 1970—Allison Krause, Bill Schroeder, Sandra Scheuer, and Jeff Miller. See the companion piece, *Remembering May 4: Sandy, Bill, Allison, Jeff*, still images of exhibits for each of the students, at <https://www.rememberingmay4.org>]
- Lewis, Jerry M. "The Candlelight Walk and Vigil." In Hensley and Lewis, *Kent State and May 4th*, 213–16. (article) [Tradition of remembrance at Kent State]
- . "Social Remembering and Kent State." In Carole A. Barbato and Laura L. Davis, eds., *Democratic Narrative, History, and Memory*. Kent State Univ. Press: Kent, OH, 2012. 176–93. [Looking at May 4 from historical vs. memorial perspectives]

“Remembering the May 4, 1970, Shootings at Kent State University.” *Akron Beacon Journal*, April 29, 2021. <https://www.beaconjournal.com/story/news/2021/04/29/looking-back-may-4-1970-ohio-national-guard-shootings-kent-state-university-four-students-killed/7396482002/> (website) [Slideshow with 75 *ABJ* photos of May 4 aftermath; 6-part article with embedded photos from 1970; and more from *ABJ*'s 50th anniversary coverage]

Arts & Culture

Anderson, Maggie, Alex Gildzen, and Raymond A. Craig, eds. *A Gathering of Poets*. Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 1993. First published 1992. [Poems written for and read in 1990 for the twentieth commemoration of the Kent State shootings]

Ehrhart, W. D., ed. *Carrying the Darkness: The Poetry of the Vietnam War*. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech Univ. Press, 1989. (anthology) [Shattering poetry written by US soldiers who served on the ground during the Vietnam War]

Guerrieri, Vince. “How the Kent State Shooting Changed American Music: From the ‘end of the sixties’ to the ‘Akron sound’.” *Belt Magazine*, 28 May 2021. <https://beltmag.com/kent-state-shooting-american-music-punk-new-wave/>. [“Ohio” and creative music production that followed the Kent State shootings]

Jedick, Peter. *Hippies*. Berkeley, CA: Creative Arts Book Co., 2021. First published 1998. (novel) [Written by a former student about Kent State’s 1969–1970 academic year]

Lynskey, Dorian. *33 Revolutions Per Minute: A History of Protest Songs, From Billie Holiday to Green Day*. New York: Ecco, 2011. (book) [The 1965–1973 category discusses in socio-political context: Country Joe and the Fish, “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-to-Die-Rag”; James Brown, “Say It Loud—I’m Black and I’m Proud”; Plastic Ono Band, “Give Peace a Chance”; Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young, “Ohio”; Gil Scott-Heron, “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised”; and Stevie Wonder, “Living for the City.” Covers Bob Dylan, “Masters of War” in its previous section]

O’Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990. (linked short stories) [Perspectives of the members of a platoon of US soldiers on the ground during the Vietnam War]

Okantah, Mwatabu S. *The Okantah Blog*. <https://www.theokantahblog.com/> (blog). 2019. [Okantah is an Associate Professor, Director of the Ghana Study Abroad Program, and Interim Chair of the Department of Africana Studies at Kent State University. In addition to on his blog, he shares his poetry through publication and performance with the Cavani String Quartet and others]

Wiles, Deborah. *Kent State*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2020. (novel in verse) [A moving, fact-based telling, related by voices reflecting that which is true to each]