

## End of an Era (360 Transition Poem)

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What is the difference between *then* and *now*?

When does an era end?

If the Civil Rights Era is over, does that mean  
everything that they fought for has been won?

If I can touch my parents  
and they can still touch memories of  
sharecropping and jim crow.

Redlining, and fire hoses.

Picket signs and burning crosses.

If my father can still touch the image of his friends  
being fired upon with live ammunition  
at a campus protest in 1968.

Tell me when does *then* end and *now* begin.

Those are just memories.

**Today, in this country, when it comes to practices of housing discrimination  
*now* is still *then* for far too many groups of people.**

We are here to commemorate and to celebrate  
the advancements made in fair housing, but more importantly  
we are here to learn. To do that effectively

**we must make the past ever present in any discussion of the future.**

We can only make amends for then  
if we fight to never let it happen again.