A Poem:

Even though most Americans identify the Civil Rights Movement as occurring in the late 1950s and 1960s, the sentiment behind the movement was brewing long before this era. Not only were there smaller, lesser known protests but artists, poets, and musicians expressed resistance through their creative works. Harlem Renaissance writers were particularly good at articulating the race-based injustice in the United States. In his poem *I, Too, Sing America*, Langston Hughes writes “I am the darker brother/They send me to eat in the kitchen/When company comes.” He closes the poem with the prescient lines, “They’ll see how beautiful I am/And be ashamed.” The shame of Jim Crow continues to haunt pockets of our country today.

Visual Art:

The American government’s reaction to antiwar protests was marked by violence both blatant and subversive. Antiwar journalists, activists, and protestors increased the danger in their lives as their messages reached a wider audience. Among the citizens, any type of violence involving police officers or the national guard was seen as suspicious and possibly, or probably, related to government plans to quell dissident voices. One of the most tragic (and conspiratorial) deaths was that of Ruben Salazar, a journalist who wrote about the Chicano power movement in Los Angeles. Salazar was killed in a raid on the Silver Dollar Café after leading a peaceful protest in a nearby park. To this day his death is debated—was it a tragic accident or a targeted hit? Salazar’s death left a wound among Los Angeles’ Spanish-speaking population and eliminated a strong voice for Hispanics. Salazar has been memorialized in a documentary, *Man in the Middle*, and in a 1986 painting by Frank Romero. Romero’s streetscape is recreated in bright, vivid colors and bold brush strokes, but in the middle of this vibrant scene is the Silver Dollar Café, marred by plumes of smoke, still depicted in the bright colors, perhaps a metaphor for the promise of Salazar and his mission.