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In The Spirit Of Liberation: Race, Governmentality, And The De-Colonial Politics Of The Original Rainbow Coalition Of Chicago

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IN THE SPIRIT OF LIBERATION: RACE, GOVERNMENTALITY, AND THE
DE-COLONIAL POLITICS OF THE ORIGINAL RAINBOW COALITION OF
CHICAGO

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2012

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DE-COLONIAL POLITICS OF THE ORIGINAL RAINBOW COALITION OF
CHICAGO

by

ANTONIO R. LOPEZ, B.A., M.A.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at El Paso
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of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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Abstract

The Original Rainbow Coalition was a revolutionary alliance established in Chicago in early 1969 by the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Organization, and the Young Patriots. The alliance connected one of the largest Black Panther chapters in the country with its headquarters in the heart of North Lawndale, to militant organizations in other outcast communities of the city. In Uptown, the Young Patriots were rooted in almost a decade of grassroots efforts that aimed to organize poor people in a community that featured a large population of southern whites who migrated to Chicago. And in Lincoln Park, the Young Lords had evolved from a street organization involved in the ethnic conflicts of the neighborhood to a political organization that defended against the blatant removal of the working-class Puerto Rican residents from the area. Witnessing harsh realities of poverty, police terror, and displacement, the Young Patriots and Young Lords were the first to embrace the Panther's politics of working-class solidarity and community service.

In contrast to scholars that examine radical coalitions of the late sixties through ethnic histories of community formation, or through the lens of the black freedom struggle during the long civil rights era, this dissertation centers the history of racialized governmentality in Chicago to explain the formation and political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition. Tracing the evolution of state racism in Chicago from the period of Indian Removal to the War on Poverty era, it demonstrates that a sophisticated strategy of racialized governmentality developed in Chicago following the Great Depression. Due to profound histories of "inter-racial" solidarity at the point of production during the 1930s, this study reveals that a neo-liberal political milieu was consolidated in Chicago in the following decades, and that state capitalism increasingly thrived upon the racialization of poverty, the incitement of racial consciousness, and the preservation of segregated spaces of poverty and despair in the city.

Utilizing a comparative and transnational framework to evaluate racial politics in Chicago during the post-Great Depression era, this dissertation argues that the oppositional consciousness that mobilized

the Original Rainbow Coalition derived from the historically specific material conditions maintained by a neo-liberal state in Chicago. In this light, this study contends that the Original Rainbow Coalition was a calculated political tactic that undermined the post-racial politics that buttressed the legitimacy of state power in Chicago, and disrupted ideas of racial essentialism that circulated at the grassroots level and worked to paralyze social change. Furthermore, due to their de-colonial politics of solidarity and the political effectiveness of their community service programs, the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots were criminalized as gangs and endured state sanctioned acts of police terror, legal harassment, and the horrific political assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton -- one of the most powerful advocates of revolutionary working-class solidarity at the time.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Illustrations.....	x
Introduction.....	1
Conclusion	33
Chapter 1: The Roots of Racialized Governmentality in Chicago: U.S. Settler Colonialism and the Birth of Bio-Politics.....	37
Chapter 2: Chicago: The Imperial Metropolis.....	59
Chapter 3: State Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Post-Racial Politics in Chicago.....	84
Chapter 4: From Bandung to Chicago: Anti-Colonialism, Civil Rights, and the Politics of Self-Determination in Chicago.....	107
4.1 Conclusion	145
Chapter 5: Up from Poverty and Out of the Ghetto?: The Politics of Community Control in North Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park	147
5.1 Conclusion	182
Chapter 6: ‘We Know What the Pigs Don’t Like’: The De-Colonial Politics of the Original Rainbow Coalition of Chicago.....	186
Chapter 7: The Rainbow Summer of 1969 and the Political Repression of the Rainbow Coalition.....	220
7.1 Conclusion	264
Conclusion	268
Bibliography	289
Appendix A.....	302
Vita	305

List of Illustrations

Illustration A1: Lincoln Park, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011	302
Illustration A2: North Lawndale, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011	303
Illustration A3: Uptown, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011	304

Introduction

We are comparatively certain about our own situation. We are very uncertain about the enemy's, but here too there are signs for us to read, clues to follow and sequences of phenomena to ponder.

Mao Tse Tung, *Six Essays on Military Affairs*

Unfortunately, too often our standards for evaluating social movements pivot around whether or not they "succeeded" in realizing their visions rather than on the merits or power of the visions themselves.

Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Tradition*

This study investigates the history of racialized governmentality in Chicago to explain the political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition (ORC), a revolutionary alliance established in Chicago in early 1969 by the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party (IBPP), the Young Lords Organization (YLO), and the Young Patriots (YP).¹ Tracing the evolution of governmentality in Chicago from the period of Indian Removal to the War on Poverty era, it reveals that the Original Rainbow Coalition was an organizing tactic that had the potential to diffuse the political paralysis maintained by racial borders in Chicago. By centering the history of racialized governmentality it offers the fresh interpretation that the oppositional consciousness that mobilized the Original Rainbow Coalition derived from the material conditions that were maintained by a neo-liberal political milieu in Chicago. Though political leaders and ethnic histories of racial exclusion were crucial, the consolidation of a neo-liberal state that racialized poverty in the city explains why the activists that formed the ORC developed the political consciousness that race was a hegemonic strategy of power, understood the need to “unite with real friends to defeat real enemies,” and committed to work “in the spirit of liberation,” as Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton would often say.

The ORC connected one of the largest and most active Black Panther chapters in the country with its headquarters in the heart of North Lawndale, to militant organizations in other outcast

¹ This coalition pre-dates the Rainbow Push Coalition founded by Reverend Jesse Jackson during his presidential campaign in 1984. For this reason, many movement participants refer to the alliance of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, Young Patriots as the Original Rainbow Coalition. In this study, the Original Rainbow Coalition, the Rainbow Coalition, and the ORC are used interchangeably.

communities of the city. In Uptown, the Young Patriots were rooted in almost a decade of grassroots efforts that aimed to organize poor people in a community that featured a large population of southern whites who migrated to Chicago. And in Lincoln Park, the YLO had evolved from a street organization involved in the ethnic conflicts of the neighborhood to a political organization that defended against the blatant removal of the working-class Puerto Rican residents from the area. Witnessing harsh realities of poverty, police terror, and displacement, the Young Patriots and Young Lords were the first to embrace the Panther's politics of working-class solidarity and community service.²

As in other cities where a spirit of Third World solidarity flourished during the late sixties, the Original Rainbow Coalition announced that a spirit of unity and liberation had found fertile ground in Chicago. By all accounts, however, this alliance remained intact for only a short time. The assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton on December 4, 1969, and the intensification of FBI and police surveillance, forced the Young Lords, Young Patriots and especially the Panthers to focus their resources on legal cases and basic survival.³ As Chicago Panther Stan McKinney put it, "We was busy trying to stay alive."⁴ Though many members remained politically active, by the end of 1972 the Young Patriots had dissolved as a local organization, the Black Panther Party was in its final months of operation in Chicago, and the leadership of the Young Lords was underground.⁵ If one evaluates the Original Rainbow Coalition according to its longevity it would appear that the alliance was just another brief political experiment during the radical sixties, albeit one that featured "inter-racial" solidarity.

² Other organizations such as Rising Up Angry (RUA) and Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYM II) would later embrace the Rainbow Coalition.

³ During the raid Defense Captain Mark Clark from Peoria was also killed by police. Seven Panthers survived the raid conducted by a police force under the direction of Illinois States Attorney Edward Hanrahan. On the events of the raid see, Jeffrey Haas, *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther*, (Lawrence Hill Books: Chicago, 2010), and Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret War Against the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement* (South End Press: Cambridge, 2002).

⁴ Stan McKinney's comments were made during a panel presentation entitled "All Power to the People: What We Want, What We Believe" on June 10, 2010 at the Du Sable Museum of African American History in Chicago, Illinois.

⁵ The Black Panther Party continued to operate in other places, particularly Oakland, California where the Party organized community programs into the early 1980s. See, Charles E. Jones and Jonathan Gayles, "The World is a Childs Classroom": An Analysis of the Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School" in *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition*, eds. Charles M. Payne and Carol Sills Strickland, (New York and London: Teachers College Press, 2008), 100-112.

Challenging that notion, this study places the formation of the ORC in relation to the evolution of racialized governmentality in Chicago in order to demonstrate its significance as a political tactic and vision of anti-racist class struggle.

The decision to examine the Original Rainbow Coalition through the lens of racialized governmentality in Chicago developed during the research process. To understand why grassroots activists divided by race and space in Chicago developed an oppositional consciousness of solidarity and were repressed by the state as political threats, it became increasingly obvious that this study had to move beyond an examination of the social histories of each organization that comprised the ORC. To make sense of why the Panthers, Lords, and Patriots not only transcended racial and spatial borders but also rejected leftist radical tactics in favor of community programs that fed, healed, educated, and protected poor people, it was necessary to understand the historically specific political milieu that existed in Chicago. In other words, what local political conditions had evolved that made the leadership of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots espouse revolutionary unity but also clearly understand that each group must focus their energies on educating, organizing, and building class consciousness within their respective communities? What political environment developed in Chicago that explains why the Rainbow Coalition did not feel the need to operate an office or headquarters in the city? What history of Chicago politics accounts for the fact that organizations that labored in unison to care for the health and welfare of the city's poor were designated as gangs by Chicago's Gang Intelligence Unit? Finally, what political milieu evolved in Chicago that required that the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots endure state sanctioned acts of police terror, legal harassment, and the horrific political assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton -- one of the most powerful advocates of revolutionary working-class solidarity at the time?

To answer these questions and explain the political unity forged by the ORC, this study evolved from a comparative history of the IBPP, YLO, and YP, towards a study that critically examines the

racial history of state power in Chicago. It stood to reason that in order to grasp why the formation of an “inter-racial” alliance that defended the poor elicited acts of repression and state terrorism, it was necessary to study the ways race shaped the cultural history of state power in Chicago, and to identify the particular ways racial borders and spaces of despair were vital to the political milieu that existed in the city during the late sixties.

By utilizing the concept of racialized governmentality to decipher the political significance of the Rainbow Coalition, this study draws upon and complicates the writings of philosopher Michel Foucault. In the broadest sense, Foucault is largely read for his insights into sexuality, discursive formations, incarceration, and the notion that power is dispersed throughout society rather than centralized and allocated. Others scholars that work within the field of colonial studies find that Foucault’s writings, lectures, and interviews that discuss the advent of bio-power in Europe offer crucial, albeit limited ways to understand the force of modern racism. Though in agreement with this latter assessment, this study nevertheless returns to and builds upon Foucault’s increasing interest in governmentality, or what he described as the invention of state rationality.⁶ In this sense, this study draws upon Foucault’s scholarship less for his insights into racial domination – which there are many – than on his thoughts about the cultural evolution of state power during the era of governmentality.

Foucault’s important investigation into “the governmentalization of the state” uncovered that state power in bourgeoisie societies transformed over time and is far more comprehensive than generally is acknowledged. According to Foucault,

⁶ Scholars such as Anne Stoler, Achille Membe, and Giorgio Agamben have produced works that build upon Foucault’s theorizations of biopower to describe colonial or carceral settings. See, Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), Achille Membe, “Necropolitics” *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11-40. In the interest of locating the locus of biopower, these authors ignore the ways Foucault’s ideas of biopower evolved into a fuller explanation of governmentality in modern bourgeoisie societies. Surely, Stoler’s brilliant critique that Foucault ignored the realities of imperial settings in his writings on European bio-power holds true for his later focus on governmentality, yet, as this study shows, his thoughts and concepts that describe the evolution of European state rationality remain key to evaluating the historical development of state power in the United States, and the adaptation of local governors to “social instability.” Moreover, as both settler colony and Empire, the United States presents challenges to colonial/postcolonial theorists who seek to designate imperial settings as “laboratories of modernity.”

We live in the era of ‘governmentality’ first discovered in the eighteenth century...And maybe we could even, albeit in a very global, rough and inexact fashion, reconstruct in this manner the great forms and economies of power in the West. First of all, *the state of justice*, born in the feudal type of territorial regime which corresponds to a society of laws – either customs or written laws – involving a whole reciprocal play of obligation and litigation; second, *the administrative state*, born in the territoriality of national boundaries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and corresponding to a society of regulation and discipline; and finally *a governmental state*, essentially defined no longer in terms of its territoriality, of its surface area, but in terms of the mass of its population with its volume and density, and indeed also with the territory over which it is distributed, although this figures here only as one among its component elements.⁷ (emphasis added)

Explaining that the historical development of the governmental state was the “fundamental phenomenon in Western History,” Foucault’s work challenged liberal and most leftist understandings that regulation and repression comprised the essence of modern state power. In contrast, he convincingly argued that governmentality is characterized by the conscious introduction of strategies of power that aim to incite knowledge and produce ideal conduct that results in the efficient management of entire populations. In one interview he explained,

In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law which says no, power is taken above as carrying the force of prohibition...If power were anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.⁸

To be sure, in describing governmentality as introducing productive strategies Foucault was not oblivious to the sustained power of law to regulate behavior, and the continued application of state-sanctioned repression. Indeed, he acknowledged that older strategies of power rooted in feudalism and sovereignty persisted alongside biopower, disciplinarity and security, which Foucault named as the triumvirate of productive strategies available to those who governed modern social formations. Ultimately, his contribution was to unveil that during the era of governmentality, governors learned that

⁷ Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds. Graham Burchell et al., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 104.

⁸ Michel Foucault, Interview by Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino, in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 119.

the production of knowledge, the incitement of discourse, and the “education of desire” were far more effective at producing ideal conduct and social control than repression.

Foucault’s scholarship on the governmental nature of the state has widespread implications for evaluating subaltern resistance and anti-racist social movements in U.S. history. For example, New Deal programs, *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, War on Poverty initiatives, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and other programs and pieces of civil rights legislation that so clearly responded to pressures from below would have to be re-evaluated as tactical maneuvers of governmentality rather than declared to be examples of successful grassroots victories. As Foucault noted,

...with government it is a question not of imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of employing tactics rather than laws, and even using laws themselves as tactics – to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved... Within the perspective of government, law is not what is important.⁹

This is not to say that grassroots activism and pressure from below are irrelevant or insignificant. Rather, Foucault’s scholarship on governmentality assists in understanding that benevolent or coercive state reactions to subaltern resistance are always operating to inoculate against potential instabilities, produce a binary of ideal and deviant conducts, and craft a stronger sense of the state among the population. Unfortunately, though Foucault’s insights into the politics of health, surveillance, and sexuality have influenced several fields of historical research, the broader implications of his work on governmentality have mostly been ignored by those who analyze social movements.

The failure to address Foucault’s ideas in social movement historiography is puzzling considering that his writings on power were fundamentally shaped by the global uprisings and grassroots activism that shook France during the late 1960s. It appears that Foucault’s emphasis on the ways modern governmentality entails varying tactics and strategies that produce acceptable conducts undermines current scholarly efforts to highlight subaltern agency and autonomy. Yet, the post-colonial

⁹ “Foucault, “Governmentality,” 95.

theorist Robert J.C. Young has made the important point that Foucault's work on "the political question of power" clarified that,

...Power is a two way process. Just as the exercise of power is heterogeneous, so is resistance; Foucault's point is simply that 'there is no single locus of a great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary.' Resistance does not operate outside power, nor is it necessarily produced oppositionally: it is imbricated within it, the irregular term that consistently disturbs it, rebounds upon it, and which on occasions can be manipulated so as to rupture it altogether.¹⁰

As Young's assessment suggests, Foucault's interest in governmentality and attention to the historical development of power should not be seen as an attack on, or a denial of, the existence of agency. Rather, his scholarship makes clear that any analysis of subaltern resistance should also consider the conscious and evolving efforts of modern administrators to produce ideal conduct and political consciousness.¹¹

Whereas this study draws from Michel Foucault's thoughts on governmentality to trace the cultural evolution of state power in Chicago into the late 1960s, it turns to the scholarship of theorist Stuart Hall to discuss the saliency of race to the politics of governmentality in Chicago. Stuart Hall's prescient observations of racial domination in the classic article "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance" (1980), are particularly important for grasping the political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition as a revolutionary anti-racist coalition. In this piece, Hall masterfully explained that any critical examination of racial domination must also account for the historical development of the mode of production in a specific location. He noted,

¹⁰ Robert J.C. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 2004), 124. Notably, in the same passage, Young writes,

If this causes difficulties for some, Foucault's skepticism with regard to the tendency to inflate the effect of individual agency can only be compared to the position of many Marxists in which resistance and revolution are hardly the privilege of the individual, but rather of collective class action. Those who forget the virtues of solidarity in order to protest against the downgrading of individual agency might recall that it has been intellectuals who have been most prone to inflate the significance of individuals – particularly intellectuals – to the same degree that their theories propose universal categories and claim universal effects. Moreover, the exclusive focus on 'resistance' as a privileged political category is itself open to question.

¹¹ It is important to note here that "ideal conduct" can mean either behavior that conforms to the model of behavior, or "deviant" behavior that operates as the "other" to the model of behavior that is designated as "good" and "descent."

Unless one attributes to race a single, unitary, transhistorical character – such that wherever and whenever it appears it always assumes the same autonomous features... then one must deal with the historical specificity of race in the modern world. Here one is then obliged to agree that race relations are directly linked with economic processes: historically, with the epochs of conquest, colonization, and mercantilist domination, and currently, with the “unequal exchanges” which characterize the economic relations between developed and ‘underdeveloped’ satellite economic regions of the world economy. The problem here is not whether economic structures are relevant to racial divisions but how the two are theoretically connected.¹²

In contrast to certain interpretations of race that “gives an overall determinacy to the economic level” Hall proposed that Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci’s concept of hegemony provides a non-reductionist way to understand the relation of racial domination to the mode of production. He explained that Gramsci’s concept of hegemony entails,

...that state of ‘total social authority’ which, at certain specific conjunctures, a specific class alliance wins, by a combination of ‘coercion’ and ‘consent’ over the whole social formation, and its dominated classes... It represents the product of a certain mastery of the class struggle, certainly, but it is still subject to the class struggle and the ‘relations of social forces’ in society, of which its ‘unstable equilibrium’ is only one, provisional, outcome or result. Hegemony is, one state of play in the class struggle which has, therefore, to be continually worked on and reconstructed in order to be maintained, and which remains a contradictory conjuncture... A state of hegemony enables the ruling class alliance to undertake the enormous task of modifying, harnessing, securing and elaborating the ‘superstructure’ of society in line with the long-term requirements of the development of the mode of production – e. g. capital accumulation on an expanded scale (332).

Considering uneven economic development and the fragile nature of hegemony -- in the sense that it has to be continually re-established and asserted – Hall explained via Gramsci that the state has a leading role in educating or “adapting the ‘civilization’ and the morality of the broadest popular masses.” It is in this educative role of the state, he emphasized, where ideas of racial difference are deployed and operate as an efficient “cementing ideology which secures a whole social formation under a dominant class” (342). In other words, though the state may not generate racial ideas, state institutions gather and

¹² Stuart Hall, “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance” in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (UNESCO, 1980), 308.

disseminate ideas of racial difference which once consented to by different factions of a society secure the unity of a hegemonic coalition that meets the multi-faceted needs of capital.¹³

Stuart Hall's Gramscian understanding of racial domination provides an important corrective to Foucault's concept of governmentality. Whereas Foucault's scholarship unveils the conscious implementation of strategies that aim to produce ideal conduct in a given population, Hall demonstrates that racial conduct and racial consciousness are the ideal result and the most efficient manner to govern modern social formations. Describing the particular force of racial power he elaborated,

...racism is particularly powerful and its imprint on popular consciousness especially deep, because in such racial characteristics as colour, ethnic origin, geographical position, etc. racism discovers what other ideologies have to construct; an apparently 'natural' and universal basis in nature itself... racisms also dehistoricize – translating historically specific structures into the timeless language of nature; decomposing classes into individuals and recomposing those disaggregated individuals into the reconstructed unities, the great coherences, of new ideological 'subjects': it translates 'classes' into 'blacks' and 'whites,' economic groups into 'peoples', solid forces into 'races' (342).

Like Foucault, Stuart Hall understood that the modern state strives to shape political consciousness. However, he unveils that in 'race' those with the power to govern through the state wield an efficient weapon.

Considering Foucault's and Hall's ideas, it is entirely appropriate then to speak of racialized governmentality in the sense that governmental strategies always entail efforts to inculcate a thoroughly racialized political consciousness.¹⁴ As such, it becomes possible to trace the development of race as a

¹³ Here, Hall builds upon previous theoretical discussions of ideology including Althusser's understanding of ideological state apparatuses.

¹⁴ The very notion of governmentality and that certain groups have the capability to govern rationally is itself a product of racial thinking. The concept of "racialized governmentality" in this study is not original. In "Racialized Modernity: An Analytics of White Mythologies" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol. 30, no. 4 (June 2007), theorist Barnor Hesse explains; ...it is in relation to the radically incommensurable corporeal 'non-European' subject that a governmental racialization emerges. It is characterized by the social routinization and institutionalization of regulatory, administrative power (e.g. laws, rules, policies, discipline, precepts) exercised by Europeanized ('white') assemblages over non-Europeanized ('non-white') assemblages as if this was a normal, inviolable, or natural social arrangement of races. It is governmental because it is concerned with regulatory and administrative rationales: assessing, determining, and controlling criteria of admission to 'European' conceptions of humanity, while shoring up colonially perceived deficiencies in 'non-European' others symbolized by their so-called but impositionally attributed racial difference (656-657).

strategy of power in a particular location by analyzing the manner in which the state disseminates, refines, adapts, and repackages ideas of innate racial difference. That said, in seeking to perform such an analysis of racialized governmentality in Chicago to unpack the political interventions of the Original Rainbow Coalition, this study takes serious Hall's caution against representing a universal experience of racial domination that could be extrapolated over broad spaces and historical periods. Rather, it concurs with Hall's argument that any analysis of racial domination is likely specific to a particular location due to the historically specific development of the mode of production.

At the same time, Foucault's concept of governmentality advances Hall's notion of hegemony. Whereas, Hall attributes the establishment of hegemonic coalitions to a process of consent, Foucault explains that power intervenes prior to consent and is operative at the level of desire. In other words, the very notion of consent assumes that there exists an autonomous zone of agency that is firewalled from state power, and that dominated subjects exercise some degree of control over.¹⁵ According to Hall, for example, individuals can either consent to or dissent from hegemonic ideas of race. In contrast, Foucault's work illustrates that state power, through the advent of governmentality, consists of conscious and ever sophisticated efforts to incite knowledge that seeps into, infiltrates, and structures the political consciousness and imaginary of citizen-subjects that makeup a population. As such, there is no location that is isolated from the tentacles of power as the particular aim of governmentality is to produce a "grid of intelligibility" that ensures consent and produces a range of acceptable conducts in a population.

This distinction has crucial implications for evaluating the histories of anti-racist social movements such as the Original Rainbow Coalition. It compels one to consider that the political importance of an anti-racist social movement may not be located in the fact that members of different

While otherwise a brilliant assessment of racialized governmentality, Hesse limits the governmental aspects of racialization to regulation and exclusion. It can be said that this study is a modest effort to extend the analysis of racialized governmentality towards the management of population and the efforts to produce "ideal citizen-subjects" in a particular location.

¹⁵ A similar argument is raised by anthropologist Circe Sturm in *Blood Politics, Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

ethnic groups allied with one another, participated in acts of dissent, and resisted ideas of racial inferiority. Rather, the challenge is to assess whether anti-racist activists and organizations recognized and opposed the particular strategy of racialized governmentality in operation at the time, and to determine whether their programs and political actions undermined the consolidation of a racial grid of intelligibility that would otherwise reconstitute the hegemony of capital. In this sense, this study examines the political tactic of the Original Rainbow Coalition in its relation to the particular strategy of racialized governmentality that was operative in Chicago during the late sixties.

One other aspect of racial domination is crucial to the theoretical framework utilized in this study to analyze racialized governmentality and the political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition. To clarify, this study defines race as a productive strategy of power that aims to consolidate a grid of intelligibility that identifies corporal, cultural, spatial, political, and economic differences as signifying the innate potential of individuals or groups to enhance or contaminate a social formation.¹⁶ Using this definition of race, it emphasizes that ideas of racial difference are deployed, and experiences of racial domination are preserved by the state, for the strategic purpose of paralyzing political opposition and disabling social change. As such, this study intersects with scholarship that examines that describes the ways state sanctioned post-colonial notions of racial essentialism severely limited Third World national liberation movements.

Colonial and post-colonial scholars argue that by demanding a pristine national culture, many post-colonial governors and cultural workers reinforced the colonial notion that a timeless and innate national character exists. As such, they demonstrate that histories of colonialism and imperialism imparted a political consciousness of essentialism that undermined the achievements of national liberation. Edward Said, for example, has deftly explained,

¹⁶ In this sense, racism is a reaction by those who maintain a racial grid of intelligibility to efforts to challenge or eliminate ideas of racial potentiality.

No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental.¹⁷

As Said suggests, post-colonial reactions to racial ideas of European positional superiority often resulted in post-colonial societies wrecked by desires for purity and authenticity. More importantly, the post-colonial record is filled with myriad examples that such a political consciousness of racial distinctiveness is at the core of political upheavals, civil wars, and heinous implosions of ethnic violence.¹⁸ And as Chandra T. Mohanty and other Third World feminist scholars have shown, the will to defend national culture and keep traditions intact is also at the core of the most intense practices of patriarchy.¹⁹ Considering the important work of those that study the colonial and post-colonial historical record, it is certainly not hyperbole to state that the stakes of maintaining ideas of racial essentialism is ultimately political paralysis and the containment of liberation.

If drawing from scholarship that describes the conditions that evolved in European colonies appears to be a reach, consider that Chicago was incorporated into the United States through a violent history of conquest and settler colonialism during the early nineteenth century. As such, to say that racialized governmentality in Chicago is rooted in a history of colonial domination is not a social construction or one interpretation among many. Furthermore, given the historical fact of U.S. settler colonialism in Chicago it is only appropriate that social movements such as the Original Rainbow Coalition are evaluated for their political significance based upon their efforts to combat the psycho-affective dimensions of racial essentialism and the political paralysis so often induced by static ideas of racial and cultural identity. It must be determined, I argue, whether activists and organizations –

¹⁷ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Random House, 1993), 336.

¹⁸ The Final Solution and the heinous history of National Socialism in Germany are naturally conjured here. It is notable that critics of colonialism like Césaire and Du Bois saw in the rise of Nazi power and the genocide of Jews a familiar enemy. On post-colonial implosions of ethnic violence see Arundhati Roy, *War Talk* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2003), and Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

¹⁹ See, M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

regardless of their love for their people and stated intentions to achieve liberation – really put forth an agenda that could overcome the political paralysis that racialized governmentality seeks to achieve. Unfortunately, the historiography of race relations in Chicago has largely silenced the history of U.S. settler colonialism and the ways ideas of racial essentialism shaped the development of racial politics in the city. Due to research frameworks that compartmentalize histories of community formation, scholars have provided little guidance to perform such an analysis of anti-racist social movements in the city.

Undoubtedly, the historiography of race in Chicago is extensive considering that the city has long been considered a laboratory to understand the force of race in modern industrialized cities. Indeed, for almost a century scholars have documented crude experiences of *de jure* and *de facto* segregation and violent acts of white supremacy aimed at preserving racial boundaries.²⁰ The analysis of race in Chicago history has been continually limited, however, by the problematic focus on race relations, and research methods that artificially isolate ethnic groups and their experiences of racism once they migrated to the city.²¹ Though ethnically compartmentalized scholarship that examines the racial experiences of African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Italians, or other groups that migrated to Chicago, does unveil that groups negotiated their racial identities in relation to one another, this sociological approach often ignores settler colonialism and elides the development of the mode of production in Chicago. In doing so, the community formation approach ultimately represents urban race relations as developing outside of the history of U.S. settler colonialism and in isolation from the history

²⁰ In 1922, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* was published by the University of Chicago.

²¹ Examples of the compartmentalized research approach include; St. Clair Drake, and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), Alan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of A Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1967), Frank Padilla, *Puerto Rican Chicago* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), James B. LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-1975* (Champaign: University of Illinois, 2002), Thomas Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), Stephen A. Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006), Davarian L. Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), Paul L. Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), Gabriela F. Arredondo, *Mexican Chicago: Race, Identity and Nation, 1916-39* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

of capital. Instead, historians have described the existence of a deviant racial order in Chicago that operated to exclude “others” from the universal freedom and equalities otherwise guaranteed by the social contract.²² Though newer research has shown an interest in intersectionality, recent scholarship continues to be ethnically compartmentalized and retains the sociological perspective that race operates primarily as a means of exclusion from political and economic markets. In limiting the force of race to social contestations between distinct groups over racial meanings and for rights, resources, and representation, many scholars obfuscate the ways race evolves in relation to the needs of capital, and is also a cognitive force that operates within groups at the levels of desire, conduct, and consciousness.

In contrast to researchers that conceptualize anti-racist social movements as rooted in ethnic histories of migration and community formation, this study utilizes a research framework that places the racial politics of the ORC as part of a longer history of anti-racist coalitions that resisted U.S. settler colonialism, capitalism, and racialized governmentality in Chicago. To accurately locate the Rainbow Coalition within this broader sweep of Chicago history, this study identifies important moments of political conflict that unveil the evolution of racialized governmentality and political struggle in the city. By acknowledging that Chicago was an indigenous space that became part of the United States through acts of state sanctioned settler colonialism and Indian Removal, I contend that one is better equipped to trace the history of racialized governmentality and the implementation of numerous strategies that aimed to craft ideal racial conduct. Moreover, that Chicago’s spectacular development as an industrial metropolis during the nineteenth century occurred in rhythm with the evolution of the United States into a global imperialist power also makes the city a central location to observe the ways overseas imperialism informed urban practices of racialized governmentality. Indeed, this study contends that the post-bellum construction of Chicago as the urban symbol of the American Empire coupled with the

²² According to this framework, ideas of racial difference operate symbolically to differentiate and “slot” groups into a hierarchical racial system that privileges whiteness and determines which bodies and communities experience injustice, exclusion, and domination. Metaphors such as “the color line” and “in between” are often used to describe the location of groups within the racial system and to complicate the Black/White binary that traditionally described the racial system in the United States.

migration of millions of wage laborers to the city – many of whom were considered at the time to be of ambivalent or inferior racial stock -- meant that global ideas of racial difference were vital to local strategies of governmentality.

To trace the evolution of racialized governmentality in Chicago this study relies upon archival research, newspaper articles, and secondary sources and manuscripts produced by other researchers of Chicago history. I also utilize a contrapuntal reading of government documents, public speeches, urban planning literature and state sanctioned sociological studies to identify the racial implications of local governmental strategies.²³ This method of close reading consists of critically assessing discourses with the mindfulness that the production of hegemonic knowledge is implicated in the preservation of oppressive power relations in colonial/modern social formations.

Tellingly, no single archive exists that collects the primary sources and oral histories that capture the history of the Original Coalition. As a result, I gathered primary sources on the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots from several libraries and archives over the course of a year and half of research. The advancement of online resources and databases also provided important primary source materials such as speeches, interviews, and community newspapers. Astonishingly, the most comprehensive archive of the groups under study in this project is located in the Red Squad and Gang Intelligence Unit files housed at the Chicago History Museum. Unfortunately, the valuable information within the dozens of files housed at the Chicago History Museum are restricted under a court order that

²³ In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said describes the method of contrapuntal reading as; ... contrapuntal reading must take account of both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the texts to include what was once forcibly excluded – in *L'Etranger*, for example, the whole previous history of France's colonialism and its destruction of the Algerian State, and the later emergence of an independent Algeria (which Camus opposed)... Obviously no reading should try to generalize so much as to efface the identity of a particular text, author, or movement. By the same token it should allow that what was, or appeared to be, certain for a given work, or author may have become subject to disputation... in reading a text, one must open it out both to what went into it and to what its author excluded. Each cultural work is a vision of a moment, and we must juxtapose that vision with the various revisions it later provoked (66-67).

settled legal cases involving the assassination of Fred Hampton.²⁴ Though I gained permission to survey and study the Red Squad and Gang Intelligence Unit files, this study is inherently limited by the legal restrictions placed upon a collection of historical data that could contribute to a more comprehensive assessment of the history of the Original Rainbow Coalition.

Fortunately, during my time conducting research in Chicago, several public events took place that commemorated the history of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Organization, the life and assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton, and the Original Rainbow Coalition. Through attending as many panels, lectures, film presentations and discussions as I could I met many movement participants. Naturally, some were eager to talk with me about their past experiences as militants in Chicago, while others that I encountered were guarded about their memories. A few were willing to answer questions “off the record,” and others expressed an interest in telling their own story.²⁵ That said, I was able to conduct eleven oral histories related to the Original Rainbow Coalition. Admittedly, this number of interviews represents a small cross-section of the total members of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots, however, these interviews proved to be rich sources of data and information that supplemented what I found in the archives. Further, these interviews were also pivotal in shifting this project away from a social history approach that requires a high quantity of interviews with members of each organization. As much as possible, I strived to “triangulate” data gathered from oral histories, archival research and secondary sources with one another in order to develop an accurate understanding of the events that took place in Chicago during the late 1960s. This project has also benefited tremendously from interviews conducted by legendary oral historians such as Timuel Black and Studs Terkel, and activists like Mike James and Katy Hogan,

²⁴ Though scholars may gain permission to consult the Red Squad and Gang Intelligence files, the legal restrictions placed upon the citation and publication of knowledge in the files make it virtually impossible to utilize the archive in a traditional manner.

²⁵ At the time of writing this dissertation, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party was in the middle of organizing an oral history project with members of the chapter. The results of this labor are highly anticipated.

among others. Finally, numerous informal conversations with activists, fellow scholars, artists and community members were invaluable to filling in the gaps for my research.

Utilizing these sources and materials, this study demonstrates that the Original Rainbow Coalition exposed a sophisticated strategy of racialized government that evolved in Chicago following the Great Depression. It reveals that since the U.S. removal of indigenous nations from the region during the 1830s Chicago was a central location where colonial ideas of racial difference adapted and structured a series of distinct efforts to maintain social stability on behalf of capital accumulation. The era that spanned the 1886 Haymarket Riots and the 1893 Columbian Exhibition, for example, witnessed a remarkable transition from a bio-political strategy of government that sought to obliterate labor militants from the ranks of Chicago's growing industrial workforce, to a disciplinary strategy that sought to cultivate the whiteness and civic pride of European migrants that lived in the city. As this study will show, however, it was a racialized strategy of neo-liberal governmentality that developed in the aftermath of the Great Depression that was threatened by the political tactic of a Rainbow Coalition. By highlighting the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition in relation to the consolidation a neoliberal strategy of governmentality in Chicago during the late sixties, "In the Spirit of Liberation" intervenes upon several fields of scholarship.

For many labor historians the New Deal era is accepted as an unprecedented period in U.S. history when a "progressive" government reacted to popular pressure and actively worked in favor of labor to curtail the power of capital. For example, in *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (2001), historian Gary Gerstle states,

During the 1930's and early 1940s, a large state emerged that would regulate America's capitalist system in the interest of general prosperity and of labor-management harmony; that would provide economic assistance to those deemed unable to help themselves and to those – such as veterans – to whom the nation owed a special debt; and that would establish a large military to wage war and protect the peace.

... Devotion to FDR and the New Deal reveals only part of the 1930s story, however, for it ignores the degree to which a popular revolt from below, emerging most forcefully from the

ranks of workers, shaped the civic nationalism of those years. This popular pressure pushed FDR to the left, forcing him to make the New Deal far more pro-worker than it had originally been.²⁶

Gerstle acknowledges that New Deal reforms were limited, however, he attributes any failings of New Deal reforms to residual ideas of biological racism and the opposition of social conservatives who practiced “principles of “individualism, state’s rights, anti-communism, and suspicion of foreigners.”

Essentially, this same perspective was put forth by historian Lizabeth Cohen in her earlier analysis of working-class activism in Chicago in *The Making of a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* – long considered a definitive study of the era. Cohen’s important research has shown that Chicago was a center of “inter-racial” working class solidarity during the 1930s. Throughout the “age of the CIO,” she explains that the city was a hotbed of labor resistance, anti-racist unionism, and New Deal reforms. According to Cohen,

The major question to be answered is how the bulk of Chicago’s factory workers, who tried valiantly before but in the end always failed, managed during the 1930s to organize themselves into unions that their bosses, by the early 1940s were forced to recognize... A New Deal state more favorable to labor and a new generation of union leaders determined and able to organize industrial workers nationwide are often seen as the crucial catalysts behind the CIO’s success... But this “whig” history of the state’s growing role in industrial relations on behalf of labor overlooks the extent to which the pressure of rank-and-file workers brought about the support of the New Deal state as well as how mixed in impact much of this governmental action was, necessitating additional pressure from the rank and file to achieve its promised ends. In short to a large extent it was the actions of workers that ensured these new protections by the state.²⁷

Certainly, Cohen correctly identifies that an upsurge in grassroots labor activism, and subversive “inter-racial” solidarity produced legislative changes and governmental attitudes towards labor.²⁸ Yet, Cohen, Gerstle and other historians mistakenly represent New Deal reforms enacted by the state as signifying

²⁶ Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 128-130.

²⁷ Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 301-303.

²⁸ Cohen notes, “It took strikes and other agitation by rank-and-file workers to move Roosevelt’s administration from a symbolic but unenforceable acknowledgement of workers’ right to organize under the NRA to the establishment of real machinery to facilitate unionization through the Wagner Act... To be sure, the violent strikes initiated by auto workers in Toledo, teamsters in Minneapolis, and longshoremen in San Francisco during 1933 and 1934 most alarmed FDR and his lieutenants, but so did the calmer grassroots organizing of industrial workers like those who made steel and tractors in Chicago” (303).

political victories for the working-class.²⁹ In contrast, this study reveals that important histories of class struggle in Chicago during the Great Depression were contained by the introduction of a neo-liberal strategy of governmentality during the New Deal era. It demonstrates that New Deal “protections” of labor were implicated in the development of state capitalism³⁰ and reflected a new regime of neo-liberal governmentality in which labor was gradually transfigured into human capital in order to create a social formation vulnerable to market analysis.³¹

Diverging from the shop-floor and cultural approaches to twentieth century working-class history, this study examines the practices of local agents of governmentality in Chicago to demonstrate that they were at the forefront of (re)crafting racial conduct and creating a neo-liberal milieu. For example, prior to the 1930s local governors and sociologists pioneered institutions such as the Chicago Commission on Race Relations and published sociological studies such as the *The Negro in Chicago* (1922) in order to discipline racial conflict and create racial harmony. After the “inter-racial” labor uprisings that took place during the Great Depression, a centralized Democratic political machine evolved and embraced the creation of a neo-liberal milieu of human capital, equal opportunity, and personal responsibility. By studying the creation of institutions charged with policing racial conduct such as the Mayor’s Committee on Race Relations (MCRR), and the actions and discourses of powerful local administrators such as Mayor Richard J. Daley and Congressman William Dawson, this study teases out the profound connections between neo-liberal interpretations of poverty and racial domination. One of the aims of this study, however, is to prove that the neo-liberal milieu that was consolidated in Chicago during the “long civil rights era” thrived upon the incitement of racial

²⁹ I am thinking here of the contributors to Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989).

³⁰ On state capitalism see C.L.R. James et al. *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing, 1986), and Paul Buhle, *From the Knights of Labor to the New World Order: Essays on Labor and Culture* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997).

³¹ Acts of state sanctioned violence towards laborers such as the May 1937 Memorial Day Massacre certainly come to mind. Indeed, this incident witnessed the police brutally shoot down dozens of workers at the Wisconsin Steel plant. My argument is that in contrast to coercive reactions like the Memorial Day Massacre, the productive aspects of power are overlooked during this era.

consciousness, and the preservation of segregated spaces of poverty and despair in the city. I contend that in order to comprehend the political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition one must reconsider New Deal reforms as implicated in the racialization of poverty in Chicago.

As a study that focuses upon the ways neoliberalism and racialized governmentality shaped the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition, this study also contributes to a rapidly growing field of scholarship that seeks to re-evaluate the legacy of the Black Panther Party.³² Several observers of the Black Panther Party and the groups they inspired insist that the model of militant Black Power practiced by the Panthers produced deep anxieties and a range of repressive actions by the state including the infamous COINTELPRO operations. Indeed, FBI Director Herbert Hoover's commentary that Panthers were "the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States" is often cited as evidence that the Panthers were considered the principle source of militant instability in the country during the late 1960s.

Other scholars such as historian Nikil Pal Singh, however, have argued that the Black Panthers represented the most significant symbolic threat to state authority in U.S. history. Beyond their actual militant potential Singh explains,

The Panthers were a threat to the state not simply because they were violent, but because they abused the state's own reality principle... Patrolling the police armed with guns and law books, the Panthers undermined the very notion of policing by performing it, and in effect deforming it themselves...Policing the police, in other words, the Panthers signaled something far more dangerous than is generally acknowledged: the eruption of a non-state identity into the everyday life of the state. That such a small and relatively poorly trained and equipped band of urban black youth could demand so much attention from federal and local police attests to the

³² Scholarly re-evaluations of the Black Panther Party are found in, Tracie A. Matthews, "No One Ever Asks What a Man's Place in the Revolution Is": Gender and Sexual Politics in the Black Panther Party (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1998), Charles Jones ed. *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered* (New York: Black Classic Press, 1998), Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas eds., *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party: A New Look at the Panthers and Their Legacy* (New York: Routledge, 2001), Jama Lazerow and Yohuru Williams eds., *In Search of the Black Panther Party: New Perspectives on a Revolutionary Movement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), Jane Rhodes, *Framing the Panther: The Spectacular Rise of a Black Power Icon* (New York: New Press, 2006), Joy James, "Framing the Panther: Assata Shakur and Black Female Agency" and Erika Huggins and Angela D. LeBlanc-Ernest, "Revolutionary Women, Revolutionary Education: The Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School" in *Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*, Dayo Gore et al., (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

tenuousness of the insertion of the state itself and to the degree to which it depends on silencing those who would take its name in vein.³³

Certainly, Singh is correct to attribute state repression and the political significance of the Panthers' to their militant rejection of state authority and "dramatic performance of black anti-citizenship." Yet, as this study shows, scholarly efforts to explain the repression of the Panthers to either their real military potential to overthrow the federal government, or their ability as an insurgent group to disrupt the legitimacy of the federal government, overlooks considerable evidence that the politics of solidarity and community programs championed by Black Panthers undermined racialized governmentality and the fragile nature of hegemony in local areas as well. Contributing to a growing body of scholarship that evaluates local histories of the Black Panther Party, this dissertation shows that the efforts of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Party to create and maintain a Rainbow Coalition in Chicago is a significant example of the ways that political tactics were informed by and directed against local political designs.³⁴

Without denying the importance of Black Power militancy or symbolic resistance, this study affirms that the IBPP was a powerful threat at the local level because the politics of solidarity and class struggle the chapter practiced undermined the tendency in Chicago to react to local forms of racial oppression through racial essentialism and intra-racial unity. Indeed, the development of community programs around the city that were inspired by the Black Panther's ten point platform disallowed group explanations of oppression, unveiled the racialization of poverty, and offered a model of self-determination to poor communities. Furthermore, by nurturing relationships between racially

³³ Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 203-205.

³⁴ Recently, local approaches to Black Panther history have emerged including; Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), Andrew Witt, *The Black Panthers in the Midwest: The Community Programs and Services of the Black Panther Party in Milwaukee, 1966-1977* (New York: Routledge, 2007), Jama Lazerow and Yohuru Williams eds., *Liberated Territory, Untold Local Perspectives on the Black Panther Party* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), Orissa Arend, *Showdown in Desire: The Black Panthers Take a Stand in New Orleans* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas, 2009), Donna Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), and Judson Jeffries, *On the Ground: The Black Panther Party in Communities Across America* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010).

differentiated activists and communities, and caring for the lives of working-class communities in Chicago, the IBPP was also a political threat because it challenged the gendered norms of militancy and racial solidarity. This is not say that activists were without flaws or faults. But in Chicago at least, the Black Panthers efforts to maintain a militant alliance that transcended racial borders challenged the prominent notion at the time that “inter-racial” coalitions undermined the virility of the “race” and their political aspirations. As such, this study reveals that through the Original Rainbow Coalition, the IBPP introduced a de-colonial political tactic that operated locally in the interstitial spaces created in Chicago by the paternalism of neo-liberal social welfare programs and the patriarchal designs of racial separatism.

Conceptualizing the Original Rainbow Coalition as a local political tactic that undermined racialized governmentality in Chicago, this study also presents research that builds upon and complicates three fields of scholarship that analyze histories of anti-racist activism in communities of color in the United States. Over the last decade, historians that study the social histories of civil rights and militant organizations led by people of color, comparative ethnic studies scholars that assess the emergence of a Third World identity in the United States, and scholars that study black and Latino community formation in Chicago have re-interpreted popular representations of political activism in communities of color. In each of these fields scholars have provided rigorous investigations of anti-racist political and cultural resistance that highlight the complex agency of people of color. Building on earlier social movement scholarship by Aldon Morris, George Lipsitz, Mary Pardo, Charles Payne, and Carlos Muñoz Jr., among others, many researchers have recovered important community histories of racial violence and exclusion to demonstrate why people of color become politically active at the grassroots level.³⁵ Others have studied transformations in racial identity, gender politics, and the

³⁵ Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), George Lipsitz, *A Life in the Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Opposition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), Carlos Muñoz Jr. *Youth and Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (New York: Verso, 1989), Robin D. G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of

oppositional consciousness of unheralded activists to unveil the complicated dynamics of social movements. Collectively, recent social movement scholarship demonstrates that popular and historical representations of activists of color are often erroneous.

Social historians of grassroots activism in communities of color during the post-World War II era reveal that activists of color are consistently misrepresented in grand narratives of the civil rights movement and the radical sixties. In an extremely insightful analysis of sixties literature, for example, ethnic studies scholar Jason Ferreira explains,

... outside of the Black Freedom struggle, the historiography of the 1960s remains, for the most part lily-white. After reading [Todd Gitlin's] *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* one might very well conclude that little organizing took place within Asian American, Native American, or Latina/o communities; or, to the extent that there was any activism, they simply sought to imitate the more central [read: important] social movements rooted in either the white New Left or the Black Freedom struggle. Both the eurocentrism and the Black White binary framework informing this historiography of the 1960s seriously damages and distorts our understanding of this vital historical moment.³⁶

For Ferreira and others, research that attributes the demise of the civil rights movement and the fragmentation of the New Left to the identity politics and militancy of activists of color during the late sixties is also inaccurate. A closer examination of the participation of people of color in radical social movement's, they argue, clearly shows that the story of the sixties is far more complex. Ferreira notes,

Moving communities of color from the margins to the center of the historical narrative, however, complicates and rewrites this periodization, subverting any facile dichotomization of a good" and "bad" sixties. In fact, 1968 serves as a "take-off" point rather than a concluding moment for social movements within communities of color. Organizations such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Republic of New Africa, African Liberation Support Committee, Third World Women's Alliance, La Raza Unida Party, Brown Berets, American Indian Movement, Women of All Red Nation, I Wor Kuen, and the Young Lords Party are just a few of the many political groups to emerge and gain strength after 1968.³⁷

North Carolina Press, 1990), Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), Betita Martinez, *De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century* (Cambridge: South End Press, 1998), Mary Pardo, *Mexican American Activists: Identity and Resistance in Two Los Angeles Communities* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

³⁶ Jason Ferreira, "All Power to the People: A Comparative History of Third World Radicalism in San Francisco, 1968-1974" (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, 2003), 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

As Ferreira suggests, an accurate assessment of the sixties reveals the proliferation of grassroots activism in communities of color and profound moments of solidarity that shatter critiques of identity politics.³⁸

New research on the black liberation struggle also complicates traditional narratives that divide southern civil rights activists from northern Black Power advocates. For example, contributors to *Freedom North: Black Struggles Outside of the South, 1940-1980* (2003), Martha Biondi's study, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in New York City* (2006), the anthology *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (2006), *We Will Return in the Whirlwind: Black Radical Organizations* by Muhammad Ahmad (2007), and Thomas Sugrue's *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (2008), demonstrate that northern black communities were centers of activism rather than recipients of political strategies.³⁹ Likewise, Robert O. Self's excellent study, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (2003) presents

³⁸ Recent studies of the Chicano Movement and Asian American radicalism confirm that communities of color were anything but peripheral historical actors during the 1960s. Several studies of the Chicano Movement including Ernesto Chávez's *Mi Raza Primero: Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Ian Haney López's *Racism on Trial: The Chicano Fight for Justice* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2004), Lorena Oropesa's, *Raza Si Guerra No: Chicano Protest and Patriotism During the Viet Nam War Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), and *Brown Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons From the Chicano Movement* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005) by George Mariscal, demonstrate that Chicana/o activists were involved in important grassroots struggles that resisted the racialization of people of Mexican descent in the United States. Likewise, a growing field of research on Asian American radical activism explodes myths of the model minority that represent Asian American communities as lacking histories of resistance similar to blacks and Latinos. Diane Fujino's *Yuri Kochiyama: Heartbeat of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), contributors to *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), Scott Kurashige's, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multi-Ethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), Daryl J. Maeda's study *Chains of Babylon: The Rise of Asia America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), and *The Next American Revolution: Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011) by Grace Lee Boggs and Scott Kurashige trace the development of Asian American pan-Ethnic identity, and document profound histories of collaborations with other communities of color. For a new synthesis of the Asian American movement and review of literature related to Asian American studies see Daryl J. Maeda, *Rethinking the Asian American Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

³⁹ Thomas Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008). Reflecting upon the ways *de facto* segregation shaped civil rights activism in places like New York, Detroit and Chicago, Sugrue explains,

Racial inequality took different forms on each side of the Mason Dixon Line in the twentieth century. Most northern communities did not erect signs to mark separate black and white facilities; only some northern schools were segregated by law; and black voters were not systematically disenfranchised in the North. But in both regions, private behavior, market practices, and public policies created and reinforced racial separation and inequality... Impoverishment and exclusion engendered despair. But they also fueled righteous indignation (xv).

compelling research of the black freedom struggle in Oakland that emphasizes local conditions produced by urban and suburban transformations. He explains,

Rewriting the history of postwar African American social movements and politics in the North and West requires a richer, deeper, and necessarily more complicated story in which northern and Pacific coast cities are not place where civil rights organizing stalled or failed in some absolute sense, but places where the postwar black rights movement took unique forms and trajectories and experienced its own successes and setbacks, where African Americans pushed to dismantle the segregation embedded in urban industrial and postindustrial capitalism, and a dynamic black political culture nurtured multiple strategies and ideologies of resistance, accommodation, and liberation. These places deserve to be understood as more than either derivative of or antithetical to the southern movement.⁴⁰

Exploring the social histories of black activism outside of the south, these scholars have challenged the notion that a non-violent southern movement was diffused to other regions where it gave way to an urban Black Power movement sometime in the mid-1960s.⁴¹

Building upon Cedric Robinson's pioneering work in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (1983) scholars such as Robin D.G. Kelley, Max Elbaum, John Munro, and Roderick D. Bush have studied black radicalism in the United States through a global framework of anti-racist and anti-capitalist struggles.⁴² Robin D.G. Kelley's *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Tradition* (2002), for example, is a mesmerizing account that describes the heterogeneity of black struggles for liberation

⁴⁰ Self, *American Babylon*, 11.

⁴¹ Other researchers of the black freedom movement have focused their attention on anti-colonial resistance and radicalism prior to the sixties to demonstrate a rich tradition of anti-racist militancy. Nikhil Pal Singh's intellectual history *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (2005), traces the ways black activists, intellectuals, and cultural producers confronted ideas of American exceptionalism and racialized liberalism during the long civil rights era. Similarly, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anti-colonialism, 1937-1957* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997) by historian Penny Von Eschen tells the history of the Council of African Affairs to reveal the transnational efforts of anti-colonial activists like W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson, and to unpack the impact of the Cold War on the civil rights movement. Biographies of movement leaders including Barbara Ransby's study of legendary organizer Ella Baker and Timothy Tyson's study of Robert F. Williams also convey the complexity of civil rights organizing, internal political debates, pre-sixties militancy, and solidarity with other oppressed groups. See, Timothy B. Tyson's, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1999), Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2003), David T. Beito and Linda Royster Beito, *Black Maverick: T.R.M. Howard's Fight for Civil Rights and Economic Power* (Urbana: University of Illinois 2009).

⁴² Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Tradition* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao, and Che* (New York: Verso, 2002), Roderick D. Bush, *The End of White World Supremacy: Black Internationalism and the Problem of the Color Line* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 2009), John Munro, "The Anticolonial Front: Cold War Imperialism and the Struggle Against Global White Supremacy, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2009).

during the twentieth century. A sweeping history of the political visions expressed by black intellectuals, artists, and activists, Kelley argues that the freedom dreams of a liberated society offered by people of color must be valued. Calling for a new paradigm to evaluate radicalism, he states, “Unfortunately, too often our standards for evaluating social movements pivot around whether or not they “succeeded” in realizing their visions rather than on the merits or power of the visions themselves.”⁴³

Joining scholars that broaden the black freedom struggle are those scholars that examine the solidarity that developed between radical activists of color in the United States and the dynamic exchanges that took place with Third World liberation movements. Turning their attention to the transnational activities of radical activists of color, they reveal the ways anti-racism and anti-imperialism forged unity between activists in the United States and beyond. Recent historical examinations of the Black Panther Party – an organization commonly portrayed as a black nationalist group -- demonstrate that the Panthers were actually influenced by and were major contributors to Third World liberation struggles. As Michael Clemons and Charles E. Jones explain,

... to restrict Black political participation to the confines of the American borders limits an understanding of the global initiatives, linkages, and accomplishments of African American actors. This shortcoming is particularly apparent in the case of the Black Panther Party (BPP). An important, yet often ignored, aspect of the Black Panther Party has been its international dimensions and global role in the New Left activism of the late 1960s.

As one of the prominent organizations of the Black Power era, the BPP distinguished itself by galvanizing progressive activists throughout the world. The Black Panther Party enjoyed immense international stature. In a mere four year span, the Panthers grew from a local Oakland-based self-defense group to a global organization with an international section in Algiers, Algeria.⁴⁴

Likewise, contributors to *Want to Start a Revolution: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle* (2009) demonstrate that female revolutionaries such as Assata Shakur, Shirley Graham Du Bois, and

⁴³ Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, ix.

⁴⁴ Michael L. Clemons and Charles E. Jones, “Global Solidarity: The Black Panther Party in the International Arena” in *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas eds., 21.

Denise Oliver were vocal participants in the international arena and became powerful symbols of Third World liberation.

The commitment of many militant activists of color to building solidarity with other groups, and the emergence of a Third World identity are also the subjects of new ethnic studies scholarship. Adding to an earlier wave of ethnic studies research that separately examines histories of activism in communities of color is a growing body of comparative ethnic studies literature that documents the emergence of coalitions and a Third World identity in the United States during the late 1960s. Jason Ferreira's manuscript, "All Power to the People: A Comparative History of Third World Radicalism in San Francisco, 1968-1974" (2003) Laura Pulidos study, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radicalism in Los Angeles* (2006), and Cynthia Young's *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S Third World Left* (2006) demonstrate that many activists of color joined together in a Third World front that bridged anti-imperialist struggles in the United States and abroad.⁴⁵ In an impressive description of Third World activists, Cynthia Young explains,

Forged in the interstices between the New Left and the civil rights movement, between the counterculture and the Black Arts Movement, this U.S Third World Left created cultural, material, and ideological links to the Third World as a mode through which to contest U.S economic, racial, and cultural arrangements. The appellation *Third World* served as a shorthand for leftists of color in the United States, signifying their opposition to a particular economic and racial world order. This diverse group of organizations and individuals fostered the creation and circulation of a sophisticated cultural lexicon, one characterized by its innovative stylistics, ideological hybridity, and a sense of political urgency...Linking the social justice struggles of U.S people of color to liberation struggles in Africa, and Asia, U.S Third World Leftists wrote essays, made films, and engaged in activities that created a distinct cultural and political formation. This formation melded the civil rights movement's focus on racial equality, the Old Left's focus on class struggle and anti-colonialism, and the New Left's focus on grassroots, participatory democracy.⁴⁶

Through examining the local racial and spatial conditions that fostered Third World activism in communities of color, or by studying the political writings and cultural production of the Third World

⁴⁵ Also see, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, "Journeys for Peace and Liberation: Third World Internationalism and Radical Orientalism during the U.S War in Vietnam" *Pacific Historical Review* 16, no. 4 (November 2007): 575-584.

⁴⁶ Cynthia A. Young, *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S Third World Left* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) 4.

front in the United States, these scholars demonstrate that many activists of color participated in dynamic processes of political and cultural cross-fertilization. Indeed, many actively traveled to Third World countries and utilized a range of cultural and political strategies that included forming alliances with one another in their attempts to transform society. The story of the Original Rainbow Coalition of Chicago certainly contributes to the history of Third World alliances in the United States.

This study of the ORC also intersects with new research that re-interprets local histories of anti-racist resistance in Chicago. Those that examine black and Latino migration and community formation have been at the forefront of challenging the notion that Chicago was the place where Dr. King's southern civil rights movement arrived and fragmented into chaos. *Family Properties: Race, Real Estate, and the Exploitation of Black Urban America* (2009) by Beryl Satter, for example, documents the emergence of an exploitative economy of contract home buying in Chicago during the post-World War II era and the grassroots and legal struggles waged by black tenant activists on Chicago's west side. Andrew Diamond's, *Mean Streets: Chicago Youths and the Everyday Struggle for Empowerment in the Multi-Racial City, 1908-1969* (2009) examines the "microdynamics" of urban life, and youth experiences of racial formation in Chicago, to place the history of the Black Power movement within a historical framework of local youth subcultures. Another moving account of racial domination is the legal analysis of Fred Hampton's political assassination by Jeff Haas in *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther* (2010). Haas contributes significantly to the local history of Black Panther Party and the brutal state repression endured by the Chicago chapter. Recent studies of community life in Chicago prior to the 1960s including Davarian Baldwin's *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (2007) and *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (2007) by Adam Green also complicate notions of black insurgency by unveiling cultural and consumer practices that fostered a

collective identity. Together, these studies demonstrate that Chicago has long been a center of black struggles for dignity and equality.

In a similar vein, scholars that examine the migration of Latinos to Chicago unveil the city as a dynamic location of Latino social justice movements, and undermine the notion that Latina/os comprise ethnic groups that lack histories of racial domination. Recovering social histories of Latina/o urban experiences of space and racial exclusion in Chicago and Latina/o participation in social protest movements are Lilia Fernández's study "*Latina/o Migration and Community Formation in Postwar Chicago: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Gender and Politics, 1945-1975*" (2005), *Mexican Chicago: Race, Identity, and Nation, 1916-1939* (2008), by Gabriela Arredondo, and "Space and Displacement in Puerto Rican Chicago" (2009) by Kerwen Secrist. Similar to Beryl Satter's study of tenant activism, Fernández's dissertation and a new book *Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago* (2011) by Leonard Ramirez et al. are noteworthy as they emphasize the political leadership of female activists. According to Ramirez,

The Chicano Movement ignited the passions of Mexican activists around a collective vision of social justice...Ordinary people stood up and made history. Mexicanas/Chicanas in Chicago were at the forefront. Without their contributions, little would have been accomplished.⁴⁷

These studies, and a forthcoming dissertation by Myrna García on the Chicago chapter of CASA reveal that histories of Latina/o involvement in community based anti-racist struggles in the Midwest are often overlooked.⁴⁸

This survey of social movement scholarship – by no means definitive – nevertheless demonstrates that over the last decade scholars have given the efforts of radical activists of color

⁴⁷Leonard G. Ramirez et. al, *Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011) 195.

⁴⁸ In addition to recent social histories of Latino community formation, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-1970* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002) by James B. LaGrand, Jacalyn Harden's study *Double Cross: Japanese Americans in Black and White Chicago* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2003), and *Hillbilly Nationalists: Urban Race Rebels and Black Power* (New York: Melville House, 2011) by Amy Sonnie and James Tracy recover histories of resistance in other racialized communities that are also overlooked in Chicago historiography due to the black-white binary that structures most scholarship.

unprecedented attention and important reinterpretations. Either through local social histories that recover experiences of racial domination and the grassroots labor performed by “unexpected historical actors,” or cultural, intellectual and transnational studies that convey the complex agency of people of color, scholars have dismantled hegemonic narratives, problematic periodizations, and inaccurate representations that obscure or minimize grassroots anti-racist activism in communities of color.

Through rigorous primary source research, oral histories, and discursive analysis of cultural texts, this recent wave of movement research also searches deeper into the oppositional consciousness of radical activists than earlier historiography that often settled for romanticizing or lambasting militant social movements. Indeed, many scholars have given considerable attention to the internal fracturing of social movements by studying internal political conflicts, entrenched ideas of patriarchy in movement circles, and painful experiences of state repression and surveillance. In this sense, scholars should be commended for seriously gauging the “successes” and “failures” of social movements, and for utilizing increasingly sophisticated theoretical concepts to understand the motivations and freedom dreams of radical activists of color. The cumulative result of the growth of this literature and increasingly specialized research is that scholars have provided a more nuanced picture of radicalism, and know more about the motivations, desires, mistakes, and complex personhood of activist of color than ever before.

Building upon recent social histories that highlight the agency of people of color, this dissertation assesses the local political efforts of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots against the political designs of racialized governmentality in Chicago. The focus on racialized governmentality in Chicago as implicated in the emergence, political actions, and dissolution of the Original Rainbow Coalition does not seek to deny the agency of those who performed courageous acts of grassroots labor and leadership. In fact, by evaluating the ways race structured a form of neo-liberal government in Chicago during the late 1960s, this study aims to demonstrate that the Rainbow Coalition is one of the best examples of the capacity of racially differentiated grassroots activists to arrive at a

common assessment of racial power and develop a strategy of class struggle tailored to local conditions. By tracing the impact of racialized governmentality in Chicago into the late 1960s, this study contributes a local framework to comprehend why activists from working-class communities who were otherwise pitted against one another learned that revolutionary solidarity was necessary and developed a common vision of anti-racist class struggle. Unfortunately, the contradiction of this approach means that readers seeking a nuanced social history of the organizations that formed the Original Rainbow Coalition will be disappointed.⁴⁹

Given that historians of anti-racist social movements in Chicago have mostly failed to reckon with the regional history of U.S. settler colonialism, chapters one and two of this study place the local development of revolutionary solidarity during the late 1960s in the context of U.S. Empire and racialized governmentality in Chicago. Chapter one, “The Roots of Racialized Governmentality in Chicago: U.S. Settler Colonialism and the Birth of Bio-Politics” and chapter two, “Chicago: The Imperial Metropolis,” demonstrate that histories of indigenous resistance to Indian Removal in the Great Lakes region, the birth of a multi-racial and anti-capitalist labor movement, and black militant resistance to white supremacy, made Chicago a central location where strategies of racialized governmentality were introduced and refined. Tracing the ways anti-racist solidarity at the point of production during the 1930s shaped the evolution of state capitalism, chapter three “State Capitalism and the Political Origins of Neoliberalism in Chicago” unveils the superimposition of a sophisticated neo-liberal strategy of government in the city. I argue that this strategy of governmentality was consolidated under the Democratic political regime of Richard J. Daley and thrived upon racial conflict, segregation and urban despair. A powerful neoliberal discursive regime centered upon personal responsibility coupled with

⁴⁹ Efforts to explain the Original Rainbow Coalition through a social history approach include John F. Rice, “Black Revolutionaries on Chicago’s West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party” (Ph.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1998), Jon F. Rice, “The World of the Illinois Panthers” in *Freedom North: Black freedom struggles outside the South, 1940-1980* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), Jakobi E. Williams, “Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago: A Case Study of Fred Hampton, the Illinois Black Panther Party, and the Origin of the Rainbow Coalition” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2008), Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists: Urban Race Rebels and Black Power, Community Organizing in Radical Times* (New York: Melville House, 2011).

city-wide conditions of poverty, death, segregation, and racial domination, however, produced the conditions necessary for a revolutionary consciousness of solidarity to develop. In this way, chapters one and two relate the culture of conquest and colonialism to the development of urban politics and experiences of racial domination in Chicago during the twentieth century.

Building upon the foundation of local and regional history provided in the first three essays, chapters four and five utilize a comparative framework to explain the politics of anti-racism in Chicago during the 1960s. Using a transnational approach, chapter four, “From Bandung to Chicago: Anti-Colonialism, Civil Rights, and the Politics of Self-Determination in Chicago,” compares the politics of Third World national liberation movements and civil rights coalitions in Chicago. Building upon new scholarship that examines the impact of the Cold War on anti-colonial activism in the United States, it reveals that a political fissure was produced in Chicago between many civil rights leaders and Third World revolutionaries. I argue that due to the political leadership of the Black Panther Party, the organizations that formed the Original Rainbow Coalition rapidly closed this political gap by embracing self-determination and anti-imperialist solidarity. Chapter five “Up From Poverty and Out of the Ghetto?: The Politics of Community Control in Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park” provides a comparative analysis of the communities that embraced the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots. I argue that residents of these communities shared experiences as bio-political threats to the city that prepared them to grasp the political efforts of the IBPP, YLO, and YP. This chapter also explains that the grassroots organizing tactics of Saul Alinsky and the community control initiatives inaugurated by War on Poverty intensified the racialization of poor people and created a fertile ground for the revolutionary politics of community control put forth by the groups that formed the ORC.

Chapter six, ‘We Know What the Pigs Don’t Like’: The De-Colonial Politics of the Original Rainbow Coalition” and chapter seven “The Rainbow Summer of 1969 and the Political Repression of the Rainbow Coalition” examines the formation, political activities, and repression of the Original

Rainbow Coalition. Drawing heavily from oral histories with movement participants it argues that the concerted efforts of the IBPP, YLO, and YP undermined racial borders in Chicago and worked to build revolutionary class consciousness in Chicago's outcast communities. The founding of community programs that independently cared for the lives of those who lacked human capital in Chicago were particularly crucial to the ways the ORC undermined the racial power of neo-liberal governmentality. Chapter seven also documents the political and ideological struggles that existed between the ORC and leftist organizations during the late 1960s, the governmental tactic of the War on Gangs, and the horrific assassination of Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton. A concluding chapter summarizes the findings of this study, assesses the political implications of the repression of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots, and points to the features of racialized governmentality in the city during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

CONCLUSION

On the evening of June 10, 2010 I attended a panel discussion at the Du Sable Museum on Chicago's south side entitled "All Power to the People: What We Want, What We Believe." This event was of particular interest to me as it focused upon the historical legacy of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party. As with other events that I attended while performing research for this study, it was evident that the panelists clearly wanted to set the record straight about the nature and politics of their activism. On this night, four members of the IBPP provided a fuller picture of the Black Panther Party than what they believed was often remembered or written about.

Dismissing the simplistic notion that the Black Panthers were violent black nationalists, they discussed the community programs they founded in Chicago, the critical work performed by women in the organization, the humanism within the Party's ten point platform, and the commitment to coalition building across racial lines. Billy "Che" Brooks, for example, emphasized that the Panthers never embraced cultural nationalism and stated straight-forwardly that "we were always a Peoples Party." He

reminded the audience that the Black Panther Party practiced international solidarity and revolutionary inter-communalism, and pointed to the existence of four international chapters and the Original Rainbow Coalition before asking, “Could we have done that from a nationalist perspective. No!” Recalling oppressive conditions of racism, poverty, and police terror in their communities, however, the panelists collectively explained that the Panther Party was a Black organization that sought to liberate Black people in the United States. Audience members, including myself, were given a lesson in the politics of revolutionary nationalism.

As the discussion relented to a question and answer session, I felt positive that my research would be strengthened by attending the panel, and was assured that my work would also contribute to a more complex understanding of the organizations that formed the Rainbow Coalition. Indeed, I had initially envisioned this study as a comparative social history of the alliance that would explore many of the themes discussed on the Du Sable panel in order to complicate representations of militant activists in Chicago. However, a question from the audience caused me to think deeply about the direction of my research.

Sitting just a few chairs away from me, a middle-aged woman politely thanked the panelists for their presentation. She then asked in a sincere tone, “What do you think happened to the movement? I don’t see the same types of things happening anymore. I mean, I just don’t see it. All I see in our community is the drugs, and the young people in the gangs, and the police. What happened?” Sympathetic to her statement, one panelist explained that times were different than in the sixties and that many Panthers continued to be active in their communities. Another assured her that young people continued to struggle in their own way and that the movement was still alive though in a different form. We were also reminded of the FBI’s COINTELPRO operations that killed movement leaders like Fred Hampton, jailed many others, and undermined community programs. All agreed that oppression

continued to permeate the society and that a new revolutionary social movement that built upon the foundation set by the Black Panther Party was necessary.

At first, I was satisfied with these answers as I certainly agreed with their assessment and am always cautious of any “glass half-empty” statement that declares the definitive end of movements. But as I replayed the discussion in my mind over the next days and weeks, I realized that her comments raised a serious challenge, albeit implicitly, to those who aim to accurately remember, write about, or commemorate the political significance of revolutionary organizations like the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, and the Young Patriots. By stating the conditions that existed in her neighborhood, and citing that a grassroots political movement that could address those conditions effectively no longer existed, she conveyed that something more was at stake in the historical memory of revolutionary groups such as the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party. Though an accurate assessment of Panther history was necessary and certainly appreciated, the fact that her community continued to suffer deeply and that a state of political paralysis existed in the city seemed to haunt any effort on her part to commemorate revolutionary history in Chicago without also asking “What happened?” This woman clearly did not seek to place blame for current conditions on those who fought so hard in the past as activists. Rather, she expressed an organic knowledge that though oppression persisted in Chicago something was drastically different about the political terrain that activists and residents of outcast communities presently confront in the city.

Perhaps her question struck a chord with me because having grown up in Chicago during the nineties, I too personally witnessed the community hardships and youth struggles that she described. And when I began to read movement history as a student, and talked to family members who were active in the sixties, I often wondered “What Happened?” Of course, many people continue to struggle, and the historical memory of working-class anti-racist social movements during the sixties continues to matter. Embedded in her question, however, was an understanding that though recovering the social

history of organizations, “setting the record straight,” and rigorously interrogating the internal dynamics of organizations are important exercises of historical memory, they are not all that is needed to build a social movement that could effectively deal with the present needs of our communities. In other words, in addition to studying the oppositional consciousness of activists, and performing internal examinations of organizations, those who still freedom dream and are passionate about challenging hegemony in Chicago must also cast their critical gaze elsewhere to understand “What Happened?” and to begin to craft an effective political strategy.

Reflecting upon how important it was for revolutionaries to have a correct understanding of strategies and tactics in warfare and in political struggle, the Chinese Revolutionary Mao Tse Tung once wrote, “We are comparatively certain about our own situation. We are very uncertain about the enemy’s, but here too there are signs for us to read, clues to follow and sequences of phenomena to ponder.”⁵⁰ Haunted by the persistent conditions of oppression and political paralysis in Chicago, and bearing Mao’s words in mind, this study transformed into a humble attempt to answer the question “What Happened?” by reading the signs and following the clues left by those who have governed over the city.

⁵⁰ Mao Tse Tung, *Six Essays on Military Affairs*, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1972), 295.

Chapter 1: The Roots of Racialized Governmentality in Chicago: U.S. Settler Colonialism and the Birth of Bio-Politics

Basically, we all had to do our part, Latinos had to organize Latinos, blacks had to organize blacks, whites had to organize whites. The Rainbow Coalition was a strategy of class struggle, of organizing. It was about who was best to organize in their communities, that's all it was.

José “Cha Cha” Jiménez

The formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition was not motivated by the liberal desire for harmonious race relations in Chicago. It was also not the intent of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots to discard racial and ethnic identities in favor of an abstract working-class identity. As indicated above by José “Cha Cha” Jiménez, the founder of the Young Lords Organization, the Rainbow Coalition was a calculated strategy of class struggle that acknowledged the reality that racial borders divided working-class communities in the city. By forming a political alliance that brought together activists from different areas of Chicago, the Rainbow Coalition exposed race as a strategy of power that obfuscated class conflict and disabled revolutionary social change. In his speech “Power Anywhere Where There’s People,” for example, Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton explained,

A lot of people got the word revolution mixed up and they think revolution’s a bad word. Revolution is nothing but like having a sore on your body and then you put something on that sore to cure that infection. And I’m telling you that we’re living in an infectious society right now. I’m telling you that we’re living in a sick society. We’re involved in a society that produces ADC victims.¹ We’re involved in a society that produces criminals and thieves and robbers and rapers. Whenever you are in a society like that, that is a sick society.

...We got to face the facts. That the masses are poor, that the masses belong to what you call the lower class, and when I talk about the masses, I’m talking about the white masses, I’m talking about the black masses, and the brown masses, and the yellow masses too. We’ve got to face the fact that some people say you fight fire best with fire. We say you put fire out best with water. We say you don’t fight racism with racism – we’re gonna fight racism with solidarity. We say you don’t fight capitalism with no black capitalism, you fight capitalism with socialism.²

Hampton articulated the political consciousness that existed within the groups involved in the Rainbow Coalition that race operated as a hegemonic force. Whereas the breakfast for children programs and

¹ ADC was the acronym for Aid to Dependent Children, a social welfare program in Chicago.

² “Power Anywhere Where There’s People!” in *Fred Hampton* (Chicago: People’s Information Center, 1972), 7.

community health clinics unveiled the failures of the state to meet the basic needs of oppressed neighborhoods, the Original Rainbow Coalition was an organizing strategy that exposed the politics of racial divisions in Chicago.

Considering that the alliance was a political strategy to organize a grassroots working-class movement in the city, it is still necessary to explain what caused activists to develop the unflinching political sense that racial borders undermined class struggle in Chicago? In other words, what led the Panthers, Lords, Patriots and others to acquire the oppositional consciousness that “having each other’s back,” as Panther Lynn French described it, was needed to produce revolutionary social change?³

Scholars often attribute the formation of the Rainbow Coalition to the exceptional consciousness of charismatic leaders. Explained in this way, the coalition was the result of ideas that emerged independent of the social environment in Chicago. Unfortunately, such interpretations reflect an ideological commitment to philosophical idealism as they deny the development of any knowledge – in this case the understanding that racial divisions undermined social change in Chicago – is part of a historical and dialectical process. Reflecting upon the development of knowledge from a materialist perspective V.I. Lenin noted,

Dialectics as understood by Marx, and in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of knowledge, or epistemology, which, too, must regard its subject matter historically, studying and generalizing the origin and development of knowledge, the transition from non-knowledge to knowledge.⁴

³ Lynn French, interview by the author, Washington, D.C, March 2010. On oppositional consciousness see, Jane Mansbridge and Aldon Morris, *Oppositional Consciousness: The Subjective Roots of Social Protest* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2001). According to the editors, “Oppositional consciousness as we define it is an empowering mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act to undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of domination. It is usually fueled by righteous anger over injustices done to the group and prompted by personal indignities and harms suffered through ones group membership. At a minimum, opposition consciousness includes the four elements of identifying with members of a subordinate group, identifying injustices done to that group, opposing those injustices, and seeing the group as having a shared interest in ending or diminishing those injustices. A more full-fledged oppositional consciousness includes identifying a specific dominant group as causing and in some way benefiting from those injustices. It also includes seeing certain actions of the dominant group as forming a “system” of some kind that advances the interests of the dominant group. Finally, it can include a host other ideas, beliefs, and feelings that provide coherence, explanation, and moral condemnation (5).

⁴ V.I. Lenin, *Karl Marx* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1970), 12.

Considering this premise, it is critical to examine the oppositional consciousness that led to the formation of the Rainbow Coalition as developing over time and in dialectical relation to the conditions of power and domination that existed in Chicago.

As I show in this chapter, the political consciousness that a Rainbow Coalition was needed to create revolutionary social change was linked to conditions of racialized governmentality that derived from a history of U.S. settler colonialism in Chicago.⁵ Examining the ways U.S. settler colonialism in the Great Lakes region introduced racialized governmentality to Chicago, it demonstrates that Chicago was a central location where colonial and imperialist ideas of racial difference determined which communities were bio-political enemies that could be obliterated, and which communities were comprised of citizen-subjects that should be governed through discipline.⁶ Through secondary sources, newspaper articles, travel literature, urban planning texts, and sociological studies it demonstrates that strategies of racialized governmentality adapted due to powerful acts of indigenous resistance, industrial

⁵ My focus on the specific nature of racial power in Chicago as related to the development of class consciousness is informed by cultural theorist Stuart Hall's classic writings on race and class. Arguing that any analysis that strives to explain racial power in colonial or metropolitan social formations should not reduce race to economic processes or de-link race from the mode of production, cultural theorist Stuart Hall linked racial domination and class struggle via Lenin, Gramsci, Althusser's, and Laclau and Mouffe's theorizations of ideology as operating to reproduce relations of production. According to Hall, "such an analysis would need to be complemented by an analysis of the specific forms which racism assumes in its ideological functioning. Here, we would have to begin by investigating the different ways in which racist ideologies have been constructed and made operative under different historical conditions: the racism of mercantilist theory and of chattel slavery; of conquest and colonialism; of trade and "high imperialism"; of "popular imperialism" and so called "post-imperialism." In each case, in specific social formations, racism as an ideological configuration has been reconstituted by the dominant class relations, and thoroughly re-worked. If it has performed the function of the cementing ideology which secures a whole social formation under a dominant class, its pertinent differences from other such hegemonic ideologies require to be registered in detail." Stuart Hall, "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Racial Domination," in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*, (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), 341-342.

⁶ Here I consider Michel Foucault's discussions of bourgeoisie governmentality as differentiated from sovereignty and the rule of law. Foucault suggests that government in modern bourgeoisie societies should be considered as rational and active techniques by governors to manage conduct and produce subjects. In a January 1978 lecture, for example, Foucault explained, "While I have been speaking about population a word has constantly recurred... and this is the word "government." The more I have spoken about population, the more I have stopped saying "sovereign." I was led to designate or aim at something that I think is relatively new, not in the word, and not at a certain level of reality, but as a technique. Or rather, the modern political problem that government begins to exercise in relation to rules, to the extent that, to limit the king's power, it will be possible one day to say "the king reigns, but he does not govern," this inversion of government and the reign or rule and the fact that government is basically much more than sovereignty, much more than the imperium, is, I think absolutely linked to the population (76). Quoted in, Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977-78*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 76. Also see, Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds., G. Burchell et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991). Foucault notes "with government it is a question not of imposing law on men, but of disposing things: that is to say, of employing tactics rather than laws, and even using laws themselves as tactics – to arrange things in such a way that, through a certain number of means, such and such ends may be achieved (95).

labor organizing, and black militancy. As such, it argues that the Original Rainbow Coalition belongs to the history of anti-racist resistance struggles in Chicago that began with American Indian coalitions that opposed U.S. settler colonialism in the Great Lakes region.

Chicago was transformed into a colonial/modern social formation through U.S. settler colonialism and the violent removal of American Indian nations of the Great Lakes region. For time immemorial Chicago was a location where indigenous nations interacted in complex ways and exchanged goods. Indigenous Chicago was part of a dynamic Great Lakes region that was home to several important nations including the Potawatomi, Menominee, Miami, Ottawa, Illinois, Fox, Sac, among others. Indeed, Chicago was named by first peoples and until the 1770s it was an indigenous space at the mouth of what is now the Chicago River and Lake Michigan. It is important to remember that to native communities land was not a commodity that could be bought and sold for profit by individuals. Instead, American Indian nations around Chicago utilized the land communally and developed sophisticated subsistence strategies to survive.

Removed geographically from the conflicts during the American Revolution, Chicago evolved into a borderlands area characterized by economic exchange and cultural interactions between first peoples and non-natives. With the arrival of John Baptiste Du Sable, a French settler colonist of Haitian descent and the first non-native person to permanently live in Chicago, the area became fully enmeshed in the dynamic political interactions of the Great Lakes region during the 1770s. Describing this region as “the middle ground,” historian Richard White has revealed that the power of American Indian nations, villages, and confederacies in the Great Lakes area undermined French and British imperial designs to extract wealth, occupy territory, and confirm colonial ideas of European racial superiority.⁷

⁷ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). To understand the complex politics of indigenous resistance in the Great Lakes region also see, Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderland to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in Between in North American History,” *American Historical Review* 104 no. 3 (June 1999): 814-841. John R. Wunder and Pekka Hämäläinen’s essay response to Aaron and Adelman’s piece, “Of Lethal Places and Lethal Essays” *American Historical Review* 104 no. 4 (October 1999): 1229-1234, is also vital to understanding the politics of representation.

Through economic exchanges, diplomacy, intermarriage, warfare, military alliances, and other forms of resistance, complex indigenous communities maintained political power in the region and were central historical actors in building the fluid cultural world that evolved in and around Chicago. Indeed, Du Sable's ability to live in Chicago hinged upon his marriage into a Potowatomie family and active participation in the native exchange culture of the area.⁸ Together with his Potawatomi wife Kittihawa (Catherine), Du Sable developed a thriving trading business at Chicago that transformed the area into a borderland. Environmental historian William Cronon explains that due to their business Chicago became,

...a polyglot world of Indian, French, British, and American cultures tied to a vast trading network that was no less Indian than European. Its inhabitants, like other people in the region, gained their living by a mixture of Indian and Euroamerican land practices: raising corn, stalking game, keeping livestock, gathering wild plants, and fishing the prairie streams."⁹

The fluid cultural world and diversity of land practices that developed in Chicago only lasted for a short time.

The dynamic economic, political and social world that developed in the Great Lakes region was destroyed by conquest and U.S. settler colonialism in the years following the American Revolution. Due to a combination of class tensions, land speculation, and the desire for economic independence, settler colonists occupied American Indian territories that were previously off limits by decrees reached through American Indian and British diplomacy.¹⁰ By 1800, for example, approximately 700,000 settler colonists moved into frontier areas west of the Appalachian mountains.¹¹ What is striking about this migration of settler colonists, however, is that ideas of racial difference became the motivating factor that produced a violent history of American Indian land dispossession in the Great Lakes region.

⁸ On Du Sable see, Lerone Bennett, "The Black Man Who Founded Chicago," *Ebony*, (November 1977): 64-72, and Christopher Robert Reed, *Black Chicago's First Century: Volume 1, 1833-1900* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005).

⁹ William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, May 1992), 26.

¹⁰ Due to Pontiac's Rebellion the British were forced to agree to the Proclamation Line of 1763, a decree that prevented North American British settler colonists from forming settlements west of the Appalachian Mountains.

¹¹ Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States, 1492 – Present* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 126.

Economic depravity and demographic pressures undoubtedly created the need for land, and pushed U.S. settler colonists into indigenous territories. The belief that American Indian's comprised an uncivilized race, however, was decisive in the frontier colonial imagination. Ideas that "Indian" labor and subsistence practices, political arrangements, gender relations, and resistive strategies reflected savagery structured the ideology of U.S. settler colonialism. In *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating*, historian Richard Drinnon has noted,

Racism defined natives as nonpersons within the settlement culture and was in a real sense the enabling experience of the rising American empire: Indian hating identified the dark others that white settlers were not and must not under any circumstances become, and it helped them wrest a continent and more from the hands of these native caretakers of the lands.¹²

To be sure, ideas of racial difference also informed the political and military practices of those American Indians who aimed to rid the Great Lakes region of Europeans and European culture. Yet, the ideology that developed among most U.S. settler colonists represented heterogeneous American Indian communities as a monolithic racial threat to modernity, economic productivity, and the racial destiny of the nation. Significantly, the U.S. settler colonists that pushed into the Great Lakes region were at the forefront of reproducing this ideology in post-revolutionary U.S. society. According to historian Richard White,

The middle ground blurred boundaries, and what pure Indian haters sought above all was to keep boundaries intact. Captives and converts, white or Indian, proved the greatest danger to Indian hating because they passed across borders... Indian haters distrusted all who crossed the boundaries. They did not believe Indians could become "civilized." To them, becoming civilized invariably meant becoming white, which Indians could never do.¹³

As White suggests, the belief that the United States was a *herrenvolk* nation was predominant at the borders of the Great Lakes where acts of genocide and treaties that forced American Indians to migrate were moralized as positive outcomes in an inevitable racial contestation.

¹² Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), xxviii.

¹³ White, *The Middle Ground*, 388-89.

A closer look at the anti-Indian racial ideology that structured the conquest of the Great Lakes region unveils another discourse of race that is necessary to understand the transformation of Chicago into a colonial/modern social formation. At best, complex indigenous communities were grouped together as an ancient race of humans that was doomed to extinction unless they relinquished their ways, accepted their racial fate, and quickly assimilated white ways. In a meeting at the White House on January 07, 1802, for example, Thomas Jefferson acknowledged that leaders from the Miami, Potowatomi and Wea nations were “Made by the same Great Spirit, and living in the same land with our brothers, the red men, we consider ourselves as of the same family.”¹⁴ In this sense, it was a racial conceptualization of history and not only the body or culture that was used to construct first peoples as non-white during the post-Revolutionary era.¹⁵ This extra-corporeal understanding of race determined that “Indians” were not ready to enter the United States as distinct subjects as they supposedly represented a stage of human history that was expiring and obsolete. Historian David Roediger has noted that the absence of American Indians in the Treaty of Paris, the agreement that ended the American Revolution, symbolized this erasure from post-colonial humanity.¹⁶

Since post-colonial U.S. society, territory, and population were conflated and regarded as the historical domain of a new chosen race, American Indians were treated as though dead in terms of having claims to land and sovereignty in the Great Lakes region.¹⁷ Though not explicitly naming American Indians, the enlightenment logic of history, modernity, and land rights that foreclosed the removal of American Indians was stated by Thomas Jefferson in a letter to James Madison concerning the succession of land rights. Writing to Madison during the French Revolution, Jefferson proclaimed,

¹⁴ Quoted in Drinnon, *Facing West*, 83.

¹⁵ On coloniality and the racialization of colonial subjects beyond the body see Barnor Hesse, "Racialized Modernity: An Analytics of White Mythologies," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 4 (2007): 643-663.

¹⁶ David R. Roediger, *How Race Survived US History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (New York: Verso, 2008) 53.

¹⁷ On the politics of Indian Removal and the denial of American Indian sovereignty, see Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 1997).

I set out on this ground which I suppose to be self-evident: That the earth belongs in usufruct to the living; that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it... We seem not to have perceived that by the law of nature, one generation is to another as one independent nation to another.¹⁸

In other words, by natural law American Indians of the Great Lakes region were considered independent nations with the power to sign treaties and transfer land. As members of an anachronistic race or an ancient generation of humans, however, they existed as dead subjects whose lives and relationship to land could be obliterated.

Confronted by this intolerant racial ideology and experiencing the loss of land many American Indian nations formed alliances, organized rebellions, and waged war against the United States. Though American Indian nations of the Great Lakes region often maintained separate political stances and diplomatic policies, many allied with the British during the American Revolution, formed the Western Confederacy in 1785, and came together again prior to the War of 1812 for the explicit purpose of preventing further U.S. land encroachments. Prefiguring the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition, the creation of an indigenous coalition led by the Shawnee brothers Tecumseh and Tenskawatawa was not based on dissolving existing identities – it was directly related to shared experiences of oppression. Unity was forged through racial experiences of violence and manipulative land seizures, the U.S. militarization of the region, the sale of land by the U.S. federal government to land speculating companies, and the partitioning of the Great Lakes by U.S. states. Despite binding treaties, federal laws that prohibited land takeovers by states, and international law recognizing the sovereignty of indigenous peoples, the colonial imaginary of U.S. settler colonialism reconciled the removal of American Indians, the selective re-interpretation of law, and the re-imagination of the Great Lakes region as part of the nation.¹⁹ Indeed, before any treaty was signed Chicago was claimed by

¹⁸ Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, September 6, 1789. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition*, eds. Barbara B. Oberg and J. Jefferson Looney. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008); Available online from: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/TSJN-01-15-02-0375-0003>.

¹⁹ Ward Churchill, *Struggle for the Land: Native North American Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide, and Colonization* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2002), 41.

several entities including Virginia and Connecticut, a proposed U.S. state of Assenissippia, the Northwest Territory, Wayne County, and the Indiana territory, among others.²⁰

It was this obliteration in the colonial imaginary -- the non-recognition of American Indian life, much less alterity or sovereignty-- that moved many American Indians to join the war against the United States. Outnumbered eight to one by settler colonists in some areas by 1800, the decision to fight the United States was a matter of survival. In fact, it was American Indian communities around Chicago who were among the most militant.²¹ Summarizing this dynamic historian Richard White explains,

The main source of resistance to the Americans – and the one that Tecumseh would tap – was not at Brownstown; it lay in the villages of Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Here direct pressures from American settlers were initially weak, but there were other sources of resentment. Kickapoos, Sauks and Fox, Chippewas, Winnebagos, Menominees, and western Potawatomi all witnessed the encroachments of the American’s elsewhere... When American demands for land did begin, Indians from the Saginaw Chippewas, to the Potawatomi’s around Chicago, to the Winnebagos and Sauks near the Mississippi became even more anti-American.²²

During the War of 1812, the coalition’s struggle for land and to maintain the complex cultural world of the Great Lakes region reached its height in and around Chicago. In August, Detroit was captured and American Indian warriors burned down Fort Dearborn in Chicago. For a few years, at least, U.S. colonial designs and capital were stalled at the shores of Lake Michigan.

It was during this period of anti-colonial resistance when ideas of race performed crucial operations on behalf of U.S. settler colonialism. Instead of raising moral questions about violence, conquest and the policies of a country supposedly built on anti-imperialist traditions, U.S. settler colonialism was reconciled by ideas that “Indians” were savages that were incapable of cultivating the land properly. Moreover, American Indian anti-colonial militancy in the Great Lakes region was constituted as a sign of barbarism. Summarizing this circular logic, historian Reginald Horsman explains,

²⁰ Bessie Louise Pearce, *A History of Chicago: The Beginnings of a City, 1673-1848*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937), 409-412.

²¹ White explains that the anti-American militancy among indigenous nations around Chicago was due to their exclusion from the negotiations of the 1795 Treaty of Greenville and their observations of the loss of land in Ohio that resulted.

²²White, *The Middle Ground*, 511.

Those Americans who pressed forward rapidly into new areas believed the Indians unworthy to retain land they did not use in the European manner. And as the Indians desperately fought to preserve the lands they lived on from white encroachment, their “savage” actions were used to condemn them. The white failure to temper greed with morality was transferred to the Indians, and frontiersman urged the government to remove or eliminate the “savage, “beastlike” Indians who resisted their advance.²³

As Horsman notes, the unwillingness to accept civilization, to relinquish land and culture, and to expire into history, were attributed to the irrationality of “Indians” whose actions were believed to be ruled by passions. Much like the French response to the outbreak of the Haitian Revolution, ideas of racial inferiority worked to render American Indian unity and military victories so unthinkable that they were credited to the calculations of the British.²⁴ More importantly, news of U.S. military defeats, or the deaths of settler colonists intensified calls for the elimination of entire indigenous nations. As savagery supposedly explained American Indian resistance, race excused legal and extralegal practices of ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, it consolidated ethnically diverse frontier communities as “white,” and bound even those that romanticized “Indians” as noble savages to the logic that Indian Removal was for their benefit. It was believed a law of nature that “Indians” could not possibly survive in proximity to a civilized nation.

The series of events and negotiations that resulted in the expropriation of Chicago and the removal of Ottawas, Chippewas, and Potowatomis were never apart from the logic of race and obliteration that predominated at the time. In fact, the Chicago Treaty of 1833 was shaped by the same hegemonic frontier racial ideology that shaped the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Speaking to Congress in 1830, for example, Andrew Jackson sought to resolve the tensions that existed at the time between states and the Supreme Court involving the legality of American Indian displacement. Representing the policy of Indian Removal as an act of charity performed by a distinct people working on behalf of humanity, he argued,

²³ Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 114.

²⁴ Here I am thinking of the brilliant study of colonialist racial thinking examined by C.L.R. James in, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L' Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1989).

To follow to the tomb the last of his race and to tread on the graves of extinct nations excite melancholy reflections. But true philanthropy reconciles the mind to these vicissitudes as it does to the extinction of one generation to make room for another... Nor is there anything in this which, upon a comprehensive view of the general interests of the human race, is to be regretted... What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, *studded* with cities, towns, and prosperous farms, embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute, occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with the blessings of liberty, civilization, and religion?²⁵ (emphasis added)

Jackson, the anti-Indian war hero, slave owner, and son of a prominent land speculator, maintained Jefferson's generational framing of land succession (the dead have no rights). Yet, the notion that only certain people performed the work of humanity and impregnated spaces with an exceptional modernity transcended the dismissal of American Indian land rights. Acquiring territory and coercing treaties were reformulated as gifts of life and benevolent acts of paternalistic humanism akin to fathering and guiding the development of humanity by evicting, killing, or containing populations that represented social death. Upon finalizing the terms of the Chicago Treaty of 1833, for example, the U.S. government agent George Porter wrote a congratulatory letter to Jackson's Secretary of War Lewis Cass that expressed the state's paternalistic perspective of Indian Removal in Chicago. Porter wrote, "Thus this whole country may probably altogether be relieved from any serious impediment to its entire settlement, by the removal of a population which will always embarrass and retard it."²⁶

Porter's belief that indigenous people innately stunted modernity and that Chicago was liberated by the treaty indicates that race did not only justify conquest but also explicitly structured the actions of government. During the time of the Chicago Treaty of 1833 ideas of race advanced in the United States, through scientific ideas of racial difference, to make the racial health and purity of the nation the *modus operandi* of the federal government. Whereas previously race operated negatively at the level of the state to deny full citizenship rights, establish restrictive statehood conditions, and limit naturalization,

²⁵ Quoted in Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 236.

²⁶ Quoted in Anselm J. Gerwing, "The Chicago Indian Treaty of 1833" *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 57, no. 2 (Summer 1964), 134.

scientific ideas of race produced a bio-political/colonial state. Consequently, the federal government was mandated to contain, eliminate or remove supposed bio-political enemies that endangered the life opportunities of those who racially qualified as belonging to the nation.²⁷ Moreover, the legitimacy of the state as the reflection of the nation and its exceptional modernity also evolved to hinge upon its ability to resolve matters of race relations in ways that maintained what legal scholar Cheryl Harris has described as “whiteness as property.”²⁸ The Illinois Black Codes and criminalization of black migration to Illinois in 1848, for instance, was one regional example of the state reproducing its credibility as the guardian of “the people.”²⁹

The successful enactment of American Indian removal and exclusionary laws in Chicago, however, were not the only achievements of racial power. The production of scientific knowledge about race, and the incitement of discourses about populations and modernity effectively insulated the state as a neutral and universal domain of justice and rationality. In other words, the discursive linking of social health and stability in Chicago to populations and race naturalized government as the practice of rational and moral calculations on behalf of advancing humanity. Not only did this liberal representation of government depend upon universal ideas of humanity and modern society, it thrived upon, and one could say required, the constant threat of racial instability.³⁰ Under this scenario perceived demographic or cultural threats to the racial equilibrium of modern society provided the very condition upon which government, through legal or coercive measures, could establish and re-invent its paternalistic leadership in the development of society in Chicago. Consequently, the transformation of Chicago into a modern racial formation occurred not only because “whites” removed American Indians and passed exclusionary laws in order to demographically and economically dominate. Chicago was also created as a

²⁷ Reginald Horsman, *Manifest Destiny*, 43-61. It is important to note that earlier federal legislation such as the Naturalization Act of 1790, the 3/5 compromise, and the Northwest Ordinance worked to craft a racial nation, but these acts of governance worked negatively to deny rights and inclusion.

²⁸ Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106 (June 1993): 1710-1791.

²⁹ On the Illinois Black Codes see, Christopher Robert Reed, *Black Chicago's First Century*.

³⁰ Theorist Achille Mbembe refers to this condition of sovereignty as the state of emergency. See, Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15, no. 1, (2003): 11-40.

colonial/modern racial formation because racialized ideas of modernity constructed government as a non-racial entity that stood above society and retained the sovereign power to kill, suppress, contain or displace any bodies and groups deemed threats to the stability of society and expendable to an exceptional nation.³¹

The displacement of American Indians from the land and the transformation of Chicago into a colonial/modern social formation also prepared the conditions for the infusion of capital into the region. In a speech on May 27, 1879 to elites of the city, the former Illinois chief justice John Dean Caton celebrated the original settler colonists of Chicago. He also recalled that on July 14, 1834 “an event occurred of a commercial character which should render it memorable, and deserves to be recorded. On that day the first commercial vessel ... ever passed the piers into Chicago harbor.”³² Caton, who eventually became a leading business owner as a communication mogul also added,

To those who have not been eye witnesses, it seems incredible that in the adult lifetime of so many of us here present a city of half million of inhabitants has grown up from nothing, and that what was then a rich wild waste for five hundred miles or more around, has been subdued, cultivated, and populated by millions of hardy, industrious, and intelligent agriculturalists. The marvel is the *growth* of the *country* rather than the city. The latter was compelled by the former, and indeed has never kept pace with it... If we have talked only of Chicago and its progress, we must not forget that Chicago is not phenomenal, but it is the whole great West that is phenomenal... Let us not say that there is a rivalry between these great cities of the West; but there is a noble emulation as to which shall do most of the honour and the glory of our beloved country.³³ (emphasis in original)

By the time of Caton’s speech to the Calumet Club, however, there was no doubt that Chicago had outpaced all other “western” cities in terms of economic and spatial development. Given its geographical position and newly available interior land and resources to exploit, business owners quickly bought land, invested large sums of capital, built railroads, and recruited workers. The labor demands of grain, lumber, railroad, and eventually meatpacking and steel industries brought thousands

³¹ On the politics of racial expendability see John D. Márquez, “Nations Re-Bound: Race and Bio-Politics at E.U. and U.S. Borders” in *Europe in Black and White: Immigration, Race, and Identity in the ‘Old Continent,’* ed. Manuela Ribeiro Sanchez et al. (Bristol: Intellect, 2011), 37-52.

³² Calumet Club of Chicago, *Early Chicago: Reception to the Settlers of Chicago Prior to 1840* (Chicago: Calumet Club, 1879), 38; Available from, <http://ia600401.us.archive.org/20/items/cu31924028806707/cu31924028806707.pdf>

³³ Ibid., 40-42.

of workers to Chicago in the ante-bellum period. Most were Euro-American workers and skilled laborers from Europe, though the first African American community also formed in Chicago during these years as the city became a safe-haven for those who escaped slavery. As a result of labor migrations, the population of Chicago grew faster than any other city in the United States from 1830 to 1880. Maps of the city during this period reveal the rapid growth and privatization of property. In 1843, for example, private property in Chicago was valued at \$1,500,000. By 1860 property values had risen to \$37,000,000.³⁴

In *Natures Metropolis*, a brilliant study of geographical development and commodity flows in Chicago during the nineteenth century, historian William Cronon clearly shows that local boosters, politicians and outside capitalists worked in tandem to rapidly make Chicago a gateway of lucrative railroad, shipping, grain, timber, meatpacking industries, and eventually manufactured goods. This, of course, had occurred through aggressive acts of land exploitation and the outmaneuvering of rival cities like St. Louis. Yet, the desire of Caton and others that belonged to the city's business elite, was that Chicago's rapid growth was recognized as a favor of God and nature, and that capital accumulation was a material reflection of the innate fitness (ie. industriousness, intelligence) of its leading citizens. For some political and economic elites the influx of capital into Chicago was explicitly likened to a colonial expedition, or a civilizing mission. Cronon quotes one prominent booster, John M. Binckley, as equating economic development in Chicago as "the war of Eastern business carried into the Africa of the West."³⁵

While one might regard Binkley's representation of Chicago as the frontline of capitalist modernity in the West as hyperbole, the city was popularly imagined at the time as a symbol of American exceptionalism in the heart of darkness. In *Croft's New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast*

³⁴ Jocelyn Maynar Ghent and Frederic Cople Jaher, "The Chicago Business Elite: 1830-1930. A Collective Biography" *The Business History Review* 50, no. 3 (Autumn, 1976): 293.

³⁵ Cronon, *Natures Metropolis*, 283.

Guide published in Chicago in 1879, for example, the popular travel writer George Crofutt included “American Progress” by John Gast on its first page.³⁶ A familiar representation of Manifest Destiny, Gasts’ “American Progress” featured Columbia hovering above the land and carrying in each hand a communications line and a book. Under her are buffalo herds and American Indians fleeing, frontiersman with tools in hand, and railroads steaming across the plains. A metaphor for the nation’s growth, Gasts’ image of Columbia was narrated by Crofutt as,

A diaphanously and precarious clad America floats westward through the air with the "star of empire" on her forehead. She has left the cities of the East behind, and the wide Mississippi, and still her course is Westward...Fleeing her approach are Indians, buffalo, wild horses, Bears, and other game, disappearing into the storm and waves of the pacific coast. They flee the wonderous vision--the star is too much for them.³⁷

The deployment of “American Progress” at the beginning of the travel guide worked to hail the reader as the prospective embodiment of the nation’s progress. Like Binkley, it also presented Chicago, the place where Crofutt authored the preface to his book, as located at the border of a dark wilderness. Invited to board a Pullman car from Chicago, readers were urged to ride west and mimic Columbia by carrying light into the blackness of the occidental. Significantly, at the time of Crofutt’s publication and Binkley’s commentary blacks comprised only 1.3 percent of Chicago’s population and had become, according to St. Claire Drake and Horace Cayton, “just one more poverty stricken group” in the city.³⁸ Yet, blackness also signified unsettled space, uncivilized labor practices, and untamed forces of nature that had to be penetrated, dominated, capitalized upon, and pacified in order for national greatness to be ensured.

The irony of externalizing blackness to naturalize Chicago as a white metropolis was that the city’s western identity was suspended. By virtue of declaring Chicago the urban symbol of American

³⁶ Crofutt’s previous travel book sold 350,000 copies.

³⁷ Crofutt distributed copies of Gast’s “American Progress” with his words as the engraving.

³⁸ St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, “North, Free, and Segregated: An Account of the Struggles of Chicago’s First Negro Migrants” *The Claude A. Barnett Papers*, Part 3, Series B: reel 16, Vivian Harsh Research Center, Chicago, Illinois. According to US census records, blacks counted 6480 in 1880. Drake and Cayton’s description of the black community in Chicago was in reference to the ante-bellum period when debates over slavery casted considerable attention on the particular history of Chicago’s small black community.

exceptionalism and an example of the economic effect of whiteness, captains of industry like Caton, city boosters like Binkley, and travel writers like Crofutt effectively removed the city from the frontier experience. This caesura produced a crisis for the city's owning-class, as industrial capital accumulation, leisure, and urban growth were irreconcilable with the frontier norms of virulent masculinity based upon settling land, Indian warfare, and economic independence. In other words, the contradiction of capitalism's spectacular growth in Chicago after the Treaty of 1833 was that by the post-Reconstruction period the culture of monopoly capitalism and the exploitation of mass production effectively disconnected the owning class from the practices of masculinity that supposedly reflected whiteness and secured republican virtue on the frontier.³⁹ If the first page of *Crofutt's New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide* deployed "American Progress," at the end an imagined tourist inquires of the author, "How does one make money in the West?," to which Crofutt replied,

You can make money ANYWHERE in the Great West, if you will peel off your coat and go to work. But if you have no money and are afraid to or ashamed to work, stay at home and let your friends support you. It would take a million such to make one live *Western man*... The want of the Far West is good, honest, reliable, steady men.⁴⁰ (emphasis in original)

Proclaimed to be of the West by Caton, yet removed from the spatial domain of racial virulence, frontier masculinity, and republican virtue expounded by Crofutt, Chicago existed as a paradox of race and American identity at a time when the frontier of Manifest Destiny had clearly departed. As such, when Caton recalled the days of overcoming Indians in Chicago and the ruggedness of the original settlers in his 1879 speech to the Calumet Club, it was less an innocent moment of nostalgia than an effort to re-establish Chicago's western identity and frame the city's business class as active progeny of the frontier experience.

³⁹ On Republican virtue see David W. Noble, *The End of American History: Democracy, Capitalism, and the Metaphor of Two Worlds in Anglo-American Historical Writing, 1880-1980* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). On masculinity and the U.S. imperialist desire to act like a civilized savage see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Matthew Frye Jacobsen, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), and Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

⁴⁰ George A. Crofutt, *Crofutt's Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide* (Chicago: Overland Publishing Co., 1878), 321.

The fragile sense of whiteness that structured the culture of the owning class in Chicago during the late 1870s and 1880s was exacerbated by the growing population and militancy of laboring populations that migrated to the city. By 1880 industrial workers numbered 75,000 -- 15 percent of the city's population --and were already the largest industrial workforce west of the Appalachians.⁴¹ According to Cronon,

Many of the new industrial workers were themselves part of an extended rural-urban migration, having come to the city from country sides as near as Illinois and as far away as Germany, Ireland, England, and Scandinavia... In that year [1880], its factories and shops produced nearly a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of goods, including \$85 million in meat packing products, \$19 million in clothing, \$10 million in iron in steel, \$9 million in foundry and machine shop products, \$8 million in beer and liquor, \$6 million in furniture, \$6 million in printed matter, and \$3 million in agricultural implements, to say nothing of smaller product lines.⁴²

Despite producing unprecedented wealth in the factories of Chicago, workers earned barely enough to survive and lived in squalor in overpopulated areas of the city. Enduring horrid living and working conditions, many joined the growing labor movement in Chicago.

It is critical to recall that during this period of labor activism the racial order categorized workers from European nations as separate races.⁴³ To use historian Matthew Frye Jacobson's terminology, workers from southern and eastern European nations that moved to Chicago had whiteness of a different color.⁴⁴ Consequently, when workers from different backgrounds united to organize strikes, publish bilingual manifestoes, arm themselves, and confront the Pullman's, McCormick's and Armour's of Chicago, they formed a multi-racial alliance against monopoly capital. At the same time, however,

⁴¹ Cronon, *Natures Metropolis*, 311.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ See David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (Cambridge: Basic Books, 2006). Roediger argues that it is not until the 1920s that ethnicity becomes operative.

⁴⁴ Building on the pioneering scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois, historians continue to participate in a lively debate on the acquisition of whiteness by working-class European migrants. Notable works include; David R. Roediger *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1999), Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1999), George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), Roediger, *Working Towards Whiteness*, Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 2008). Examinations of whiteness in Chicago during this period include, Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), and Gabriela F. Arredondo, *Mexican Chicago: Race, Identity and Nation, 1916-39* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

biological ideas of racial difference also operated to attribute participation in the labor movement and radical ideology to race and history. Labor activism, according to the racial grid of intelligibility at that time, was an act of savagery, a sign of racial degeneration, and the result of Old World practices of class conflict. As such, by constructing labor militancy as an external disease carried by foreigners into the city, biological ideas of race worked productively to reconcile conditions of labor exploitation and to construct labor activists as bio-political enemies of the city. Furthermore, since strikes and protest marches disrupted the stability of capitalist modernity and race relations in the city, they qualified as material acts of instability or blackness that justified a response by the biopolitical state: the institution vested with the power to restore equilibrium by eliminating racial threats.

Even a cursory look at the reactions of government to the early labor movement in Chicago illuminates the ways colonial ideas of race worked to construct militant workers as bio-political threats and produced state sanctioned violence against workers. On July 23, 1877, for example, ship, railroad, and streetcar workers walked off the job and joined the Great Railroad Strike. In response to over eight thousand laborers refusing to work and effectively paralyzing Chicago's economy, the Chicago police shot into a crowd of workers gathered on the southwest side killing three. During this incident Albert Parsons, one of the outspoken critics of Chicago's business class, was cornered by plain-clothes officers and members of the Board of Trade and told to leave the city or he would be killed. When Parsons remained defiant his captors screamed out "Hang him, lynch him, lock him up."⁴⁵ Scrambling to restore order, the Illinois National Guard and Federal troops were called into the city. Tellingly, the regiment of Federal troops that occupied Chicago arrived from the Dakotas where they had recently fought the Lakota Sioux. Just as in the sixties when the ORC experienced police raids, officers and federal troops illegally busted into union halls on the west side of the city, and dispersed union meetings with bullets and batons.

⁴⁵ William J. Adelman, *Haymarket Revisited* (Chicago: Illinois Labor History Society, 1986), 6.

As a result of the explosion of labor militancy during the Great Railroad Strike the business owners of Chicago formed a Law and Order league headed by George Pullman, the railroad monopolist. When workers armed themselves two years later and began to march in military formations in Grant Park, the Illinois State General Assembly responded by outlawing the right of workers to carry arms, and in 1881 a new law was passed prohibiting anyone from handing out leaflets in public.⁴⁶ After radicalized workers organized a Poor Peoples March at the end of 1884 to protest a cut in wages by Marshall Fields, Cyrus McCormick, Pullman, and the Swift and Armour meatpacking monopolies, state sanctioned violence intensified. During the turbulent July 1885 Streetcar strike, Chicago police Captain John Bonfield issued the first “shoot to kill” order and instituted new police anti-riot techniques as part of a city-wide campaign to control labor resistance. Witnessing these new police techniques, the radical activist Lucy González Parsons wrote,

Let us examine into this matter and ascertain, if we can, what this street-riot drill is for. Certainly not for the purpose of fighting enemies from without, nor for a foreign foe, for if this was the case we would be massing our armies on the seacoast. Then it must be for our enemies within... Then who is the street-riot drill for? For whom is it intended? Who is to be shot?⁴⁷

Parson’s questions were soon answered when police broke up the infamous Haymarket Protest Meeting of May, 4th 1886 and arrested eight labor movement leaders including her husband Albert Parsons. Accused of setting off a bomb, three of the eight were eventually hung on November 11, 1887 despite a lack of evidence and worldwide pressure for their release.

The legal measures and violent practices enacted by government, including the hanging of the Haymarket leaders, clearly unveils the state’s strategy to coercively reconstitute the power of capital. By enacting restrictive legislation and employing force, the strategy of the state was to re-establish social stability by eliminating or punishing those subjects of instability or “enemies within” the nation. And yet, despite a wave of new laws, police violence, and the execution of movement leaders, Chicago

⁴⁶ “Mrs. Parson Arrested” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 24, 1887, p. 2; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁴⁷ Adelman, *Haymarket Revisited*, 10. Parsons wrote this in December, 1885.

remained a location of intense labor conflict and social unrest. In one of the more revealing statements made prior to the Haymarket executions, Hortencia Black, the wife of defense attorney Captain William P. Black, expressed to reporters from New York City her anxieties about the violence that could erupt in the city on the day of the hangings. She stated,

The town is torn by a tornado of conflicting passions –hate, pity, rage, sorrow – each with tense violence struggling for mastery...A very panic has seized the community. Our homes, our lives, are near to destruction... We are dealing with men made desperate by weight of [sic] we. They see their friends on the brink of an abyss over which wild, unreasoning passion works to hurl them to disgraceful death... Frankly we fear them.⁴⁸

Though Hortencia Black was close to the trial, and witnessed the failure of the legal system, she reiterated an understanding of uprisings and social conflict as an irrational and savage form of masculinity.⁴⁹ On the other hand, her anxieties about violence in Chicago speak to the ineffectiveness of the colonial/bio-political state that governed Chicago during the late 1880s. As a final effort to coerce stability, for example, Mayor John P. Roche banned the singing of revolutionary songs and radical speeches at the funeral of the Haymarket leaders. Despite this, some 20,000 people attended the funeral and 200,000 people lined the streets of downtown Chicago to stand in solidarity with the labor movement and pay their last respects. Tellingly, the day of the Haymarket funerals was pronounced to be “Black Friday” by anarchists in Chicago.

Examined from this perspective, the techniques of social control used by the bio-political state to try to control class conflict in Chicago reflected the desire of monopoly capitalists to re-assert racial dominance in Chicago. Though the execution of the Haymarket leaders proceeded through a legal process, one could say that the use of violence was also an attempt to conquer an irrational force of instability through rational barbarism. The war of maneuver that was waged by business elites, in other words, was more of a performance of the bio-political strategy of obliteration than an effective strategy

⁴⁸ “Mrs. Parson Arrested,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

⁴⁹ Hortencia Black tried to persuade her husband not to take the case as it might ruin his career as a lawyer. See, “To the Bar of Justice,” Available online from, <http://www.chicagohistory.org/dramas/act3/toTheBarOfJustice/captainBlack.htm>

of controlling conduct through hegemony. As abusive labor and living conditions and state violence only resulted in more workers in the streets and in the union halls, coercive or negative forms of power were counterproductive to the economic and political needs of capital in Chicago. The dilemma following the Haymarket affair then became how to establish a binding hegemony over a racially diverse labor force potentially carrying the infectious disease of class conflict from the Old World into the city. Once again, race was pivotal to the reconciliation of this dilemma, and explains how Chicago went from a Black Friday in late 1887 to becoming the White City in 1893, less than six years later.

Much of the research about laboring migrants from Europe becoming “white” has centered upon the ways whiteness depended upon exclusionary immigration laws and legal decisions that determined who was non-white.⁵⁰ Scholars have also looked to the exclusionary federal subsidies and welfare programs that began during the 1930s, and continued in the post-WWII era. A critical examination of the changing nature of racialized governance in Chicago suggests, however, that whiteness was also an effective strategy of power that developed as a solution to the crisis of labor counter-conduct. Just as overseas imperialism was pursued to solve the overproduction crisis of the 1890s, a transformation in the boundaries of American identity contributed to the neutralization of labor radicalism. Of course, the consolidation of hegemony in Chicago was not accomplished immediately. It required the incitement of new discourses, new knowledge production, and the dissemination of symbolic representations of race, nation and Empire. Though this war of position was no doubt waged in other places, the 1893 Columbian Exposition made Chicago a central location where a new disciplinary strategy of racialized governmentality was refined. In the next chapter, this study evaluates the racial politics of the imperialist/disciplinary state in Chicago to highlight the ways imperialist ideas of race encircled “white”

⁵⁰ I am thinking here of Ian Haney López, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: NYU Press, 1997), Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

citizen-subjects within the boundaries of disciplinarity, and relegated black denizens to the domain of bio-politics.

Chapter 2: Chicago: The Imperial Metropolis

Chicago was the first expression of American thought as a unity; one must start there.

Henry Adams

What shall we of Illinois say – how shall we boast of our wonderful farms, of our busy factories, of our Imperial City by the Lake?

Frank Lowden

Three years before the landmark case *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) institutionalized segregation, the Niña, Pinta and Santa Maria descended upon the shores of Lake Michigan. As excited spectators cheered, the replicas of the ships that “discovered” the New World entered Chicago’s harbor and arrived at the World’s Columbian Exposition. Financed by monopoly capitalists and subsidized by the U.S. Congress, Chicago’s World’s Fair was an unprecedented display of American exceptionalism, historical memory, scientific progress, and racial knowledge. Designed under the direction of architect Daniel Burnham, the World’s Fair was also one of the first exercises in modern urban planning. Tellingly, Burnham’s vision of Chicago’s lakefront was the White City and the Midway Pleasance. Intended to stand as a stark contrast to the un-ordered and chaotic urban environment that existed beyond the borders of the World’s Fair, the White City educated some twenty seven million paying visitors in the culture of modernity and progress that they belonged to. According to historian Mae Ngai,

Myriad symbols and practices of racial exclusion and hierarchy pervaded the ideas of nation and world embodied by the Columbian Exposition, themes that captured and unified the trends of race and nationalism in the late nineteenth century... The White City and the Midway were designed as an object lesson for the masses in the evolutionary path of humankind, which marked the racial identity and “place” of the world’s people’s.¹

On the one-mile Midway Pleasance that connected the metropolis to the White City were exhibits about the races of the world that attributed science and modernity to the European race. Organized by Harvard professor Frederic Ward Putnam, the Midway was an exhibition of the knowledge produced by the new

¹ Mae Ngai, “Race, Nation, and Citizenship in Late Nineteenth-Century America, 1878-1900” in *Race and Ethnicity in America*, Ronald H. Boyer ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

academic field of anthropology and method of ethnography complete with living “savages” to be observed and commented upon by the public. Collectively, these exhibits were an unprecedented public display of racial hierarchy that placed Europeans above Asians, American Indians, and Africans.

Considering the spatial designs and racial knowledge presented at the White City and the Midway, it is relevant that African Americans were virtually excluded from the planning process of the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. Despite the best efforts of leading African American scholars and community leaders to influence the exhibition, and the independent organization of a Colored American’s Day, representations of African inferiority were prevalent.² Indeed, the outspoken anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells spent her time at the World’s Fair in front of the Haitian Building distributing copies of *Why the Colored American is Not in the World’s Columbian Exposition*, a protest pamphlet co-written with Frederick Douglass. In a letter to newspaper readers in Ohio explaining the genesis of the pamphlet Wells wrote,

It was thought that as the intelligence, skill and every civilized people on the globe was to be represented at the fair, and that many would come expecting to see something of the Afro-American; that as he had been so studiously kept out of representation in any official capacity and given menial places, it was the race's duty to tell why this is so. Especially does this seem necessary when the foreigner, knowing nothing about the kind of prejudice prevailing in this country, will be told all manner of things to the Afro-American's discredit as a race by the white American. The pamphlet is intended as a calm, dignified statement of the Afro-American's side of the story, from the beginning to the present day; a recital of the obstacles which have hampered him; a sketch of what he has done in twenty-five years with all his persecution, and a statement of the fruitless efforts he made for representation at the world's fair.³

As Wells understood, the efforts to exclude blacks from the planning process symbolically reflected their absence in the imaginary of the nation, and confirmed that that the Columbian Exhibition was directed towards educating European laboring populations about their racial position within the

² Christopher Robert Reed, *“All the World Is Here!”: The Black Presence at White City* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

³ “Miss Ida B. Wells Informs Our Readers as to the Condition of the World's Fair Pamphlet Movement,” *Cleveland Gazette*, July 22, 1893; Available online, <http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/socm/doc4.htm>

boundaries of whiteness.⁴ Numerous recitals of the recently written pledge of allegiance, for example, were introduced to the public, and monuments of Greek classical imagery led seamlessly to an oversized Statue of the Republic at the center of the fairgrounds.

Fostering a local identity was also the focus of the Worlds' Fair. In the largest one day turnout of the entire exhibition, 716,800 people entered the fairgrounds on Chicago Day, October 9, 1893. Organized on the anniversary of the Chicago Fire of 1871 that nearly destroyed the city, Chicago Day announced the arrival of Chicago as a modern metropolis. Posters announced Chicago Day as "Forming in its entirety the most significant and greatest spectacle of modern times," and the title of one publication touting the new Chicago was *Chicago of Today: The Metropolis of the West*. Significantly, both the poster and the text featured an image of the female icon Columbia overlooking the city. For the duration of the World's Fair, Gast's Columbia returned to Chicago and called upon white citizen-subjects to embrace the city as the capital of western civilization and an imperial metropolis that required protection.

To understand why Chicago was a central location where discourses of race, nation and Empire operated to conjoin laboring populations from Europe, one must consider that the World's Columbian Exposition took place during a period of intense anxiety and debate about the future prospects of American democracy and republican virtue. Indeed, it was on the grounds of White City that historian Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his renowned paper "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" to an American Historical Association meeting. Drawing upon 1890 U.S. census data that enumerated the end of free land in the West, Turner declared,

Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development... In this advance the frontier is the outer edge of the wave – the meeting point between savagery and civilization... the most important effect of the frontier has been in the promotion of democracy here and in Europe. As

⁴ It is important to note that during Colored Americans Day the topic of "recolonization" to Africa dominated the debate. See, Reed, *All the World is Here*.

has been indicated the frontier is productive of individualism... And now four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history.⁵

Though Turner's essay influenced political calls for Empire and would shape historiography of the United States for decades, his conclusion about the end of free land was old news in a city where the western frontier had long departed. One can think then that the World's Columbian Exhibition and the image of the new Chicago introduced an updated answer to preserving American exceptionalism.

The symbols of race and nation disseminated at the 1893 World's Exhibition demarcated those considered racially fit to be citizen-subjects and pronounced that whiteness and democracy no longer required a western frontier. Instead, they were innate and universal European racial characteristics that could be maintained indefinitely by rationally embracing a nation that embodied modernity and racial superiority. Instead of coercing obedience then, a disciplinary strategy of government was introduced by the World's Fair in Chicago. Visitors were approached as individuals with the free-will to rationally defend an exceptional nation that reflected their racial superiority. This strategy of governance, in other words, proposed that a test of racial fitness for inclusion existed in the minds of those that qualified as citizen-subjects. Of course, this exercise of rationality -- the ability to choose the nation -- was unavailable to groups cast as non-Europeans. By virtue of their global origins outside of Europe they were always already irrational and racially unfit for modernity and inclusion in the nation. Though Turner declared the end of the first period in American history, he only had to look to the White City and the Midway exhibits to see the existence of this new urban frontier and the next strategy for maintaining republican virtue.

Obviously, the six month World's Fair did not immediately consolidate the differentiated races of Europe. Indeed, throughout the 1890s Chicago's newspapers routinely reported on episodes of

⁵ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" in *Does the Frontier Experience Make America Exceptional?*, Richard W. Etulain ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's 1999).

violence between the Irish, Polish, and Italians, among others.⁶ Furthermore, industrial workers remained vulnerable to changes in wages and urban despair – conditions that continued to prompt labor solidarity as witnessed by the 1894 Pullman Strike. Yet, the representations of whiteness, modernity and national identity disseminated by the World’s Fair created the discursive space that fastened the separate “white” races of Europe. By demarcating Europeans as racially fit citizen-subjects and presenting American national identity as a rational choice, the World’s Columbian Exposition constructed each individual as a potential agent of modernity with the ability to maintain civilization, stability, and white supremacy. This discourse bound people from previously differentiated races, however, by creating state security as the common privilege of whiteness.⁷ Though it is difficult to know how quickly citizens-subjects assimilated the racial meanings of the World’s Fair, there is evidence that a collective sense of being part of a national population that enjoyed security developed rather rapidly.

Traveling from England to Chicago in the aftermath of the World’s Fair, for example, the journalist William Stead reported upon the deplorable conditions of criminals and unemployed workers in what he dubbed the “capital of the Western World.” In his publication *If Christ Came to Chicago* (1894) that was printed by a union press, Stead attributed the excess of “tramps,” “pariahs,” “drunkards,” and “harlots,” to corrupt politicians and the lack of Christian sentiment among elites in Chicago. He compared governmental strategies in London and Chicago to call for a moral revival led by the state and wrote,

The Community which we call a state stands more than ever in need of being directed and controlled and dominated by the moral sense of the community. In other words, the state must have a conscience as well as a will and mind. That community will best be governed in which the moral sense of its members has most authority.⁸

⁶ See, Guglielmo, *White on Arrival*.

⁷ Philosopher Charles Mills has aptly described this exchange as a racial contract. See, Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁸ William Stead, *If Christ Came to Chicago* (Chicago: Laird and Lee, 1894), 340; Available online from, “Homicide in Chicago,” <http://homicide.northwestern.edu/pubs/ICCTC/>

Stead's call for a moral governmental rationality in Chicago was undergirded, however, by the belief that the modern state in England and the United States had the obligation to protect the true source of modernity -- the white worker.

In a concluding chapter of his text, tellingly entitled "The Conscience of Chicago," Stead reprinted a speech that captured what he believed to be the basis for a new era of governmentality. In this address Stead explained that the "future of human race" was the responsibility of the "English Speaking man." Pointing to the establishment of colonies around the globe, Stead noted, "Already he begins to dominate the world," and added, "The British Empire and the American Republic comprise within their limits almost all the territory that remains empty for the overflow of the world." Significantly, Stead argued that given the immensity of the civilizing mission allotted by history to imperial powers, the governments of England and the United States must re-conceptualize its citizens as agents of Empire. He explained,

Their citizens, with all their faults, are leading the van of civilization, and if any great improvements are to be made in the condition of mankind, they will necessarily be leading instruments in the work... It follows from this fundamental conception of the magnitude and the importance of the work of the English-speaking race in the world that a resolute endeavor should be made to equip the individual citizen more adequately for his share in that work.

Stead then waxed poetic about the virtues of embracing those who were previously viewed by the state authorities as racial degenerates, bio-political threats, and potential labor militants. He exclaimed,

For the ordinary common English-speaking creature, country yokel, or child of the slums, is the seed of Empire. The red-haired hobbledehoy, smoking his short pipe at the center of Seven Dials, may two years hence be the red-coated representative of the might and majesty of Britain in the midst of a myriad of Africans and Asiatics. That village girl, larking with the lads on her way to the well, will in a few years be the mother of citizens of new commonwealths; the founders of cities in the Far West whose future destiny may be as famous as that of ancient Rome.

At the climax of his speech Stead argued, "No one is too insignificant to be overlooked" and called for governments to "improve the condition, moral and material, in which the ordinary English speaking man is bred and reared." As if speaking to the U.S. Congress or the British Parliament as a fellow statesman,

he concluded, “To do this is a work as worthy of national expenditure as the defense of our shores from hostile fleets.”⁹

Published one year after the World’s Fair took place, *If Christ Came to Chicago* indicates that representations of European racial superiority were producing new collective identities and discourses of working-class citizen-subjects as agents of civilization.¹⁰ More importantly, it stands as a reference that clearly shows how a sense of whiteness and national belonging was linked to, and one could say hinged upon, knowledge of imperialism as a civilizing mission. Since all citizen-subjects were constructed as having the innate potential to maintain imperial stability, Stead argued that those in positions to govern were obligated to make the rational choice and the moral decision to expend resources to improve their conditions.

If Christ Came to Chicago is a text that indicates that the consolidation of hegemony in Chicago required a racial grid of intelligibility of imperialism to construct whiteness. Whereas the construction of whiteness and the reconstitution of planter hegemony in the post-Reconstruction U.S. south required the production of racial knowledge involving the fitness of emancipated slaves for democracy and myths of sexuality and miscegenation, in Chicago it was a global knowledge about “foreigners” and colonial spaces that operated to invent whiteness.¹¹ Comparing the status of the black community and “foreign” workers in Chicago in the classic text *Black Metropolis* (1945), Drake and Cayton explained that Chicago was,

... busy absorbing immigrants from Europe between 1890 and 1910 – a major “social problem.” Because it was American and small, the Negro community was far less a “problem” to native-white Chicagoans of the Nineties than were neighborhoods inhabited by the foreign born.¹²

This is not to make the error of saying that people of African descent and racist ideas of blackness were insignificant to the construction of the racial order in Chicago. It is to say that without a tradition of

⁹ Ibid., 341-342.

¹⁰ In this case, those from England and America were conflated into “the English-speaking race.”

¹¹ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

¹² St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1993), 57.

chattel slavery, and the influx of laboring populations from Europe considered the major source of racial anxiety, that the consolidation of a white subjectivity in Chicago also had to draw upon other sources of racial knowledge.¹³

Removed from the historical experiences of plantation slavery, the establishment of a collective sense of whiteness and national belonging in Chicago required racial knowledge of colonial populations and U.S. governance abroad.¹⁴ And during the late nineteenth century, the production of knowledge about the fitness of “whites” and their eligibility as citizen-subjects was prevalent. U.S. imperialism in Asia, for example, provoked the first restrictive immigration laws that effectively defined the United States as a white nation. The Page Law (1875), Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) and the Gentlemen’s Agreement (1908) operated as gate-keeping laws that restricted “Asians” as bio-political threats to the nation and also served to construct citizen-subjects as belonging to a pure white race that was under attack.¹⁵ Likewise, the Insular Cases (1901-1905) that determined that the U.S. Constitution did not follow the flag and that Puerto Rico was an “unincorporated territory” operated to racially configure the spatial borders of United States sovereignty. While *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and anti-black racism undoubtedly shaped social and economic relations, immigration restrictions and ideas of benevolent imperialism necessarily defined the boundaries of the possessive investment in whiteness in Chicago.

¹³ According to census records the black community in Chicago grew from 6,480 in 1880 to 14,271 in 1890. For an assessment of the complexity of the black community in Chicago during this period see, Reed, “*All the World is Here.*”

¹⁴ Writing about the centrality of colonial spaces and US Empire to the construction American national identity, American Studies scholar Amy Kaplan has noted,

...the power concentrated in the imperial state is not static... but is amassed both as an ongoing political, social, and cultural process in struggle with oppositions it gives rise to and responds to at home and abroad, and as a monopoly whose contours change over time in relation to those struggles... The binary opposition of the foreign and domestic is itself imbued with the rhetoric of gender hierarchies that implicitly elevate the international to a male public realm, and relegate the national to a female, private sphere. Foregrounding imperialism in the study of American cultures shows how putatively domestic conflicts are not simply contained at home but how they both emerge in response to international struggles and spill over national borders to be reenacted, challenged or transformed (64).

See, “Left Alone with America: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture” in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).

¹⁵Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Lee and Shah argue that restrictive immigration laws were driven by bio-political anxieties about “Asian” birthrates, demographic growth, sexual conduct, racial miscegenation, and imperial rivalry.

The series of Pre-requisite Cases (1878-1942) that defined who was “white” and eligible for citizenship also worked to construct Chicago as the domain of a white population.¹⁶ The contradictions of these legal decisions indicate that even a global grid of intelligibility involving race, space and eugenics could not clarify who was actually “white.” Instead, the reliance upon scientific and “common sense” ideas of racial identity only served to codify the United States as a white nation and the state as the rational institution that calculated the racial health of the nation. In other words, immigration policies, the Pre-Requisite Cases, the Insular Cases, and white supremacy in the south all worked to configure the borders of whiteness and the modernity of the disciplinary state in Chicago.

Undoubtedly, those represented as citizen-subjects at the World’s Columbian Exposition did not relinquish European national identities and become “white” in its immediate aftermath. Yet, at the World’s Fair and in the years that followed they consumed new knowledge, symbols and discourses that emphasized national unity and normalized their social position as agents of modernity that could expect the privilege of collective security. Historian William Cronon notes,

What did the fair mean? Everyone who attended asked this question in form or another, but it was left for Henry Adams, that most perceptive but detached of contemporary observers to say it best... Adams was so fascinated by the exposition that he traveled to Chicago a second time wander through its exhibits for half a month. He was struck in part by the incoherence that lay just beneath the surface of its apparent unity.... “Chicago” he wrote, “asked in 1893 for the first time the question whether the American people knew where they were driving.” If one wanted to understand the nation and its civilization, one must answer the riddle of the White City. “Chicago,” Adams said, “was the first expression of American thought as a unity; one must start there.”¹⁷

Chicago, Adams could see, was the place where a binding hegemony was congealing and hinged upon imperialist discourses that produced national unity. Yet, if the White City that astonished Adams and legal decisions represented the national population and national spaces like Chicago as “white,” it was the introduction of urban planning that effectively disciplined a collective white subjectivity in Chicago.

¹⁶ On the Pre-requisite cases see, Ian Haney López, *White By Law*.

¹⁷ Cronon, *Natures Metropolis*, 344.

After redesigning Manila in the aftermath of the U.S. War against the Philippines and Washington D.C. in the style of the White City, Daniel Burnham was re-commissioned by the business elite of the city in 1906 to modernize Chicago.¹⁸ Funded by the Chicago Commercial Club, Burnham and Edward H. Bennett produced *Plan of Chicago* in 1908. As a defense of systematic and rational urban design based upon “the public good,” and a comprehensive program for improving city life over time, *Plan of Chicago* was an unprecedented text in modernist urban planning. More importantly, the distribution of 1650 copies to city elites, the use of a public film, and the dissemination of an eighth grade text book to communicate the plan to children, made *Plan of Chicago* a new practice in popular education involving the relationship of citizen-subjects to urban space. The promotion of *Plan of Chicago* over an extended period of time projected an image of a modern Chicago to a generation of citizen-subjects. Designs for new transportation networks, a central business district, an open lakefront, and neighborhoods connected by parks and wide boulevards emphasized aesthetic beauty and efficient commodity flows. Yet, according to Chicago architect Stuart Cohen, it was a unified plan and “the creation of a shared vision that was the real lasting contribution of the *Plan of Chicago*...”¹⁹

Above planning designs and recommendations *Plan of Chicago* established that cities were frontiers of civilization that required economic order and social unity. Throughout the civilized world, the text explained, urbanization was the trend of humanity but “Men are becoming convinced that the formless growth of the city is neither economical nor satisfactory; and that overcrowding and congestion of traffic paralyze the vital functions of the city.”²⁰ Pointing to the transformation of European capitals as the universal model of urban progress, the authors explained that prosperity and the forward movement of civilization required the control and organization of city space. The plan explained that

¹⁸ Robert S. Roche and Aric Lasher, *Plans of Chicago* (Chicago: Architects Research Foundation, 2010), 43. Roche and Lasher explain that Burnham was originally commissioned by the Merchants Club, a more recent organization of business elites. In 1907 it merged with the longer established Commercial Club, of which Burnham was a member, in order to centralize private support for the Plan of Chicago.

¹⁹ Roche and Lasher, *Plans of Chicago*, 166.

²⁰ Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennet, *Plan of Chicago*, Charles Moore ed. (Chicago: The Great Books Foundation, 2009), 1.

natural forces of growth and expansion produced “intolerable conditions” that prevented the development of Chicago into an “efficient instrument for providing all its people with the best possible conditions of living.” It declared;

Chicago, in common with other great cities, realizes that the time has come to bring order out of the chaos incident to rapid growth, and especially to the influx of people of many nationalities without common traditions or habits of life...

... The days of chance and uncertainty are past. The days of doubtful ventures are gone, and the hazards of new fortunes. The elements which make for the greatness of the city are known to be permanent; and men realize that the time has now come to build confidently on foundations already laid.

Plan of Chicago made it clear that Chicago could become a healthy, efficient, and prosperous metropolis for all citizen-subjects if elements that disrupted convenience, circulation, and social unity were eliminated. “The constant struggle of civilization,” the authors explained, “is to know and attain the highest good; and the city which brings about the best conditions of life becomes the most prosperous” (34).

The *Plan of Chicago* projected a modern Chicago as the optimal model of social and economic organization. The gradual adaptation of urban conditions, according to the authors, would create an ideal environment for civilized life and prosperity in Chicago to flourish. In this sense, the rational creation of a prosperous environment, the improvement of life, and the focus on efficiency extolled by *Plan of Chicago* were cultural values shared by the racial objectives of eugenics and the economic principles of Taylorism that aimed to maximize racial quality and labor productivity, respectively. Just as advocates of eugenics called for the cultivation of superior racial elements and the elimination of defections that stunted racial progress, the *Plan of Chicago* advocated the obliteration of urban elements that constrained life and the accumulation of wealth. Though Burnham and Bennett did not explicitly evoke eugenics or Taylorism the city was imagined as an entity of civilization that suffered from internal maladies. They wrote,

Thoughtful people are appalled at the results of progress; at the waste in time, strength, and money which congestion in city streets begets; at the toll of lives taken by disease when sanitary precautions are neglected; and at the frequent outbreaks against law and order which result from narrow and pleasureless lives. So that while the keynote of the nineteenth century was expansion, we of the twentieth century find that our dominant idea is conservation (32).

The progressive notion that spatial reform and conservation were the new practices of progress and modernity reveals that the *Plan of Chicago* regarded modern life as dependent upon an active safeguarding of the city. As a delicate container of civilization prone to natural forces the modern metropolis was gendered as feminine and thus required vigilant oversight so that elements that stunted progress did not contaminate the city. Indeed, the authors continually emphasized that the *Plan of Chicago* was the product of “the men of Chicago, trained in intense commercial activity” and was written by “men of disinterest and high status.” For this reason, *Plan of Chicago* was not a conservative text that aimed to reinforce the values and retain the privileges of a previous social and economic structure. Instead, it was a progressive text that operated productively to define new patriarchal and racial norms of civic behavior.

As a text that offered a shared vision of spatial conduct *Plan of Chicago* was more than a comprehensive set of planning designs and recommendations. By defining conservation as the norm of civic involvement, *Plan of Chicago* was also implicated in consolidating disciplinary governance in the city. According to philosopher Michel Foucault, disciplinarity is differentiated from the relationship between a sovereign power and legally restricted subjects in that a strategy of government structured by discipline strives to control the conduct of subjects through introducing a model of ideal behavior. The ability to conform to a required norm, according to Foucault, operates as a mechanism to identify normal and deviant subjects. He explained;

Discipline, of course, analyzes and breaks down; it breaks down individuals, places, time, movements, actions and operations. It breaks them down into components such that they can be seen, on the one hand, and modified on the other. It is this famous disciplinary, analytical-practical grid that tries to establish the minimal elements of perception and the elements sufficient for modification.... discipline classifies the components thus identified according to definite objectives. What are the best actions for achieving a particular result: What is the best

movement for loading one's rifle, what is the best position to take? What workers are best suited for a particular task?... discipline fixes the processes of progressive training and permanent control, and finally, on the basis of this, it establishes the division between those considered unsuitable or incapable and the others.²¹

Bearing Foucault's description of disciplinarity as introducing qualitatively different techniques of power in mind, *Plan of Chicago* stands as a document that demarcated ideal citizen-subjects. Embracing capitalist anxieties about urban life, the ideal citizen-subject linked desires for leisure, prosperity, and the comfort of future generations to the stability and health of the city. The authors noted;

The people of Chicago have ceased to be impressed by rapid growth or the great size of the city. What they insist asking now is, How are we living? Are we in reality prosperous? Is the city a convenient place for business? Is it a good labor market in the sense that labor is sufficiently comfortable to be efficient and content? Will the coming generation be able to stand the nervous strain of city life? When a competence has been accumulated, must we go elsewhere to enjoy the fruits of independence? If the city does not become better as it become bigger, shall not the defect be remedied? These are questions that will not be brushed aside. They are the most pressing questions of our day, and everywhere men are anxiously seeking the answers.²²

In this case, the ability to assimilate these concerns and to act on behalf of the city and the public good was a racial mechanism to differentiate undesirables. In other words, *Plan of Chicago* re-constructed whiteness as the innate fitness to transcend class or racial experiences and embrace an abstract citizenship dedicated to capital accumulation and the conservation of civilized life in the city. Of course, this ability was never granted to those racialized as having global origins outside of Europe.

Just as it is difficult to measure the immediate impact of the 1893 World's Fair on white subjectivity, it is also impossible to ascertain how quickly the *Plan of Chicago* created a sense of whiteness and conservation among citizen-subjects. Nevertheless, it is possible to grasp its hegemonic logic, ideological work, and political effects. For example, the use of European classical architecture and extension of the grid system communicated powerful messages of racial unity and modernity to the public. According to architect Thomas Beeby,

²¹ Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 57.

²² Burnham and Bennet, *Plan of Chicago*, 32.

Architecture is the spoken word of the city, for it is an understandable communication system employing signs that are ordered in a particular manner... Classicism supplies the key to reading the city and its architecture. Classicism in its purest form is a canonic language, an authoritative discourse that attempts to create a world within a world, free of contradiction: perfection.²³

Drawing upon the architectural and planning design of the White City that communicated messages of order, modernity and racial unity, *Plan of Chicago* utilized classical style to link the city to European civilization. In addition, *Plan of Chicago* represented the “spirit of Chicago” as the quality that made the city an exceptional location for capital accumulation. The authors proclaimed;

In creating the ideal arrangement, everyone who lives here is better accommodated in his business and his social activities...The very beauty that attracts him who has money makes pleasant the life of those among whom he lives, while anchoring him and his wealth to the city. The prosperity aimed at is for all Chicago. This same spirit which carried out the Exposition in such a manner as to make it a lasting credit to the city is the soul of Chicago, vital and dominant; and even now, although many new men are at the front, it still controls and is doing a greater work than it was in 1893. It finds the men; it makes the occasion; it attracts the sincere and the unselfish; it vitalizes the organization, and impels it to reach heights not believed possible of attainment. This spirit still exists. It is present to-day among us. Indeed, it seems to gather force with the years and the opportunities. It is even now impelling us to larger and better achievements for the public good. It conceals no private purpose, no hidden ends. This spirit – the spirit of Chicago – is our greatest asset. It is not merely civic pride: it is rather the constant, steady determination to bring about the very best conditions of city life for all the people, with full knowledge that what *we as a people* decided to do in the public interest we can and surely will bring to pass.²⁴ (emphasis added)

Beyond civic pride, the “spirit of Chicago” was linked to imperialism as it was a benevolent impulse and a primordial quality that produced progress. As a result, a school textbook was developed in order to cultivate the “spirit of Chicago” and ensure that children understood their responsibility as citizen-subjects.

Plan of Chicago communicated to the public that the creation of a unified and modern metropolis was an urgent matter. As the authors explained, “To-day there is no excuse for the second city in the United States with its destiny made manifest and its wealth secure, if it shall now fail to keep pace with the march of progress that is gathering into its ranks the progressive cities of the world” (32).

²³ Roche and Lasher, *Plans of Chicago*, vii. Historian Dominic Pacyga has also noted that Burnham widened the streets of Chicago to prevent laborers from closing roads during protests and to allow the police to repress worker resistance.

²⁴ Burnham and Bennet, *Plan of Chicago*, 8.

The necessity to keep pace and the need to conserve civilized life for future generations made it imperative to educate young citizen-subjects about the *Plan of Chicago*. Published in 1912 by William D. Moody, the *Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago* was an accompanying textbook that intended to instruct school children in the values of the *Plan of Chicago*.²⁵ Significantly, the deployment of the word “manual” speaks to a consciousness of disciplinarity and the introduction of correct guidelines of conduct to be followed. Declaring that “Chicago today stands at the threshold of a great future,” Moody explained that it was urgent that children embrace the *Plan of Chicago*. He wrote;

What are we as citizens, to do to promote the future well being of our city?
First, we are to study the Plan of Chicago that we may understand it. When that is accomplished, we are to make it clearly and distinctively our ideal. We are to look forward to the carrying out the Plan of Chicago in the broad spirit that an injury to one is an injury to all, and that the well-being of one promotes the well-being of all. We are to make the Plan our ideal and to put it before us and dare to recognize it and believe in it and to build for it... In this work of citizen building and city planning, our children must play their part...²⁶

As indicated by Moody, the *Wacker Manual* was deployed to instill a sense of duty, community patriotism, and the “spirit of Chicago” among working-class children. It emphasized to young citizen-subjects that unity, loyalty to the city, and an active form of conservation was the ideal model of civic participation. On the other hand, “negligence, indifference, and inertia” were intolerable qualities that threatened the progress of an exceptional metropolis. Moody explained,

Nature gave Chicago the location that under the touch of modern commerce produced the great city. It is not the growth that amazes. The growth naturally accompanied industry. It is Chicago’s spirit which grips the world’s attention.

No city in America –perhaps none in the world—has the love and devotion of its people that Chicago has. No people of any city will labor so hard, or sacrifice so much for their city, as will the people of Chicago. It is this civic patriotism – almost as strong as our love of country – that will determine the successful future of our city, in the realization of the Plan of Chicago. It is desirable that the instructors of our schools organize the mighty forces at their command and prepare the minds of our children to grasp and lay fast hold upon the science of city planning, as related to the future glory of Chicago, and the prosperity and happiness of all her people.²⁷

²⁵ Notably, Moody was the managing director of the Chicago Plan Commission.

²⁶ Walter D. Moody, *Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago*, (Chicago: Chicago Plan Commission, 1912) prefatory note; Available online, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/10418.html>

²⁷ Ibid.

As evident by the *Plan of Chicago* and the *Wacker Manual*, urban planners worked ideologically to construct the ideal citizen-subject as the protector of the city and an agent of capitalist modernity. In doing so, they transplanted the anxieties of race and space to “white” laboring populations and normalized patriarchal nativism as a vital element for creating a civilized, modern, and prosperous Chicago. In this light, it was no accident of history that during the early twentieth century, segregationist practices and anti-black violence developed in the city.

The effect of discourses and symbols that constructed Chicago as a domain of civilization and citizen-subjects as agents of modernity was the racialization of blacks as a biological threat to the health and prosperity of the city. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to adequately document the horrific experiences of labor discrimination, racial terror and housing covenants that cumulatively resulted in the spatial segregation of blacks in Chicago.²⁸ It is, however, critical to consider that blacks comprised a small demographic population that was dispersed throughout Chicago at the time of the World’s Fair. Echoing the observations of St. Claire Drake, the historian and policy critic Paul Street notes,

...blacks maintained only a slight presence at the time of the Columbian Exposition. There were just less than 15,000 African Americans in Chicago in 1890, when Chicago was home to 161,000 German-born immigrants, 70,000 Irish-born immigrants, 43,000 Swedish-born, 38,000 British-born, 25,000 Czechs, 24,00 Poles, and 22,000 Norwegians.²⁹

By 1910, the black population grew to 44,103, but the ability of blacks to reside and travel throughout the city virtually ended.³⁰ Examining residential census data, historian Allan Spear has explained,

The concentration of Negroes in enclaves was clearly increasing throughout this period. By 1910, over 30 percent lived in predominantly Negro sections of the city and over 60 percent in areas that were more than 20 percent Negro. Whereas in 1900 nineteen of thirty-five wards had been over .5 percent Negro, this figure was reduced to thirteen in 1910. Furthermore, the second

²⁸ Notable studies of black experiences of racial discrimination in Chicago include; Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1967), William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), and Paul Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007).

²⁹ Street, *Racial Oppression*, 76.

³⁰ Spear, *Black Chicago*, 12. According to U.S. census data 44,103 represented only 2 percent of the total population of Chicago.

and third wards, which included the heart of the black belt, were now 25 percent Negro, while in 1900 only one ward had even approached that figure.³¹

As Spear's insights indicate, though blacks were no more than two percent of the total population of Chicago between 1890 and 1910, they were identified as the principal threat to whites and were no longer tolerated in most areas of Chicago. Indeed, by the turn of the twentieth century community leaders were publicly denouncing acts of white supremacy in Chicago and comparing them to oppressive Jim Crow conditions that existed in the south.

Speaking to a congregation at the Institutional Church and Social Settlement for Colored People, for example, the Reverend Reverdy C. Ransom explained that a "race chasm" was taking hold in Chicago. He exclaimed,

The North and South are yearly coming closer together in their attitude toward the negro. It looks as though the negro is to be caught between the upper and the nether millstone of the North and the South and ground into annihilation.³²

Ransom's sense that a new environment of racial animosity towards blacks existed in Chicago was shared by others including the author Paul Laurence Dunbar. Writing in June of 1903 about the "Negro Question in Chicago," Dunbar proclaimed, "There is a negro problem at the north, but view it fairly and squarely." He noted,

Perhaps it is a different question from that of the south, because it is more industrial than anything else, but the point remains that the question does also... The traditions of the country prevent "benevolent assimilation," and this black child of America must ever stand apart from all the rest of his fellow. To a large extent he is driven to colonize parts of the city. His lodges, his clubs, his churches, his saloons – whatever he is, whatever he has, whatever he does, is invariably stamped "colored." The rise to any prominent position, it makes little or no difference, he is "colored." The Swede, German, the French, the Italian have equal chances for advancement for they are all white. When they have passed a certain point in the industrial economy, when they have reached a certain state of intellectual development, nobody cares from what nationality they sprang. They live wherever they please and go about as their will directs.³³

³¹ Ibid., 17.

³² "Preaches on Race Chasm" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 20, 1900, p. 9; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

³³ Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro Question in Chicago" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 21, 1903, p. 45; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

The reflections of Dunbar indicate that in the years preceding the First Great Migration to Chicago, the consolidation of whiteness was already linked to spatial and economic privileges *and* the dehumanization of blacks. Moreover, it becomes clear that the disciplinary aims of the *Plan of Chicago* and the *Wacker Manual* were not isolated from these processes. Instead, they worked to sanction acts of anti-black violence and segregationist behavior as rational practices of civic loyalty in Chicago.

There is no doubt that the recruitment of black labor as strike-breakers produced serious tensions with white workers in Chicago during this era. To explain racial tensions as stemming exclusively from the introduction of black labor, however, implicitly blames the victim. It also ignores interracial organizing efforts and the ways citizen-subjects understood space as central to their racial identity. The emergence of several racist improvement and conservation associations in Chicago's white neighborhoods indicate that anti-black resentment and violence was not only carried out by racist factory workers. Neighborhood associations comprised of lawyers, doctors, real estate agents and other professionals were central to racializing city-space. One leader of the Hyde Park Improvement Protective Club, for example, publicly noted in 1908 that "The districts which are now white must remain white. There will be no compromise."³⁴ White athletic clubs and youth gangs also emerged during this period and were actively involved in the racial surveillance of neighborhood racial borders.³⁵ Attention to economic conflict between black and white factory workers also silences the spatial actions of city officials and progressive reformers who aimed to rid the city of other so called "undesirables." In 1912, for instance, prostitution was criminalized in Chicago and the red light district was displaced. Tellingly, the "vice district" was relocated to the Black Belt indicating that crime and deviant behavior needed to be quarantined along with blacks.

³⁴ Quoted in Spear, *Black Chicago*, 22.

³⁵ See, Andrew Diamond, *Mean Streets: Chicago Youths and the Everyday Struggle for Empowerment in the Multiracial City, 1908-1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

Despite the efforts of certain unions and the persistence of exploitative working conditions, the nature of anti-black racism severely undermined labor organizing efforts during the WWI era. As black workers migrated to Chicago in greater numbers during WWI, they were confronted with a racial division of labor, hostile unions, overcrowded neighborhoods, and angry mobs committed to maintaining segregation. Undoubtedly, many blacks resisted white supremacy in a variety of ways including militancy, and not all white citizen-subjects participated in exclusionary practices.³⁶ Spaces of inter-racial interaction such as the “black and tan” establishments also emerged during this period. In the final analysis, however, blacks that migrated to Chicago during and after WWI encountered a Manichean society that was effectively compartmentalized and governed according to whiteness and blackness.³⁷ Whereas prior to the World’s Fair, the working-class black community in Chicago was one of many racialized poor populations in the city, during and after WWI black and white working-class experiences of labor, city space, and governance were diametrically opposite. Of these different experiences, it was the practices of the state and the police during acts of anti-black racial violence that revealed a dual system of governmentality had evolved in Chicago.

On July 3, 1917 forty-two year old Thomas Nuby and his brother-in law who recently arrived from Alabama were attacked by six white youths on 31st street and Calumet Avenue. Occurring just one day after the outbreak of the East St. Louis race riot, a mob of whites formed and threatened the two brothers, “Where are you going? Better not go to East St. Louis; they would lynch you down there.”³⁸ Seeking refuge in a store, the mob outside called for a lynching. Unbelievably, Nuby was arrested by police for allegedly pulling a knife during the confrontation.

³⁶ Tuttle, *Race Riot*, 108-156.

³⁷ Describing Franz Fanon’s understanding of a Manichean society, theorist Homi K. Bhabha explains, “Global duality should be put in the historical context of Fanon’s founding insight into the “geographical configuration” of colonial governance, his celebrated description of the Manichean or compartmentalized structure of colonial society. The generic duality that spans the world of colonized societies is “a world divided into two... inhabited by different species,” (xiii). In, Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004).

³⁸ “Negro Beset By Six Youths Draws Knife,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 4, 1917, p. 2; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

The recurrence of these incidents and the reactions of law enforcement solidified that blacks were outside the boundaries of citizenship and legal protections. Indeed, the actions of the state and the police towards racial violence and segregation confirmed that blacks experienced government as a bio-political threat and an expendable population that should be quarantined or eliminated. The case was opposite for those citizen-subjects that committed racial violence and other migrants racialized as white in Chicago. Their experiences of governmentality were on full display during a patriotic unity rally held in downtown Chicago just three months after Nuby and his brother were accosted.

During the same week that the October Revolution was unfolding in Russia, an estimated 150,000 people gathered in Grant Park to observe military demonstrations and listen to speeches by civic, union, and religious leaders. The day's events were led by Governor Frank Lowden and made front page news of the *Chicago Tribune* in an article insightfully entitled, "City's Legions All for War: Every Race, Every Walk of Life Joins Hands to Aid U.S." According to the article,

All of Chicago seemed to have journeyed to Grant park to show Chicago's patriotic spirit. Gov. Lowden and former Govs. Charles S. Deenen and Edward F. Dunne, as well as hundreds of the city's prominent men and women mingled with the park crowds. All were citizens – patriotic citizens – paying homage to the war spirit upon which the country depends to conquer³⁹

Witnessing the crowds, former governor Deneen described the event as "the greatest demonstration of patriotism that the city has ever seen."⁴⁰ Tellingly, the article highlighted Chicago's "great melting pot" and the patriotism displayed by recent migrants from Europe, particularly the loyalty demonstrated by Germans in Chicago. After a boy named Mitchell Schoenwetter, who lived just blocks from where Thomas Nuby was attacked, won a race and received an American flag as a prize, one onlooker was moved to remark, "Rather fine that a boy whose name indicates that his family came from Germany should be the young patriot to get that first flag. It's a real thing with him too. Watch how carefully

³⁹ "City's Legions All for War," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 22, 1917, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

he's wrapping it up.”⁴¹ As this commentary indicates, German migrants in Chicago were under intense surveillance to demonstrate their loyalty to the nation during WWI. Yet, it also shows that unlike black migrants who were violently excluded from the city's melting pot, white migrants from Germany remained eligible for “benevolent assimilation” given they openly displayed their loyalty to the values of the United States.

The ways whiteness in Chicago hinged upon performing loyalty was clarified by Governor Frank Lowden. As thousands waived American flags, the governor and son in-law of George Pullman, delivered a speech that was quite different than other speakers that day. Whereas labor leaders pledged their work and support to the troops, and the clergy evoked WWI as a war to save Christian civilization, Lowden explained that WWI was a conflict of ideologies of government. “It is a war,” he explained “of two big ideas – ideas so big that the world is not big enough to hold them both.”⁴² Staring into the sea of citizen-subjects, Lowden continued,

One idea is that man is capable and has the right to govern himself. The other idea is that man is unfitted to govern himself, that government must be imposed from above, and that when that government is so established it is above all moral law, it is above all human rights, and with it the sword is the last argument and the last appeal.

The governor then made the case for war and national unity and asked the audience, “What are we going to say of our own past if we permit this idea to win? What shall we of Illinois say – how shall we boast of our wonderful farms, of our busy factories, of our Imperial City by the Lake.” Pointing to the historical development of Chicago as an example of American exceptionalism, Lowden urged that U.S. intervention in the war against “kaiserism” reflected the nation's virulent commitment to protecting certain core values, namely the freedom to pursue prosperity. In other words, warfare and violence were just practices if they defended the civilization, its political economy, and free form of government. Lowden's speech and the reality of anti-black violence clearly highlight the contradictions of race and

⁴¹ The boy was reported to live at 3904 State Street.

⁴² Ibid. The article also pointed out the absence of Chicago Mayor Big Bill Thompson, Lowden's chief political opponent and also a Republican.

government that existed in Chicago during WWI. The contradictions of racialized government in the city were certainly not lost to those who witnessed the persistence of racial violence, particularly Ida B. Wells.

In a letter to the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* on July 7, 1919, Wells lambasted city and state officials for failing to address violence against blacks in Chicago.⁴³ In her letter, “The Race Problem in Chicago” she wrote,

With one Negro dead as the result of a race riot last week, another one very badly injured in the county hospital; with a half dozen attacks upon Negro children, and one on the Thirty fifth street car Tuesday, in which four white men beat on colored man, it looks very much like Chicago is trying to rival the south in its race hatred against the Negro. Especially does this seem so when we consider the bombing of Negro homes, and the indifference of the public to these outrages.⁴⁴

Predicting that a race riot would occur in Chicago if officials did not bring perpetrators of racial violence to justice, Wells directed her anger towards Frank Lowden. Critiquing his negligence during the East St. Louis riot two years earlier, she explained,

There had been a half dozen outbreaks against the colored people by whites. Two different committees waited upon Gov. Lowden and asked him to investigate the outrages against Negroes before the riot took place. Nobody paid attention. Will the legal, moral, and civic force of this town stand idly by and take no notice of these preliminary outbreaks?⁴⁵

Unfortunately, the racial bonds of hegemony and the construction blacks as bio-political enemies of the city guaranteed that there would be no preventative measures taken or racial justice.

Ida B. Wells must have denounced Lowden upon hearing the news of Eugene Williams death just days later on July 27, 1919. Swimming at the 25th street beach the teenage youth crossed an imaginary racial border in the lake that was declared off limits to blacks. Immediately, Williams and his friends were pelted with stones by whites policing the racial borders of the beach. Hit in the head by a

⁴³ The East St. Louis Riot erupted on July 2, 1917 and resulted in the deaths of forty blacks and nine whites. Incidentally, Wells was not the first to warn of an outbreak in Chicago. As far back as 1900, Rev. Reverdy Ransom warned of impending racial violence. See, “To Avert Race Riots” *Chicago Daily Tribune*; August 19, 1900, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁴⁴ Ida B. Wells, “The Race Problem in Chicago,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 7, 1919, p. 8; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

rock possibly thrown by George Stauber of 2904 Cottage Grove, Williams drowned in front of dozens of horrified onlookers.⁴⁶ The first in a series of violent conflicts erupted as those who witnessed the killing of Williams demanded that police make an immediate arrest. According to one newspaper report,

Colored men who were present attempted to rescue, but they were kept back by the whites, it is said. Colored men and women, it is alleged, asked policemen Dan Callahan of the Cottage Grove station to arrest Stauber, but he is said to have refused. Then indignant at the conduct of the policeman, the Negroes set upon Stauber and started to pommel him... Then they turned on Policeman Calahan and drove him down Twenty-Ninth Street.⁴⁷

As this account reveals, demands for justice made by members of a community that were expelled from the racial domains of universality went unheeded.⁴⁸ No arrests were made, and as news of the murder, police indifference, and black militancy spread through the Black Belt and white neighborhoods of Chicago, the elements of a race riot were ignited.

For several days racial violence raged on the streets of Chicago.⁴⁹ Mobs of whites armed with bricks and pistols organized expeditions into the Black Belt in search of anyone bearing the minimal element of perception -- dark skin. Notably, athletic clubs and youths seeking to demonstrate their manhood and civic spirit were at the frontlines of racial violence.⁵⁰ Haunting pictures captured during the riots show black youths running for their lives only to be captured and beaten savagely with bricks. Not even Oscar De Priest, the first black politician elected to Congress since 1901, was spared from trauma. He was nearly shot when a police officer fired into a crowd at 35th and State Street.⁵¹ Many

⁴⁶ "Report Two Killed, Fifty Hurt, in Race Riots," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 28, 1919, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ On racial violence and the racialization of universal justice, see Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Towards a Critique of the Socio-logos of Justice: The Analytics of Raciality and the Production of Universality," *Social Identities* 7, no. 3 (2001): 421-454.

⁴⁹ All in all, 537 people were injured and thirty eight were killed during the riots. Though, 342 blacks were injured and twenty three were killed, blacks were arrested by police at twice the rate of whites. For an examination of the riots see, William Tuttle, *Race Riot*. An important recent analysis of the riots is provided by Arredondo in *Mexican Chicago*. From her research, Arredondo shows that two Mexicans named José Blanco and Elizondo González were mistaken for black and became victims of white mob violence during the riots. Though Gonzalez was murdered, his death was not included in the official records of the riots which represented the riots as a black/white conflict. See Arredondo, *Mexican Chicago*, 37-38.

⁵⁰ Diamond, *Mean Streets*, 29. Richard J. Daley was an active member of the Hamburgs.

⁵¹ "Colored Editor, An Eyewitness, Tells of Battle," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

unsuspecting riders were pulled off of streetcars and savagely beaten in the streets. According to one report on the day the race riot began,

...whites stood at all prominent corners ready to avenge the beatings their bredren had received. Along Halsted and State streets they were armed with clubs, and every Negro who appeared was pummeled. Lewis Phillips, colored, was riding in a Thirty-ninth street car, when a white man took a pot shot from the corner as the car neared Halsted street. Phillips was wounded in the groin and was taken to Provident Hospital.⁵²

The fact that Phillip's groin was targeted speaks to the anxieties about masculinity that shaped much of the racial violence during the riots. Indeed, anti-black violence by white mobs and particularly the police was continually justified in the white press as containing the savagery of black males for the purpose of protecting white women. One article, for example, explained that "The stockyards police fought two desperate battles during the evening with colored men alleged to have killed two white women and a white child."⁵³ Another article reported that the Chicago Telephone Company "would allow none of the girls living on the south side to go home," and be made vulnerable to black male violence.⁵⁴

It is important to understand that masculinist, anti-black racial violence committed by citizen-subjects and the police during the 1919 race riot were not irrational or residual acts of racism. Considering the conscious efforts to discipline citizen-subjects as agents of modernity that stretched back to the 1893 Columbian Exposition, they were entirely rational and modern acts of citizenship and white supremacy. In this light, the 1919 race riots in Chicago and other episodes of anti-black racial violence actually fulfilled the hegemonic and imperial disciplinary project that was initiated after the labor uprisings of the 1880s.⁵⁵ They confirmed that Chicago was indeed an imperial metropolis.

⁵² "Report Two Killed, Fifty Hurt, in Race Riots," *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

⁵³ "Strike is on: Cars Stop! 20 Slain in Race Riots," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers (1849-1987).

⁵⁴ "Telephone Girls Held in Loop to Avoid Riot Peril," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers (1849-1987).

⁵⁵ This interpretation of anti-black violence concurs with the work of theorist Arjun Appadurai in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). In a brilliant affront to primordialist explanations of racial violence, he writes,

...much of national and group politics in the contemporary world has to do not with the mechanics of primordial sentiment ... the creation of primordial sentiments, far from being an obstacle to the modernizing state, is close to the center of the project of the modern nation-state.

... many racial, religious, and cultural fundamentalisms are deliberately fostered by various nation-states, or parties within them, in their efforts to suppress internal dissent, to construct homogenous subjects of the state, and to maximize the surveillance and control of the diverse populations under their control. In these contexts, modern nation-states often draw on classificatory and disciplinary apparatuses that they inherited from colonial rulers and that in the post-colonial context have substantial inflammatory effects (146).

Chapter 3: State Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Post-Racial Politics in Chicago

God made us men. God made us like all other men – in his own image – whether white black or yellow or brown or red. God limited us only by the limitations which we place on ourselves

Congressman William Dawson

The implosion of the 1919 race riots confirmed that the conduct of many working-class white citizen-subjects was effectively disciplined in Chicago. The “success” of the imperial/disciplinary state becomes clear if one observes that much of the anti-black racial violence was organized by space and conceptualized as protecting white areas of the city. According to Janet Abu-Lughod the “maximum injuries, fights, and fatalities” occurred in border zones that demarcated the black belt from Irish neighborhoods to the west. She notes,

During the six days between July 27 and August 2, white gangs made raids on the black belt, and battles erupted outside it, wherever blacks had to travel to reach their jobs. In these occurrences, spatial patterns proved highly significant...¹

...In graphic language Wentworth Avenue was referred to at the time as the “Dead Line”... The large, predominantly Irish district to the southwest was “protected” by Ragen’s Colts, young “party hacks” who were financially supported by Frank Ragen, a popular Democratic Cook County commissioner. During the riot, Ragen’s Colts actively attacked blacks across the “Dead-Line” and harassed and beat blacks venturing into Irish turf.²

The spatial nature of anti-black violence indicates that citizen-subjects maintained a structure of feeling that violence waged on behalf of protecting white areas of the city was an acceptable practice that would go unpunished. Tellingly, this popular consciousness extended to the downtown area, the center of business activity, where two blacks were killed and many were victims of beatings and intimidation.³

Yet, the 1919 race riot also marked a transformative moment in the history of racialized governmentality in Chicago as sustained black militancy undermined power relations in the city. During the duration of the riots, remarkable examples of black militancy were reported in the white press, and

¹ Janet I. Abu-Lughod, *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 58.

² Ibid., 61.

³ Abu-Lughod suggests that the development of a Fordist economy marked the development of a dual city in Chicago with downtown operating hegemonically as the façade of the city.

can be detected despite the racist intonations and celebration of police activities by the writers. One article, for example, reported that,

Many of the casualties were policemen. Some of them were shot, some stoned, some beaten. The police fought with revolvers, and with rifles and bayonets; and clashes between them and Negroes were frequent. Some of the rioters were also armed with rifles and bayonets. Some of them looted State street shops and robbed white pedestrians... The city hall was surrounded by sixty detectives armed with rifles, the chief saying this was only for precautionary reasons. He declared it was possible Negroes might attempt to march on city hall.⁴

Another article reported,

Miss Mame McDonald and her sister, Frances had been bathing with a friend, Lieut. Runkle, a convalescing soldier. A colored woman walked up to the trio and made insulting remarks, it is said. Runkle attempted to interfere, but the colored woman voiced a series of oaths and promptly struck the soldier in the face. Negroes in the vicinity hurled stones and rocks at the women and both were slightly injured.⁵

Though it is highly unlikely that McDonald and her sister were stoned in the same manner as Eugene Williams, this article does expose the fragile power of white supremacy during the riots.⁶ Similarly, another article explained how one man narrowly escaped death by dressing as a woman and painting his face dark. According to the article,

Edward F. Hoffman, chauffeur for the Bissell Laundry company, who lives on 3626 South State street had been marked for punishment by his colored neighbors.

He got home early last night and crowds of Negroes gathered about the house. They shouted for him to come out. Herman's [sic] wife and his sister-in-law, Miss Genevieve Sheldon dressed him up in some of their clothing and helped him to black his face. Then they called for a taxi, and could get none.

They asked the police to send a patrol. When it came the women were timid. They had washed the black off their faces, and refused to go. They were persuaded to enter the patrol, however. The rioters offered no insults and made no efforts to molest them. Then Herman [sic] wormed his way, in his disguise, through the crowd that was yelling for him, and escaped.⁷

⁴ "Strike is On: Cars Stop! 20 Slain in Race Riots" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁵ "Report Two Killed, Fifty Hurt, in Race Riots" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 8; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁶ I read into the report of Negroes stoning the two sisters as a projection of what really occurred to Eugene Williams, and a way to conflate black and white racial violence.

⁷ "In Wife's Dress Foils Angry Mob" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

Undoubtedly, this incident was crafted and sensationalized in order to represent blacks as easily manipulated by whites. Yet, it also demonstrates anxieties about a complete breakdown of white masculinity and patriarchal nativism during the race riots.

This disruption in the order of things, including labor strikes that shut down the economy, produced a significant transformation in racialized governmentality in Chicago. Whereas the imperial/disciplinary state previously focused on disciplining citizen-subjects, the power of black labor and militancy during the riots forced a conscious reconsideration of the ways to address the conduct of those racialized as black. As one editorial summarized,

It is becoming more and more evident that the white and colored people are not living in harmony in Chicago and that the tendency toward conciliation is not sufficient to bridge the chasm... The colored people do not seem to be disposed to recede from what they consider a just position in the community and the whites seem determined not to give way, as they conceive it, before a penetration of colored people into neighborhoods which heretofore have been restricted to white population... If the races are always at swords' points and individuals of each continually being sacrificed to the violent feeling which exists and which it is no use to deny, *does it not follow that somewhere there must be a rule of conduct?*⁸ (emphasis added)

If we remember that the colonial/bio-political state in Chicago did not bother with the conduct of American Indians and worked to remove them altogether, one must ask why blacks were not similarly removed, and why the imperial/disciplinary state made any effort to engage black conduct in Chicago after the 1919 riots. Granted that there were calls for “recolonization,” the reason the state did not work to remove them altogether was that black labor had become an essential component of the division of labor and local electoral politics. For these reasons, a sustained production of knowledge about black people was introduced to discipline black conduct in Chicago.

Class and status contradictions certainly existed within the black community of Chicago for decades.⁹ However, during the 1919 race riots new knowledge about the deviancy of “Negros” and the decency of “Colored” folks was incited. Newspaper articles, for example, sensationalized and

⁸ “Race Riots,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 8; Available online from: ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

⁹ See, Reed, *All the World is Here*, and Christopher Robert Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership, 1910-1966* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

magnified acts of violence against whites, but they also made sure to highlight the loyalty of “Colored” soldiers and police. Under the sub-heading “Colored Veterans Aid Police,” one article explained that “Colored soldiers who had seen service in France sided with the police in quelling the disturbance. The rioting Negroes were driven back.”¹⁰ The difference between “Colored” and “Negro” was also highlighted in another article that quoted second lieutenant John E. Hawkins. Described as “colored” and “a man who knew practically every permanent resident of his race on the south side,” Hawkins was quoted as attributing the riots to,

Hoodlums, newcomers – drifters, who have come to Chicago with the influx from the south that began when the United States entered the war.

No permanent resident of the black belt is involved in these riots. You will note the disturbers are practically all youths – none of them over 19 years of age. It is street corner gang stuff, I believe. The condition would be the same if the district were populated with other races.¹¹

Hawkins verification that new migrants, criminals, and youth were responsible for social instability implied that “Colored” people of the Black belt were permanent residents accustomed to urban life, and decent, law abiding people. His notion that social instability was due to the migration and deviant culture of southern outsiders hinted at the circulation of new discourses deployed to discipline the working-class black population of Chicago. This knowledge that attributed conditions of urban instability and conflict to the cultural deficiencies of outsiders derived primarily from the sociology of race relations.

It is not coincidental that after the 1919 race riots Chicago became the center of sociological investigation and that sociological knowledge of non-whites was incorporated into the domain of disciplinary governance. Just as the production of anthropological knowledge about the racial fitness of citizen-subjects was linked to the development of imperialism abroad and domestic labor control,

¹⁰ “Strike is On: Cars Stop! 20 Slain in Race Riots,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1919, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers (1849-1987).

¹¹ “Race Riot Zone Seen From Taxi, Ominous, Quiet,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 29, 1919, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1987).

sociological discourses of race relations were linked to the transition to Fordism and the need to manage labor resistance.¹² In a succinct summary of this dynamic, C.L.R. James et al. explain,

After World War I the Taylor system, experimental before the war, becomes a social system, the factory laid out for continuous flow of production, and advanced planning for production, operating and control. At the same time there is the organization of professional societies, management courses in college curricula and responsible management consultants. Between 1924 and 1928 there is the rationalization of production and retooling (Ford). Along with it are the tendencies to the scientific organization of production, to closer coordination between employers fusion with each other against the working class, the intervention of the state as mediator and arbiter.¹³

Indeed the functionalist sociological knowledge produced primarily out of the University of Chicago was attuned to the changes in the non-white labor market in the city including the exponential growth of the black population in Chicago and the migration of Mexicans to the city after WWI. It was also directly connected to the re-intervention of the state in Chicago as an arbiter of racial stability.

On October 8, 1919, the Chicago Committee on Race Relations was convened by Governor Frank Lowden as a group of experts that would analyze the cause of the riots. It cannot be overstated that the same governor that failed to act during the East St. Louis riots in July of 1917 and that neglected to protect black life in Chicago for years leading up to the riots of July 1919, formed an institution charged with the tasks of analyzing and harmonizing race relations. Eventually appointed to lead the work of the commission was Charles S. Johnson, a graduate student and protégé of Robert E. Park, the renowned University of Chicago sociologist and president of the Chicago Urban League. According to historian Ralph L. Pearson, Park's scholarly influence on Johnson is essential to understanding the research undertaken by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations (CCRR) and the conclusions reached in its monumental 1922 study *The Negro in Chicago*. Pearson writes,

Data from Park's analysis questioned the validity of the usual arguments against school integration, equal employment, opportunities, and open housing. His research also challenged the tradition of innate black inferiority. Park theorized that racial alienation was the product of

¹² On Fordism also see David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Maden: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990).

¹³ C.L.R. James et al., *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (Chicago: Charles Kerr Publishing Company, 1986), 40.

social and psychological insecurity that compelled whites to keep blacks in inferior positions. Continued racial alienation, Park contended, would lead to a strong sense of race consciousness among blacks. The ideological and methodological impact of Park upon Johnson was deep and indelible.¹⁴

Building upon Park's theories and research methods, Johnson organized a series of conferences, meetings, and interviews over a period of eleven months to gather data about race in Chicago. There is no doubt that it was an unprecedented effort in Chicago history. The result of this research process was an eight hundred page sociological study that became a model for other cities studying the roots of racial conflicts.

As a compilation of ethnographic data, meticulous analysis of the 1919 race riots, and identification of racial conflict as a social problem, *The Negro in Chicago* stands as an important reference in the history of anti-racism in the city. For my purposes, however, the formation of the CCRR and the publication of *The Negro in Chicago* also marked a new period in which state sanctioned knowledge on race relations operated to circulate new discourses of race and forged a new hegemony. Though the study denounced racial exclusion and undermined biological notions of black inferiority, it identified feelings of racial attachment as the most significant force of social instability. In other words, the inequalities engendered by capitalism were rendered invisible by a study that represented "whites" who excluded and "blacks" that maintained a sense of racial belonging as the new deviants of society. If one recalls that during the 1893 Colombian Exposition the body was identified as the minimal element of perception that demarcated citizen-subjects, *The Negro in Chicago* proposed that exhibiting racial loyalty above abstract citizenship was the signifier of abnormality.¹⁵ More importantly, though racial

¹⁴ Ralph L. Pearson, "Charles Johnson and the Chicago Commission on Race Relations" *Illinois Historical Journal* 81 (Autumn, 1988) 214-215. On Robert E. Park also see Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1986), Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), and Ferreira da Silva, "Towards A Critique of the Sociologos of Justice".

¹⁵ This is not to say that the body or skin color no longer mattered.

consciousness was attributed to exclusionary practices, feelings of racial belonging were ultimately conceptualized as the failure to adapt to capitalist modernity.¹⁶

The construction of racial exclusion and racial conflict as irrational behavior in *The Negro in Chicago* served other purposes. First, it consolidated a black/white racial binary in Chicago that constructed whites as the most capable of relinquishing irrational racial bias.¹⁷ As a result, those that moved to the city in the aftermath of the 1919 riots confronted a black/white racial hierarchy that positioned groups according to their potential to integrate and maintain equilibrium. For example, one group slotted under this system was Mexicans who began to move to Chicago in large numbers as a result of the Mexican Revolution (1911-1920) and labor recruitment efforts. Historian Gabriela Arredondo shows in *Mexican Chicago* that it became obvious to many Mexican migrants that how one was racially categorized was critical to residential and job opportunities. She concluded that,

Over the course of the 1920's and 1930's, Mexicans increasingly discovered that they were not whitening on the model of their European neighbors. Efforts to mark their whiteness, elbowing their ethnic neighbors for position, only served to distinguish them from Blacks... Mexicans experienced separation and segregation that proved the inadequacy of melting-pot practices and that ultimately marked them as non-white racial others.¹⁸

As Arredondo suggests, Mexicans were ultimately considered non-white and inassimilable by a racial system that demarcated blackness as a corporeal and cultural quality that absolutely prevented one from evolving into a citizen-subject.¹⁹ Second, at a time when immigration quotas slowed the flow of southern and eastern European migrants, and non-whites began to move to Chicago in larger numbers,

¹⁶ Ferreira da Silva, "Towards a Critique of the Socio-logos of Justice," 432-433.

¹⁷ Indeed, the study explained that of the 537 casualties during the riots 195 were "White", 342 were "Black," and two were "Others."

¹⁸ Gabriela F. Arredondo, *Mexican Chicago: Race, identity and Nation, 1916-39* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 9.

¹⁹ This also explains why resistance to this binary developed in the culture form of the New Negro and the development of businesses and cultural industries that created a black modernity in Chicago and a sense of black national identity. See, Davarian Baldwin *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2007), and Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006).

The Negro in Chicago reinforced the notion that new migrants presented the principle risk to instability.

For example, in the foreword to the study, Governor Frank Lowden wrote,

The report does not pretend to have discovered any new formula by which race trouble will disappear. The subject is too complex for any such simple solution. It finds certain facts, however, the mere recognition of which will go a long way towards allaying race feeling. It finds that in that portion of Chicago in which colored persons have lived the longest and in the largest numbers relatively there has been the minimum of friction. This is a fact of the first importance. For it tends to show that the presence of Negroes in large numbers in our great cities is not a menace in itself.²⁰

Thus, the sociological knowledge of race relations in Chicago externalized instability and emphasized that segregation and racial conflict did not reflect the spirit of Chicago.

The main political impact of *The Negro in Chicago*, however, was that the state was legitimized as a modern, non-racial entity with the interest and power to develop institutions that would rationally work to alleviate racial inequality, and disequilibrium. Again, the foreword to the study written by Frank Lowden is indicative. Congratulating the commission on its work Lowden wrote, “The Commission on Race Relations was appointed and conditions began to improve. The activities of this Commission, composed of the best representatives of both race, were, as I believe, the principal cause for this improved condition.”²¹ Lowden’s reflections demonstrate that race and racial conflict were conceptualized as social phenomena that were disconnected from the state and could be rectified by the active work of state sanctioned institutions headed by black and white men of expertise. In other words, the production of sociological knowledge of race relations effectively exculpated government from the domain of the racial. Moreover, during a time when the resistive New Negro culture emerged and black-owned institutions fostered a black national identity in the city, *The Negro in Chicago* announced the end of state indifference in matters of race relations.²² Indeed, it was the active and conscious

²⁰ *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922), xii.

²¹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

²² Baldwin, *Chicago’s New Negroes*, Green, *Selling the Race*.

interest of the state to produce racial harmony that would make Chicago a qualitatively different racial formation during the period that historian Nikhil Pal Singh describes as the “long civil rights era.”²³

When Governor Frank Lowden publicly announced the creation of the Chicago Commission on Race Relations he ushered in a new era of state intervention in matters of race. Linking the outbreak of racial conflict to government he explained,

These riots were the work of the worst element of both races. They did not represent the great overwhelming majority of either race. The two are here and will remain here. The great majority of each realizes the necessity of living upon terms of cordial good will and respect, each for the other. That condition must be brought about. To say that we cannot solve this problem is to confess the failure of self-government... When we admit the existence of a problem and courageously face it, we have gone half-way towards its solution.²⁴

This statement indicated that controlling racial conduct -- whether exclusionary practices or actions based upon racial alienation -- was an interest of modern government in Chicago. Consequently, the state initially invested in the production of knowledge about race relations that would mitigate “racial misunderstandings” that erupted into conflicts. Tellingly, state sanctioned knowledge of race relations initially focused on knowing the internal dynamics of black community and family life so as to represent most residents as having a collective will to integrate. This worked to demarcate deviant blacks as those who participated in militant resistance and practiced racial consciousness. Nevertheless, efforts to discipline the racial conduct of Chicago’s black population were short-lived, however, as the Great Depression ushered unprecedented “inter-racial” working-class resistance that required another advancement in racialized governmentality.

In *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, historian Lizabeth Cohen demonstrates that during the Great Depression a powerful labor movement and spirit of working-class unity re-emerged in Chicago. According to Cohen, lessons learned over two decades of labor organizing combined with the binding force of mass communication culture and the promises of the

²³ Nikhil P. Singh, *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

²⁴ *The Negro in Chicago*, xvi.

New Deal brought white and non-white workers to jointly support CIO union campaigns. Cohen explains,

Racial unity became a watchword of the CIO's campaign in the 1930s, and to an astonishing degree in those early years – given both the long history of prejudice in industrial communities and many of the racial conflicts that would erupt -- it became a reality in many locals...The CIO hardly created a racially integrated society, but it went further in promoting racial harmony than any other institution in existence at the time. CIO unions also made sure that employers would never again take advantage of another potential division with the industrial work-force – nationality.²⁵

Just as black labor strikes during the 1919 race riots caused a shift in the disciplinary strategy of governance, working-class unity in the packing houses and steel mills of Chicago imperiled the accumulation of industrial capital. The reaction to this competing vision of racial harmony at the point of production was a qualitative change towards a form of neo-liberal governmentality that thrived upon racial conflict.

Challenging the perception that neoliberalism is just a re-introduction of laissez-faire economic policies and attitudes towards government, philosopher Michel Foucault explains that neoliberalism is distinguished by its transfiguration of labor to human capital and the extension of a market analysis to all social phenomena.²⁶ Examining the discourses of leading U.S. economists during the Great Depression, Foucault noted that laborers were re-conceptualized as individual units of enterprise whose acquisition of income or consumption power disclosed ones human capital and thus desirability to

²⁵ Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 337. On race and the efforts of the CIO to organize black workers also see Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina, 1990).

²⁶ In *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) Foucault writes,

The fundamental question of liberalism is: What is the utility value of government and all actions of government in a society where exchange determines the true value of things...In neoliberalism—and it does not hide this; it proclaims it – there is also a theory of *homo economicus*, but he is not at all a partner of exchange. *Homo economicus* is an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of himself. This is true to the extent that, in practice, the stake in all neo-liberal analysis is the replacement every time of *homo economicus* as partner of exchange with a *homo economicus* as entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his earnings. So, even if there is a return to the idea of *homo economicus* as the analytical grid of intelligibility, there is a complete change in the conception of this *homo economicus* (46, 227).

society.²⁷ To govern a social formation comprised of units of human capital efficiently, however, required the implementation of laws and institutions that established an environment of equal opportunity and individual competition. In other words, the role of government in the period of state capitalism was not to impede capital in favor of labor as some historians of the New Deal suggest.²⁸ Instead, the state passed laws, initiated job and housing programs, and circulated ideas of upward mobility in order to attach labor to a neo-liberal vision of citizenship in which all individuals (regardless of race, creed, religion etc.) have the opportunity to compete for the improvement of their human capital in a strictly monitored economic and political environment. In this light, the implementation of New Deal social welfare programs, and eventually federal civil rights laws that proclaimed equal access to economic and political markets also produced the necessary conditions to distinguish those with low human capital as abnormal. More importantly, these measures and an insistence upon law and order legitimized the state as an arbiter of equality and upward mobility, and operated to construct affluence and poverty as the result of innate elements instead of one's location in the mode of production.²⁹

Of course, New Deal programs and social welfare policies did not end bio-political practices, or signal that the state was detached from the domain of the racial, as Chicago sociologists once inferred. Numerous scholars have clearly demonstrated that New Deal housing and labor programs, post-WWII G.I. Bill allocations, federal subsidies for suburbanization, and transportation projects, invested in the human capital of white workers at the expense of workers of color. The mass deportations of ethnic Mexicans, the seizures of land owned by Japanese-Americans who were placed in internment camps, the racist hiring practices of the military industrial complex, and American Indian termination programs were other state sanctioned policies of exclusion that explicitly worked to benefit the life opportunities of the white "middle class." Instead, such experiences indicate that the transition to a neoliberal state

²⁷ In the neo-liberal scenario income is considered the remuneration of a successful investment in human capital.

²⁸ The end of the New Deal has continued to be a central debate among US historians. Steve Fraser, and Gary Gerstle, eds. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

²⁹ According to Foucault the same logic operates at the global level to explain the failures of Third world economic development.

after the Great Depression did not mark the end of the dual experiences of governmentality that characterized the imperialist/disciplinary state. Rather, it should be considered that a neo-liberal state that thrived upon the incitement of racial conflict and spaces of poverty and despair was superimposed and produced the urban poor as new subjects of racial inferiority.³⁰ Once again, Chicago was at the forefront of implementing this new strategy of racialized governmentality.

On the afternoon of May 13, 1943 Elmo Vasser walked along the railroad tracks in his Morgan Park neighborhood on the far south side of Chicago. Heading towards Shoop elementary school, Vasser was confronted by two police officers in a squad car who called him over to be questioned. According to the only eye witness, Louis McCaney, the teen approached the squad car when one of the cops shouted at Vasser, who then backed away and turned to run. “One of the officers jumped out and shouted again, then fired into the air” McCaney recalled, “With this Elmo picked up a stone and threw at him, then turned to run. He had just gotten across the street when one of the bullets hit him and he fell.”³¹ Shot three times with a .38 caliber revolver, sixteen year old Elmo Vasser died at the hands of police officer Patrick Rynne.

As news of the police shooting of Vasser “spread like wild fire” through Morgan Park angry community members mobilized themselves to seek justice.³² Looking for an explanation and guidance from community leaders, 800 people gathered at AME Arnett Chapel. Addressing the congregation Reverend Archibald Carey of AME Woodlawn church denounced the police murder but cautioned the community against retaliatory violence. Carey explained, “while all of us are enraged over the malicious act, we must guard against any resort to violence... now is the time to prove that we do not intend to tolerate further brutal treatment of law-abiding Negro citizens by irresponsible police

³⁰ Here I am thinking of Denise Ferreira da Silva’s reference to the “zonas de violencia” in Brazil and the United States.

³¹ Sam Lacy, “Big Rally Demands Trial of Cop Killer of Youth” *The Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

³² Ole Nosey, “Everybody Goes When the Wagon Comes” *The Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943, p. 12; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

officers.”³³ Reverend Carey was followed by Attorney William H. Temple of the NAACP who proclaimed, “This child’s death has provoked a determination to do away with these ills at once and for all time.”³⁴ Those gathered contributed 3,000 dollars towards the prosecution of Patrick Rynne. Yet, not everyone in the community was convinced that the legal case would produce justice. According to a *Chicago Defender* report, “an angry crowd of Negro citizens garnered about the undertaking parlor with lynch threats for the policemen.”³⁵ Their suspicions of impunity were proven correct when a few weeks later Patrick Rynne was found innocent of any wrong doing by an investigative committee.³⁶

The murder of Vasser and acquittal of Rynne confirmed to many that white supremacy in Chicago was intensifying during World War II. In a letter soliciting a donation from businessman and newspaper mogul Claude A. Barnett on June 29, 1943, for example, Horace Cayton, the sociologist and co-author of the recently published *Black Metropolis*, expressed that the future of race relations in Chicago looked bleak. Explaining that the Parkway Community House he directed worked to “stem the rising tide of racial misunderstandings” during the war, Cayton wrote,

Racial violence is with us. It is not something to be thought of as beginning after the war, when the boys return from service. The stresses and strains incident to the prosecution of the war have broken down the established machinery for maintaining interracial amenity. There are the zoot suit riots in Los Angeles, the Newark riots, and now the Detroit riots. There is hardly a question that this wave of misunderstanding and anti-Negro feeling will sweep the country.³⁷

Acknowledging that the work of the Parkway Community House was a “feeble” and desperate plan to maintain racial peace in the city, Cayton anticipated that Chicago would soon witness an outbreak of violence.

Cayton was not alone in responding to the prospect of widespread racial violence. In *Making the Second Ghetto*, historian Arnold Hirsch explains that in the aftermath of Vasser’s murder and the

³³ Lacy, “Big Rally Demands Trial of Cop Killer of Youth” *The Chicago Defender*, 3.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ole Nosey, “Everybody Goes When the Wagon Comes” *The Chicago Defender*, 12.

³⁶ Hirsch points out that the police officers involved in the incident were later brought under investigation when news of the Detroit riot arrived in Chicago.

³⁷ Horace R. Cayton to Claude A. Barnett, June 29, 1943, The Claude A. Barnett Papers, Vivian Harsh Research Center, Part 3, Series B: Colleges and Universities, 1918-1966 reel 16, Chicago IL.

explosive Detroit riot, the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations (MCRR) was rapidly organized and funded to prevent a race riot in Chicago. Noting that Chicago was at the vanguard of race riot prevention tactics, Hirsh explained,

The MCRR was funded by the mayor's contingency fund and operated out of the mayor's office until 1947 when it was made an official department of the city government... Chicago thus became the first city in the nation to "establish a human relations committee supported by public funds," For the first time there was an "official acceptance of public responsibility for the social health of the city."³⁸

It is notable that the MCRR was organized under the direct leadership of the mayor of Chicago considering that the original committee on race relations formed after the 1919 riots was sanctioned by republican Governor Frank Lowden. What is also striking about the MCRR was that while it conducted sociological examinations of racial conflict and disseminated information to the public about racial harmony, it no longer approached racial violence as caused by racial misunderstandings as did Cayton and the Parkway Community House. Instead, by deploying police to maintain the city's racial borders and also disallowing the reporting of actual incidents of racial violence in the city's papers, the MCRR treated racial conflict as a permanent feature of urban life and as an inevitable result of inter-racial interaction.³⁹ In fact, though the MCRR organized committees, contracted experts, mapped out the city to identify "racial hot-spots," and produced studies about race, its practices of fortifying segregation and maintaining a "hush policy" in the local media indicate that city government preferred that racial borders remained intact and that racial oppression continued but was concealed to the public.

The riot prevention tactics implemented in the city reveal that as the control of racial conduct came under the scope of the MCRR and the infamous Chicago political machine, the state was not invested in fostering integration or creating racial harmony.⁴⁰ To be certain, the powerful democratic machine that developed in Chicago during the New Deal and eventually gained its full power under

³⁸ Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago 1940-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 44.

³⁹ Hirsch calls this the "era of hidden violence" in Chicago

⁴⁰ The Chicago political machine is often traced back to New Deal mayor Anton Cermak.

Mayor Richard Daley did not aim to discipline racial conduct. Instead, the explosion of anti-black racial violence in the years following the creation of the MCRR unveils that the machine's political power thrived upon racial violence. Moreover, during a period when large numbers of black and white southerners, Puerto Ricans, and American Indians, among others, migrated to the city, the democratic machine and capitalist hegemony were fortified by acts of white supremacy and conditions of oppression that incited race consciousness among disparate laboring populations in Chicago.

The creation of the MCRR and the unleashing of racial conduct served multiple hegemonic interests and collectively produced the optimal neoliberal scenario. First, the MCRR's approach to race relations constructed white supremacy as irrational acts committed by whites that did not escape to the suburbs and remained in the city. This ultimately operated to obfuscate the ways downtown business interests determined city legislation that shaped the growth of the second ghetto on the west side and created conditions of urban despair and displacement in many areas. Second, educational reforms, the outlawing of racial covenants in 1948, and the creation of housing programs directed by the MCRR only served to legitimize the state as an arbiter of universal equality and justice, even though racist housing practices persisted. Finally, the states "anti-racist" initiatives through the MCRR made it convenient for machine politicians to attribute the proliferation of poverty and segregation in the areas they represented to innate deficiencies. Riots and race-based responses to white supremacy in oppressed communities served to entrench the sociological notion that people were poor because they remained bound to a backward culture of racial communalism instead of modern individual enterprise.

The logic and political effect of the states neo-liberal approach to race relations in Chicago was summarized by none other than William Dawson, the most powerful black politician in Chicago.⁴¹ In a speech delivered to the U.S. Congress on June 23, 1945 entitled "Race is not a Limitation,"

⁴¹ As a Congressman, William Dawson controlled the south side black vote for the political machine. Scholars and observers often refer to Dawson and the black alderman under his control as the "silent six" for their compliance with the machine.

Congressman Dawson explained that the post-WWII era marked a new beginning for black people. He noted,

From now on we are on our own. Friends we do have; and many. But from now on their numbers and what they will do will depend on the course of action we charter for ourselves. We, ourselves, must assume the responsibility for ourselves and abide by the results of our own achievements. The situation is here; the circumstances are set; the battle lines are drawn; our obstacles and enemies are known. The place we attain in the final analysis must necessarily depend upon how well we appraised the situation, how intelligently we mastered the circumstances, and how skillfully we planned and executed our battle strategy... God made us men. God made us like all other men – in his own image – whether white black or yellow or brown or red. God limited us only by the limitations which we place on ourselves.⁴²

Though Dawson acknowledged white supremacy, his appeal to personal responsibility as the metaphysical salvation of black people linked upward mobility to rationality and individual enterprise.⁴³

The notion that blacks should assume responsibility for their socio-economic position and could not expect government intervention on behalf of the group also operated to criminalize race consciousness in black communities. In fact, Dawson's speech which was originally a commencement address to black students at Wilberforce University in Ohio, identified the promotion of racial identity as the enemy of black people and their progress towards modernity.⁴⁴ He explained,

Negro youth in seeking to enlist are brought face to face with hatred and bigotry not practiced against any other citizen...Those who remain at home find themselves barred from places of employment, places of amusement, places to eat, places of worship, and vehicles of travel. Daily they face a hundred on and one indignities and insults directed against them alone.

Were it my desire, I could cite to you from my own personal knowledge incidents which would chill the blood within you, whip your temper into frenzy, and fan the fires of your wrath into a devastating flame on which reason and judgment would be quickly consumed and give place to bitter vengeance and unbridled retaliation... But were I to do this and leave you so – were I to do this in some selfish desire to pose as a fighter for my people – and present no plan of action to overcome the situation; were I to do this and leave you embittered and angry and without hope to master the circumstances, I would prove myself today a worse enemy to you than any person of any other race could ever be.⁴⁵

⁴² U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Representative William L. Dawson, "Race is not a Limitation" 79th Congress, 1st Session 23, June 1965. William Dawson Papers, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center Washington D.C.

⁴³ This also hints at the cultural link that tied the machine with many black churches in Chicago.

⁴⁴ The fact that Dawson's speech was originally delivered in Ohio should not be overlooked. It speaks to the dissemination of ideas of race that developed in Chicago to other parts of the country.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Conceptualizing those that emphasized race consciousness as igniting a “devastating flame” and race leaders as the worst enemy of black people, Dawson unveiled the Chicago machines’ racialized political logic. Though racial conduct was unleashed, any social movement, leader, and community uprising that declared a racial initiative and stepped outside the boundaries of neo-liberal citizenship were the antithesis of progress and modernity in Chicago. Indeed, Dawson’s notion that race-based politics was irrational and offered “no plan of action” was consistently used by city elites during the post-WWII period to consolidate what historians Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering describe as a “civic credo.”

If the neo-liberal political logic that buttressed the Chicago machine was explicitly voiced by William Dawson, its institutionalization was symbolized by the evolution of the Mayor’s Committee on Race Relations. In their meticulously researched study of the civil rights movement in Chicago, *Confronting the Color Line*, Pickering and Anderson note that in 1947 the MCRR was renamed the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR).⁴⁶ They reveal that by the time Richard J. Daley became mayor of Chicago in 1955 and assumed leadership of the Chicago democratic machine, the CCHR distinguished those who practiced racial politics (particularly blacks) as the principle enemies of stability. Tracing the trajectory of the CCHR they explained,

At the end of its first five years as a government agency, the commission issued a report that was exuberant in its claims. Chicago, the report maintained, was firmly set on the path of progress in dealing with the evils of the color line... Selected neighborhoods were still convulsed from racial change, but in the absence of any analysis of the structural problems, the commission was reduced to theorizing that irrational attitudes accounted for the continuing conflict.

...By 1951, however, the commission seemed to be much more impressed and saddened by the irrational attitudes of blacks than by those of whites. Firm in its conviction that that the “problems arising in communities undergoing change must be met by people living on the blocks in these areas,” the commission expressed concern that the blacks were yielding to “segregated-mindedness” and losing the opportunities for desegregation... The problem, as envisaged by the commission, was to get the message across to blacks that this equality was theirs for the taking.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ This transformation perhaps best symbolizes the shift to governing human capital.

⁴⁷ Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 62-65. Anderson and Pickering distinguish between a

Pickering and Anderson rightfully lambasted the CCHR as a misdirected agency that blamed black people for segregated conditions of oppression. In their eagerness to declare the CCHR a failed effort at racial justice, however, they fail to see that as a governmental entity that incited discourses involving cultural deficiencies and the irrationality of racial politics, the CCHR was actually operating productively to institutionalize the neo-liberal vision of citizenship and reinforce the Chicago machine.

Most historians, in fact, maintain a similar liberal perspective as Pickering and Anderson and represent the Daley regime as a corrupt northern government that was complicit with those that maintained *de facto* racial segregation. To support this representation it is obligatory for scholars to point to the open housing marches led Dr. Martin Luther King in Chicago in 1966 and his confrontations with white supremacists in the city.⁴⁸ Scholars commonly recall the rabid acts of white supremacy that took place in Chicago that summer and note that King was hit with a brick during a march in Marquette Park. King's remark that, "I have seen many demonstrations in the South, but I have never seen anything so hostile and so hateful as I've seen here today" is often quoted to characterize the unique nature of racial domination in the city. In these narratives, Dr. King and the Chicago Freedom Movement coalition (CFM) exposed the enigma of northern segregation and presented a moral dilemma to Daley to build racial harmony. In the end, however, the pathological Daley refuses the opportunity to produce meaningful changes in Chicago and the dream of a beloved community dissolves into race riots and Black nationalism shortly after the infamous Summit Agreement of August 1966.

Liberal descriptions of King's efforts to end *de facto* segregation in Chicago provide some truths into the nature of racial domination in the city. It is certainly true that Daley reinforced segregation in Chicago. Indeed, he built a freeway to keep his own neighborhood of Bridgeport lily white. Yet, liberal

"civic credo" and "racist realism" as determining racial politics in Chicago. They explain, "What we call the civic credo, which promised equality in the long run while denying it in the short, and racist realism, which saw no possibility of equality at all, had both emerged with, and in the case of the latter, as part of the metropolitan color line before the appearance of the civil rights movement (4)."

⁴⁸ See, James R. Ralph, *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1993), Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000* (New York: Penguin, 2001).

narratives that lament the limited achievements of the Chicago Freedom Movement fail to adequately explain the persistence of white supremacy, poverty, and oppression in Chicago beyond pathological racists and the personality of Daley. In other words, in constructing Daley as responsible for the demise of civil rights initiatives and for the rise of black nationalism in the city, many scholars fail to provide a systemic explanation of persistent racial domination and oppression in Chicago. Worst, they implicitly lead one to believe that if another politician with a better sense of racial justice and morality was mayor that racial harmony would have manifested.

The notion that Daley was a pathological figure who failed the moral test of the civil rights movement because he maintained a residual politics of white supremacy is a convenient way to discount the local history of racial domination and the political culture of the Chicago machine. A more critical assessment is that Daley was an experienced neo-liberal governor that thrived upon the hyper-visibility of racial politics. Even a cursory examination of Daley's public demeanor towards civil rights demands in the city reveals that he viewed the incitement of racial conflict as desirable. From his efforts to maintain Benjamin Willis as the Chicago Public Schools director despite massive opposition and student walkouts, to his statement to a July 1963 NAACP convention that "there are no ghettos in Chicago," Daley consistently fanned the flames of racial consciousness.⁴⁹ In fact, at the NAACP convention Daley upset hundreds of liberals, community members and educators by leading a protest march through downtown against himself!⁵⁰ In typical Daley fashion he later told a *JET* magazine reporter that "it was a wonderful parade" and when asked about those that booed him he explained, "I never see signs opposing me."⁵¹ Though one could easily dismiss these actions and statements as merely narcissistic expressions of power, there is no denying that Daley converted movements and uprisings that highlighted racial inequality and segregation in the city into racial spectacles in order to consolidate the

⁴⁹ It is commonly noted by historians that Daley and Rev. Joseph H. Jackson president of the National Baptist Convention were booed by the crowd.

⁵⁰ "Teacher, Minister Lead Protest Against Mayor Daley, Dr. Jackson" *JET* 24, no. 13 (July 18, 1963): 8-9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

power of the state. The patronage system and the machines control over dozens of black churches were certainly critical to Daley's political power during his confrontations with the CFM, however, it was the ability to incite racial conflict and convert poverty, oppression and anti-racist activism into evidence of innate deficiencies that made Daley an effective neo-liberal governor.

This is not to say that civil rights activism was politically insignificant in Chicago, did not unite people, or failed to inspire them to rise up and challenge white supremacy. It is to say that a neo-liberal state that thrived upon racial politics had evolved in Chicago for three decades prior to the arrival of Dr. Martin Luther King. Witnessing the implosion of riots in places like Watts one year prior to his move to Chicago, King distinguished racial oppression in cities outside of the south. He explained "In the South, we always had segregationists to help make issues clear.... This ghetto Negro has been invisible so long and has become visible through violence".⁵² What King failed to grasp was that in Chicago, the political machine and the hegemony of capital required the hyper-visibility of ghetto and barrio violence. Images and representations of black and brown rage, as in the 1965 Lawndale riots and the Division Street Riots of 1966, were the very basis upon which the state could legitimize its sovereignty. Dr. Martin Luther King and the Chicago Freedom Movement coalition were not unsuccessful because of any lack of organizing ability, desire for freedom, or community support. They simply applied a political strategy that was designed to undermine the dual system of governmentality that characterized the imperial/disciplinary state. In Chicago, however, King was exposed to a well-oiled neo-liberal state that embraced social movements for equal opportunities.

Not only did the Chicago Freedom Movement underestimate the ways the political system in Chicago thrived upon segregation and the hyper-visibility of racial conflict, it also miscalculated the politics of poverty. Indeed, during a decade when six hundred thousand jobs left the city of Chicago, and comprehensive urban economic development plans required land occupied by poor people, the

⁵² Quoted in "Chicago Campaign, 1966," in *Martin Luther King Junior and the Global Freedom Struggle*, Available online, http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_chicago_campaign/

hyper-visibility of spaces of grinding poverty and despair were even more vital to the hegemony of capital during the 1960s. Whether it was blacks in Lawndale, southern whites in Uptown, or Puerto Ricans in Lincoln Park, the racialization of poverty was central to state sanctioned programs of displacement and the increased policing of “slums.” Attributing dilapidated buildings, overcrowded apartments, drug and alcohol abuse, high unemployment rates, and the exponential growth of street gangs to the innate deficiencies of recently arrived migrants and ghetto/barrio residents not only justified lucrative conservation and urban renewal projects, it made an aggressive politics of space a moral responsibility. In the same vein, War on Poverty and Model Cities initiatives that created opportunities for community participation operated to construct those that remained poor as lacking the ability to capitalize upon the state’s benevolent investment in urban human capital. Indeed state sanctioned programs, which appeared to respond sincerely to pressures from below, actually re-inforced the neo-liberal notion that human capital was accumulated through ambition and personal responsibility. In this light, civil rights demands that the government act morally, end poverty, and provide equal opportunities for all were simply liberal freedom dreams based upon a flawed analysis of the political conditions that evolved in Chicago.

On April 20, 1967, following a landslide election victory in the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King’s desegregation campaigns in the city, Mayor Richard J. Daley delivered his most confident inauguration speech. Using his standard bravado Daley proclaimed,

Today, the people are looking to us to carry out the objectives enunciated in the Comprehensive Plan for Chicago. Published last December, the Plan has the major objective of improving the quality of life. Its focus is directed to three related human concerns: the expansion of human opportunities; the improvement of the environment in which we live; the strengthening of the economy which sustains every man, woman and child in this city...

The problems they present will not be solved by demonstrations in the streets, but by demonstrations of understanding and compassion. In fact, the greatest peril to the success of these endeavors is the threat to the rights of others that lies in violence and intimidation. The greatest protection of the rights of all is the preservation of law and order--and as long as I am Mayor, law and order will prevail. The truth is that only a tiny minority of our citizens--a relative handful--are engaged in creating violence and dissension with calculated appeals to

hatred and emotion. Unfortunately theirs are the loudest voices, theirs are the most vociferous and irresponsible claims and charges.⁵³

Considering the evolution of governmentality in Chicago after the Great Depression, this discourse presented the city as the optimal neo-liberal society. The people of Chicago were reduced to abstract units of enterprise that abide by law and order, hold a rational desire for capitalist development, and vigorously compete for improvement and progress. At the same time, Daley the benevolent sovereign, promised to care for the life of the people of Chicago and protect them from irrational enemies that threatened the city. Those who challenged urban planning designs, incited racial identities, failed to improve their human capital, and held demonstrations were expulsed as bio-political enemies of the city. Daley's sweeping victory and speech confirmed the neo-liberal milieu in Chicago could withstand the civil rights movement. Yet, it also created the political conditions that gave rise to a revolutionary political consciousness of class struggle in Chicago.

In August of 1967, just months after Daley's speech, Marlin Johnson, a local FBI agent opened a file on a young and dynamic leader from Maywood named Fred Hampton. Already an accomplished civil rights activist in Maywood, Fred Hampton was in the midst of a revolutionary political transformation that would make him the leader of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and eventually the target of a COINTELPRO assassination operation. Unlike the majority of those that filled downtown and Lincoln Park a year later during the Democratic convention, Hampton's political perspective was primarily shaped by the forms of oppression and strategies of power he witnessed on a daily basis in poor black communities in Chicago. Like Cha Cha Jiménez, Hy Thurman and many others that joined the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots, Fred Hampton witnessed racism, brutal incidents of police terrorism, grinding poverty, and labor exploitation. It was these concrete experiences of living in a sick society and observing a political machine that thrived upon

⁵³ "Inaugural Address of Mayor Richard J. Daley, April 20, 1967," Available online, http://www.chipublib.org/cplbooksmovies/cplarchive/mayors/rj_daley_inaug04.php

primordialist racial divides, individual ruin, and communities of despair that forged the consciousness that led to the Rainbow Coalition.

It is undeniable, as numerous scholars and participant observers argue, that leaders like Chairman Fred Hampton and Cha Cha Jiménez were absolutely critical to the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition.⁵⁴ In the final analysis, however, it was experiences of racialized poverty, and the organic realization that those conditions were preserved by a historically specific neo-liberal state in Chicago, that forged a revolutionary sense of class struggle and community self-determination among many activists. By forging an alliance that opposed racial divisions and founding community programs that cared for the very life of poor people, Original Rainbow Coalition activists directly challenged the neo-liberal state. It was also in this respect that Original Rainbow Coalition activists advanced upon earlier efforts at community control in Chicago and forged an organic link with Third World revolutionary liberation movements committed to self-determination and the end of imperialist domination.

⁵⁴ Felix Padilla, *Puerto Rican Chicago* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), Jon F. Rice, "Black Revolutionaries on Chicago's West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party," in Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, editors. *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), Lilia Fernández, "Latina/o Migration and Community Formation in Postwar Chicago: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Gender and Politics, 1945-1975" (Ph.D. diss., University of California San Diego, 2005) Jakobi E. Williams, "Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago: A Case Study of Fred Hampton, the Illinois Black Panther Party, and the Origin of the Rainbow Coalition" (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2008).

Chapter 4: From Bandung to Chicago: Anti-Colonialism, Civil Rights, and the Politics of Self-Determination in Chicago

As they came to know one another better, their fear and distrust evaporated. Living for centuries under Western rule, they had become filled with a deep sense of how greatly they differed from one another. But now face to face, their ideological defenses dropped. Negative unity bred by a feeling that they had to stand together against a rapacious West turned into something that hinted of the positive. They began to sense their combined strength; they began to taste blood.

Richard Wright, *The Colored Curtain*

As I now look back, I see in the crusade waged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1910 to 1930, one of the finest efforts of liberalism to achieve human emancipation; and much was accomplished. But the essential difficulty with the liberalism of the twentieth century was not to realize the fundamental change brought about by the world-wide organization of work and trade and commerce.

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*

Chicago, like other cities, suffered the consequences but did not attempt to control the economic and social forces that threatened the city. In proposing these changes Chicago again is pioneering.

Ruth Moore, *What Sort of City Should Chicago Be?*

On the evening of July 30, 1958 Kwame Nkrumah, the Prime Minister of Ghana, addressed an audience of three hundred at the Sheraton-Blackstone hotel in downtown Chicago. According to Charles Livingston, a reporter for the Associated Negro Press covering the event that evening, “Nkrumah, clothed in a native konto robe which contrasted strikingly with the backdrop of the brilliantly lighted hall, arose” to speak.¹ After praising the U.S. educational institutions that opened their doors to African students, and extending an invitation to visit Ghana, Nkrumah delivered a scathing rebuke of racism and ongoing colonialism. He declared,

The battle is not ended. If Ghana is free and others are not free. I would not count myself as being free and freedom will not be complete until we are linked through total liberation with the whole African continent... And if we Africans are liberated, we will not be free until self-respect and honor are accorded to men of color everywhere. Colonialism must go!²

¹ Charles J. Livingston, “Africa is On the March, Prime Minister Nkrumah Tells Chicagoans: Ghanaian Chief Honored at Dinner,” *Associated Negro Press*, August 6, 1958, Claude A. Barnett Papers, Series C, 1956-64: reel 65.

² Ibid.

Livingston reported that upon hearing Nkrumah's statement the integrated audience applauded in approval.

As the leader of the newly independent nation of Ghana, and a symbol of national liberation movements and post-colonial masculinity, Nkrumah also invoked a spirit of Pan-African solidarity that undoubtedly moved those representing the African diaspora in Chicago that evening. Indeed, influential civic, academic, religious, and business leaders including Claude Barnett, Archibald Carey, J.H. Jackson, and St. Claire Drake, among others were present. They, like the many thousands who lined the streets earlier in the day to see Nkrumah's motorcade make its way through the Black Belt, surely felt a deep sense of pride in the country and revolutionary leader that were victorious over the forces of white supremacy in Africa.

Significantly, however, they were not the only ones to welcome Nkrumah to Chicago. In fact, the Prime Minister was Mayor Richard J. Daley's guest of honor, and it was the mayor who introduced Nkrumah to the audience at the Blackstone hotel. To "great applause" Daley praised Nkrumah as a great leader, singled out the Prime Minister's love of freedom, and reminded the audience that Ghana's "Freedom Day" celebration a year before was an exemplary event attended by many of his friends.³ Though Barnett and Drake had performed much of the work necessary to organize what Livingston described as "one of Chicago's top social gatherings," it was Daley who was recognized as the head of the welcoming committee.⁴ It is also telling that when Nkrumah first arrived to Chicago, it was Daley who greeted him at the airport, guided him to city hall for an official welcoming ceremony, and presented him to business owners from the area. The Mayor of the imperial metropolis also did not miss

³ Notably, Richard Nixon was a prominent guest at the Freedom Day celebration in Ghana, and was also a central figure in facilitating Nkrumah's official state visit.

⁴ Nkrumah visited a number of locations during his short time in Chicago including visits to African Studies program at Northwestern University, University of Chicago and Roosevelt University. On the second day he visited Johnson publications and the Daily Defender before meeting with the region's leading steel and candy manufacturers. The welcoming committee was chaired by Claude Barnett with Edward Logolin, the vice president of the US Steel Company, serving as the vice chairman.

the opportunity to name Nkrumah an honorary citizen of the city of Chicago and award him a medallion to symbolize this honor.

Daley's confident behavior during Nkrumah's visit to Chicago can easily be dismissed as another example of his infamous personality. I suggest, however, that the Mayor's confident behavior illuminates an important contradiction of racialized governmentality in Chicago that is crucial to understanding the politics of solidarity practiced by Rainbow Coalition activists during the late sixties. Namely, one must question why a renowned African revolutionary was celebrated as a model of freedom by the mayor when a major component of hegemony required that local black militants be denounced as communists or irrational race leaders that upset social stability? Certainly, Cold War interests figured prominently during Nkrumah's official visit to Chicago. Nkrumah's interest in promoting Ghana's cocoa production to the city's candy manufacturing companies also could have shaped Daley's benevolent public performance.⁵ However, the contrast between Nkrumah's explicit denouncement of colonialism and overtures to Chicago's black community, and Daley's confidence during the Prime Minister's visit requires further explanation. In other words, what accounts for Daley's ability to admire a revolutionary like Nkrumah and yet not feel threatened by his message of anti-racism and gesture of anti-colonial solidarity?

Considering that the mayor's political machine dominated the vote in Chicago's Black Belt and that anti-colonial activism was largely repressed in the United States during the Cold War, it is plausible that Daley felt secure about local political loyalties and dismissed Nkrumah's influence on black communities in the city? Perhaps, the mayor operated strictly according to the interests of Chicago's business community that wanted to exploit the resources of the newly independent nation of Ghana? There is also the possibility that Daley's performance was entirely scripted by Cold War politics and was simply a benevolent effort to sway an influential Third World leader away from communism?

⁵ According to Livingston Nkrumah received a hearty response after calling on Chicagoans to eat more chocolate.

Transcending these possibilities, I argue that Daley's conduct during Nkrumah's visit exhibited a confidence in neo-liberal governmentality due to a political fissure that existed at the time between the leadership of Third World national liberation movements and many political leaders struggling for racial equality in Chicago.

The formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition in late 1968 represented a rapid closure of this gap as the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party led an anti-racist political coalition that embraced self-determination and anti-imperialist solidarity. To understand the political significance of the Rainbow Coalition beyond the recognition of "inter-racial" activism, it is necessary to take a transnational approach to the black freedom struggle in Chicago and the transformations in anti-racist coalition politics in the city during the post-World War II era. A focus on the political efforts of blacks in Chicago acknowledges the radical humanism consistently advocated by the black freedom struggle and the political influence of black social movements in the United States. As historian Nikhil Pal Singh aptly states,

Throughout the post-World War II period, blacks have been the single group in the United States whose politics have regularly gone beyond narrow self-interest and aimed at broad expansions of social as well as civil rights... From the vision of a people's century during the World War II to the revolutionary intercommunalism of the sixties, the one consistency of the black political imagination across its ideological and generational divides has been its combination of grassroots insurgency and global dreams.⁶

Moreover, the transnational history and radical humanism of black social movements allows one to compare anti-racist activism in the U.S. with Third World national liberation movements that often practiced a politics that extended beyond group or national interests.

That said, this chapter draws on archival research, newspapers, speeches, and secondary literature to compare the development of Third World anti-colonial politics that culminated at the Bandung Conference of 1955, with the evolution of post-World War II civil rights activism in Chicago

⁶ Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 219-220.

that contributed to the formation of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCCO) during the early 1960s. It demonstrates that whereas the political leadership of most Third World national liberation movements undermined imperialist governance by emphasizing self-determination as a fundamental element of freedom, a coalition of local leaders in Chicago were contained by a spirit of integration that reinforced neo-liberal governmentality in the city. Though the CCCC and the Chicago Freedom Movement practiced “inter-racial” solidarity, and organized widespread anti-segregation campaigns, I argue that these coalitions did not account for transformations in state capitalism and the hyper-visible captivity of racial domination that characterized the post-Great Depression consolidation of neo-liberal governmentality.

Self-determination, or the ability to exercise governmental authority, was the basis of Third World solidarity during the post-World War II era. A shared political consciousness of self-determination, however, was not the result of any innate characteristic that existed within leaders in the Third World. To be sure, not all political leaders in the Third World were militant revolutionaries. Rather, a consensus on self-determination and the achievement of anti-colonial solidarity stemmed from shared histories of imperialist domination, common political experiences with imperial powers, and dynamic interactions between political leaders following World War I.⁷

At the same time that governor Frank Lowden of Illinois responded to the 1919 race riots by calling for racial harmony and forming the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, political leaders from the United States and European imperialist powers were busy debating the re-organization of imperialist international relations in the aftermath of WWI. After dealing Germany various penalties through the June 1919 Treaty of Versailles, the attention of imperialist governors turned to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson’s vision of a League of Nations. Struck by the displays of militarism during

⁷ In fact, the concept of a Third World does not develop until the geopolitics of the Cold War emerges. It is during the post-WWII era when the concept of the “Third World” is used to signify a non-aligned political position by colonies seeking national liberation.

WWI and fearing the influence and political potential of the Bolshevik Revolution, Wilson envisioned the League of Nations as a governing body comprised of enlightened statesmen that would rationally govern the world in order to avoid future global conflicts.⁸ Historian Anders Stephanson has argued convincingly that Wilson's idea of a League of Nations was motivated by a puritanical sense of Christian duty and the notion that the United States was an exceptional nation destined to lead the civilized world. According to Stephanson,

He had pitched it, not accidentally, as a "covenant." It was to be in his words a combination of the world for arbitration and discussion," a "wholesale moral clearinghouse." Since the criterion of self-governing rationality would determine who was to be allowed membership, Russia obviously did not qualify; and Germany would be on "probation." It was a universalist organization that was not universal.⁹

As Stephanson suggests, Wilson's vision of the League of Nations as a moral contract was structured by a universal model of civilized governance that designated states that rejected global security as deviant nations. In other words, whereas governors in Chicago reacted to the implosion of violence in the city by forming an institution that identified race consciousness as irrational and anti-modern behavior, the League of Nations was founded upon the idea that the violence that erupted in World War I was the result of immoral economic and military policies carried out by governments that acted irrationally.

Racialized notions of self-determination were, of course, central to the preservation of European and U.S. imperialism by the League of Nations. In fact, ideas of racial difference reconciled imperialist domination and were used to deny sovereignty to colonies in Africa and Asia on the basis that colonial populations lacked the innate ability to practice rational self-government. Historian Vijay Prashad

⁸ Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995). Stephanson summarizes Wilson's vision;

The new system would thus replace secret diplomacy with open agreements, feature self-determination as opposed to territorial wheeling and dealing, guarantee the independent status of small states; open up the world economically and dismantle exclusive spheres of influence; function on a basis of moral norms and the common interest in agreement; and confront political transgressors with concerted power.

But the ensuing Treaty of Versailles of 1919 deviated in many ways from these principles; it suffered, indeed, from being neither crushingly punitive nor Wilsonian. It did, however, include as its centerpiece his proposal for a League of Nations (117).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 117.

explains that the founding covenant of the League of Nations was explicit in this matter. According to Prashad,

The “interests” of the colonized had to be curtailed, the Covenant of the League noted, because the colonized were “people not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world” (Article 22). Instead of independence and the right to rule themselves, the league felt that “the best method of giving practical effect to [the principle of self-determination] is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.” Self-determination did not mean the end to colonialism, but for the League of Nations it meant paternalistic imperialism.¹⁰

Indeed, it was through a racist model of modernity and self-government that the League of Nations denied self-determination to colonies in Africa and Asia but re-established the sovereignty and national borders of nations in Europe that were violated during WWI. More importantly, by denying sovereignty to colonies on the basis of racial difference, the League of Nations essentially suspended national independence in European colonies indefinitely and designated anti-colonial nationalism as an irrational political force similar to Bolshevism.

In this light, it was not a coincidence that the politics of imperialism and the principle of the self-determination of nations also figured prominently in the debates that took place during the series of International Communist Congresses that began in 1920. Though some scholars point to Marx and Engels’ discussions of the “Asiatic mode of production” to argue that communists shared the racial attitudes of imperialists, this problematic argument largely neglects V.I. Lenin’s voluminous writings on imperialism during his exile in Switzerland and as the leading Bolshevik theorist until his death in 1924.¹¹ In *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), for example, Lenin explicitly

¹⁰ Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A Peoples History of the Third World* (New York and London: The New Press, 2007), 21.

¹¹ Several postcolonial scholars argue that Marx and Engels maintain the “backwardness” of Asian economies because they maintain Europe as the universal basis of social and economic development. See particularly Dipesh Chakravarty, *Provincializing Europe* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000). Yet, Marx and Engels are explicit in attributing the “advancement” of Europe to material histories of slavery and colonialism not any innate Europeaness. Likewise, the signifiers “Asian” or “Orientals” for Marx and Engels do not signify innate backwardness. A June 6, 1853 letter to Marx from Engels exemplifies their materialist perspective of economic development;

recognized that colonies were central to the historical development of monopoly capitalism. Lenin explained,

Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle with competitors, including the contingency that the latter will defend themselves by means of a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate is the struggle for acquisition of colonies.¹²

Rejecting the perspectives of Social-Democrat Karl Kautsky and liberal J.A. Hobson that imperialism was one choice among many for European nations, Lenin argued that acquiring colonial possessions was the only choice available to imperialist powers. Due to his understanding that colonial labor and resources were the life source of capitalist accumulation, Lenin was an uncompromising advocate of national liberation struggles during the international communist conferences that followed World War I.

At the Second Congress of the Communist International held from July to August of 1920, for example, Lenin presented a report on National and Colonial Questions. In this document Lenin outlined the political line to be followed by communist parties towards national liberation movements. Considering that Lenin's political position motivated a formal resolution in 1930 that confirmed the right of blacks to self-determination in the southern Black Belt of the United States,¹³ and was at the

The absence of property in land is indeed key to the whole of the East. Herein lies its political and religious history. But how does it come about that the Orientals did not arrive at landed property, even in its feudal form. I think it is mainly due to the climate, taken in connection with the nature of the soil, especially with the great deserts which extend from the Sahara straight across Arabia, Persia, India, and Tartary up to the highest Asiatic plateau. Artificial irrigation is here the first condition of agriculture and this is a matter either for communes, the provinces, or the central government. Oriental government never had more than three departments: finance (plunder at home), war (plunder at home and abroad), and public works (provision for reproduction). The British government in India has administered Nos. 1 and 2 in a rather narrow-minded spirit and dropped No. 3 entirely, so that Indian agriculture is being ruined. This artificial fertilization of the land, which immediately ceased when the irrigation system fell into decay, explains the otherwise curious fact that whole stretches which were once brilliantly cultivated are now waste and bare (Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in the Yemen, districts in Egypt, Persia and Hindustan); it explains the fact that one single devastating war could depopulate a country for centuries and strip it of its whole civilization (312).

See, Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, *On Colonialism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974).

¹² V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1975), 98.

¹³ On the Black Belt Thesis see, "Resolution on the Negro Question in the United States" *The Communist International* 3, no. 2 (February 1, 1931). Also see, Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

core of political alliances and fractures among U.S. activists into the late 1970s his thoughts deserve to be quoted at length,

The imperialist war of 1914-18 has very clearly revealed to all nations and to the oppressed classes of the whole world the falseness of bourgeois-democratic phrases, by practically demonstrating that the Treaty of Versailles of the celebrated “Western democracies” is an even more brutal and foul act of violence against weak nations than was the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of the German Junkers and the Kaiser. The League of Nations and the entire postwar policy of the Entente reveal this truth with even greater clarity and distinctness. They are everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle both of the proletariat in the advanced countries and of the toiling masses in the colonial and dependent countries. They are hastening the collapse of the petty-bourgeois nationalist illusions that nations can live together in peace and equality under capitalism.

From these fundamental premises it follows that the Communist International’s entire policy on the national and the colonial questions should rest primarily on a closer union of the proletarians and the working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. This union alone will guarantee victory over capitalism, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible.

...Consequently, one cannot at present confine oneself to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the various nations; a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements. The form of this alliance should be determined by the degree of development of the communist movement in the proletariat of each country, or of the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement of the workers and peasants in backward countries or among backward nationalities.¹⁴

... In all their propaganda and agitation—both within parliament and outside it—the Communist parties must consistently expose that constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities which is to be seen in all capitalist countries, despite their “democratic” constitutions. It is also necessary, first, constantly to explain that only the Soviet system is capable of ensuring genuine equality of-nations, by uniting first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; and, second, that all Communist parties should render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and underprivileged nations (for example, Ireland, the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies.

¹⁴ Again, it is extremely important here to note that Lenin’s use of the signifier “backward” to refer to certain countries and nationalities is consistent with the dialectical materialist perspective of social and economic development. Though scholars have argued that such discourses exemplify an extrapolation of the development of European capitalist modernity to the entire world, and is thus a racialization on non-European spaces and populations as backward, the dialectical materialist perspective does not attribute dependency and poverty in colonies, or technological advancement and industrialization Europe to innate racial elements such as Asianess or Britishness. Rather, it is the development of the mode of production and the related potential of revolutionary class struggle that determines if a country is considered backwards or advanced. For this same reason, national liberation movements led by bourgeoisie leaders in the colonies were considered an important step towards creating the conditions for a global class struggle.

Without the latter condition, which is particularly important, the struggle against the oppression of dependent nations and colonies, as well as recognition of their right to secede, are but a false signboard, as is evidenced by the parties of the Second International.¹⁵

In contradistinction to the denial of self-determination by the League of Nations, Lenin emphasized that colonial populations and oppressed national minorities were unequivocally capable of self-government and reserved the right to exercise sovereignty. Though anti-colonial national liberation struggles were not necessarily revolutionary in terms of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, Lenin still considered them to be entirely rational struggles that were critical to the demise of imperialism. Significantly, Lenin's perspective of national liberation movements was hotly debated and altogether rejected by some within his own party.

In contrast to Lenin, Leon Trotsky argued that because national liberation movements were struggles for national sovereignty and self-determination, they were ultimately reformist in nature. According to former Trotskyite C.L.R. James,

Trotsky, basing himself on the experience of 1914-1918, believed that there were two fundamental political currents in the world working-class movement. One was reformism, the Second International, based upon private property, the defense of the national state, enemy of the proletarian revolution. The other was revolutionary, based upon or fighting for state property, repudiating the national state, advocate and defender of the proletarian revolution.¹⁶

Believing that only advanced workers from industrialized countries could lead an international revolutionary movement to socialism, and rejecting the theory that socialism had to be built one country at a time, Trotsky argued against nation-based peasant/proletariat alliances and any compromise with a native bourgeoisie that sought national liberation. Instead, he advocated for a pure form of international "permanent revolution." Concomitantly, Trotsky called for the dissolution of national communist parties as he believed that nationalism would fracture the international working-class movement.

¹⁵ "Notes for the Committee on the National and Colonial Questions" in *Lenin Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers), 203.

¹⁶ C.L.R. James et al., *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 1986), 5. It is important to note that James was once an ardent Trotskyite until a falling-out over the question of black liberation.

Adherents to Trotsky's vision of international revolutionary struggle regarded anti-colonial national independence struggles to be counter-revolutionary as they often incited nationalism and involved alliances of peasants, a small minority of industrial workers, and native elites. Communist and Spanish Civil War veteran Harry Haywood has explained,

Trotsky's entire position reflected a lack of faith in the strength and resources of the Soviet people, the vast majority of whom were peasants. Since it denied the revolutionary potential of the peasantry, the success of the revolution could not come from internal forces, but had to depend on the success of proletarian revolutions in the advanced nations of Western Europe... Trotsky's scheme of permanent revolution downgraded not only the peasantry as a revolutionary force, but also the national liberation movements of oppressed people within the old Czarist Empire. Thus in "The Struggle for Power" he wrote that "imperialism does not contrapose the bourgeoisie nation to the old regime, but the proletariat to the bourgeoisie nation."

While Trotsky de-emphasized the national colonial question in the epoch of imperialism, Lenin, on the other hand, stressed its new importance. "Imperialism," said Lenin, means the progressive mounting of oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of Great Powers; it means a period of wars between the latter to extend and consolidate the oppression of nations."¹⁷

Reflecting on the political implications of Trotsky's mechanical theory of permanent revolution Haywood added, "In the United States I was to witness how Trotsky's purist concept of class struggle led logically to a denial of the struggle for black liberation as a special feature of the class struggle, revolutionary in its own right."¹⁸ By designating national liberation struggles as deviant political movements, Trotskyites ironically replicated the position of the League of Nations. And as Haywood indicates, Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution would continually structure opposition to the desire for self-determination among colonized populations and national minorities in the United States.

Certainly, supporters of national liberation in African and Asian colonies with long traditions of de-colonial resistance did not wait for resolutions from International Communist Congresses. Nor did anti-colonial leaders need to be schooled in historical materialism to know that self-determination was necessary. Indeed, as early as 1900 delegates to the first Pan-African Conference held in London, including W.E.B. Du Bois, jointly repudiated the subjugation of African nations by European imperialist

¹⁷ Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1978), 179-181.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.

powers and Jim Crow in the United States. In early 1919 Du Bois also organized the inaugural Pan-African Congress in Paris as an effort to influence the League of Nations. On this event the *Chicago Tribune* reported,

Robert R. Moton, successor of the late Booker Washington as head of the Tuskegee Institute , and Dr. William E. B. Du Bois, Editor of the *Crisis*, are promoting a Pan-African Conference to be held during the winter while the Peace conference is on full blast. It is to embrace Negro leaders from America, Abyssinia, Liberia, Haiti, and the French and British colonies and other parts of the black world... It is quite Utopian, and it has less than a Chinaman's chance of getting anywhere in the Peace Conference, but it is nevertheless interesting. As self-determination is one of the words to conjure with in Paris nowadays, the Negro leaders are seeking to have it applied, if possible, in a measure to their race in Africa.¹⁹

Likewise, in February of 1927 the World Congress Against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism in Brussels brought together communists and national liberation leaders from Africa and Asia and resulted in the formation of the League against Imperialism. According to Vijay Prashad,

The League against Imperialism was a direct attack on the League of Nations preservation of imperialism in its mandate system... The delegates came from Communist and socialist parties as well as radical national movements...The congress in Brussels called for the rights of the darker nations to rule themselves.²⁰

The organization of trans-Atlantic Pan-African conferences and the League Against Imperialism demonstrates that a desire for liberation from colonialism and white supremacy produced a profound solidarity between leaders from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the United States. Likewise, the participation of Du Bois and others activists from the U.S. also reveals that during the interwar period there was consensus among leading U.S. and Third World freedom fighters that self-determination was a requirement of liberation.

It is critical to consider that the solidarity that existed between U.S. and Third World activists was based entirely on the consciousness of common histories of white supremacy, racial violence, and exploitation. Writing in early 1920 on the politics of being black in the United States, Du Bois captured

¹⁹ Philip Foner ed., *W.E.B. Du Bois Speaks: Speeches and Addresses, 1920-1963* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 163.

²⁰ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 21-22.

the ways World War I unveiled a common enemy and produced a profound solidarity among non-whites. He wrote,

As we saw the dead dimly through rifts of battlesmoke and heard faintly the cursings and accusations of blood brothers, we darker men said: This is not Europe gone mad; this is not aberration nor insanity; this is Europe; this seeming Terrible is the real soul of white culture – back of all culture – stripped and visible today.²¹

Du Bois' realization that people of African descent in the United States and colonized peoples in the Third World confronted a similar culture of imperialism transcended any solidarity based upon primordial racial unity. Indeed, reflecting on a trip to Africa in 1923 in his autobiographical *Dusk of Dawn*, Du Bois would write,

What is Africa to me? Once I should have answered the question simply: I should have said “fatherland” or perhaps better “motherland” because I was born in the century when the walls of race were clear and straight; when the world consisted of mutually exclusive races; and even though the edges might be blurred, there was no question of exact definition and understanding of the meaning of the word... But the physical bond is least and the badge of color relatively unimportant save as a badge; the real essence of this kinship is its social heritage of slavery; the discrimination and insult; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through Yellow Asia and into the South Seas. It is this unity that draws me to Africa.²²

For Du Bois and other Black Atlantic activists like Paul Robeson, the black liberation struggle in the United States was inherently linked to the freedom dreams of other oppressed peoples that endured imperialist domination. Witnessing the preservation of imperialism and the outbreak of WWII, Du Bois became more explicit in framing this relationship. Anticipating the brilliant writings of Aimé Césaire in a wartime address entitled “Prospect of a World Without Racial Conflict” he declared,

The supertragedy of the war is the treatment of the Jews in Germany. There has been nothing comparable to this in modern history. Yet its techniques and its reasoning have been based upon a race philosophy similar to that which has dominated both Great Britain and the United States in relation to colored people.²³

Through the Council on African Affairs, Du Bois, Robeson and other prominent black activists maintained an active anti-colonial political perspective into the mid-1950s. Unfortunately, the alterity

²¹ Foner, *W.E. B. Du Bois Speaks*, 8.

²² Nathan Huggins ed. *W.E.B. Du Bois* (New York: Library of America, 1986), 639-40.

²³ Foner, *W.E. B. Du Bois Speaks*, 124. Here, Du Bois provides a similar analysis of the coloniality of WWII that is further explored by Aimé Césaire in *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

that existed between anti-colonial politics in the United States and Third World liberation movements did not survive the intensification of the Cold War.

Just as the desire for self-determination was not the product of an innate Third World quality, the demise of anti-imperialist solidarity in the United States was not a reflection of any deficiency. Instead, the absence of an active multi-national political movement based upon common demands for self-determination was the result of intense anti-communist political repression, ideological struggles, and the impact of the Cold War on the civil rights movement. Historians such as Martha Biondi, Penny Von Eschen, and Francis Njubi Nesbitt have documented the ways the Cold War transformed the civil rights struggle in the United States during the 1940s.²⁴ In *Race Against Empire* (2005), for example, Von Eschen explains that “In the aftermath of WWII an extraordinarily broad consensus on colonial issues existed among black Americans.”²⁵ The persistence of racial violence during World War II brought together a range of activists including members of the Council of African Affairs and the NAACP. She demonstrates that by the late 1940s, however, most civil rights organizations and the black press bent to a Cold War perspective of racial domination and abandoned the Black Atlantic perspective of Pan-African solidarity and white supremacy. She states,

The new liberal argument on civil rights was intimately linked to changes in foreign policy, arguing that discrimination within the United States was undermining America’s legitimate global strategies. As India and then Indonesia won independence, and nationalist movements accelerated throughout Africa and Asia, this argument played an increasingly important role in the shaping of U.S. policy. Moreover, as civil rights politics itself came to be suspect in the deepening Cold War hysteria, [Walter] White and other liberals – facing as the alternative the destruction of the NAACP -- moved more and more to protect civil rights by grounding its justification firmly in anti-Communism and support of U.S. foreign policy.²⁶

As Von Eschen suggests, many prominent civil rights leaders reproduced notions of American exceptionalism at the historical moment when several Third World nations were attaining self-

²⁴ Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Right in Postwar New York City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), Francis Njubi Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions: African Americans Against Apartheid, 1946-1997* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

²⁵ Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, 70.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

determination. Moreover, the move of many civil rights leaders towards a Cold War perspective of racial power resulted in requirements of loyalty oaths and the purging of communists from numerous organizations. For example, on April 13, 1951 Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, the president of the Palmer Memorial Institute in Greensboro, North Carolina telegraphed Claude Barnett. Seeking to clarify that she was not a communist she wrote,

The listing of my name on the Un-American Activities is not due to any communist tendencies I have or my being affiliated knowingly with any communistic organizations... I want my friends and people of both races to distinctly understand that however unfair the American way of life is for the Negro, I personally haven't found anything any better to which I could cling... I am a "dyed in the wool" Christian woman and that does not square with communism. My name has no place on the Un-American Committee for no one person in America for the past 50 years gave more time and attention to creating inter-racial feelings north and south, to bring to the American Negro a chance to exercise his freedom on a high basis.²⁷

Refusing to make similar statements of loyalty Du Bois was gradually ousted from the NAACP and Robeson was consistently accused of being a communist.

Despite severe pressures by the U.S. government and castigations by fellow civil rights activists, Du Bois and Robeson continued to link racial discrimination in the U.S. to the oppression endured by colonized peoples in the Third World. Indeed, in a speech at the Paris Peace Conference on April 21, 1949 Paul Robeson was reported to have declared,

We colonial peoples have contributed to the building of the United States and are determined to share in its wealth. We denounce the policy of the United States government which is similar to that of Hitler and Goebbels. We want peace and liberty and will combat for them along with the Soviet Union, the democracies of eastern Europe, China and Indonesia... It is unthinkable that American Negroes could go to war on behalf of those who have oppressed us for generations against the Soviet Union which in one generation has raised our people to full human dignity.²⁸

²⁷ Claude A. Barnett Papers, Part 3: Subject Files on Black Americans, 1918-1967, Series B, Colleges and Universities, 1918-1967: reel 16.

²⁸ Robeson's speech at the Paris Peace conference remains a topic of debate among historians and others who evaluate Robeson's career. For example, Martha Biondi and Robeson biographer Martin Duberman contend that Robeson was misquoted at the Paris Peace Conference. Paul Robeson Jr. and Robeson's granddaughter Susan Robeson, however, have maintained that the quote accurately reflects Robeson's political perspective. See, Susan Robeson, *The Whole World in His Hands* (New Jersey: Citadel Press, 1981), Martin Duberman, *Paul Robeson* (New York: The New Press, 1989), Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*.

Robeson's comparative perspective U.S. foreign and domestic policy directly undermined Cold War notions of American exceptionalism. Unfortunately, Robeson's and Du Bois' conceptualization of anti-colonial solidarity and racial oppression were forced to the sidelines of racial politics in the United States during the 1950s.

Through the Smith Act, the House Un-American Committee, and the actions of the State Department the dynamic career of Paul Robeson was severely impeded, and the ability of Du Bois and Robeson to participate in overseas political conferences was restricted. Except for a small number of revolutionary activists such as Ella Baker, Jack O'Dell, and Robert Williams who remained active within the NAACP or SCLC, it was liberal leaders who embraced anti-communism and a narrow vision of racial discrimination as exclusion from an exceptional nation who were pushed to the forefront of the civil rights movement during the 1950s.²⁹ The isolation of Du Bois and Robeson – arguably the two most prominent anti-colonial activists during the 1940s – produced a considerable fissure with the political leadership of Third World national liberation movements during the 1950s. This gap was clearly visible during the Bandung Conference of 1955.

On April 18, 1955, only two days before Richard J. Daley was inaugurated as mayor of Chicago, leaders from Africa and Asia convened an international meeting at Bandung, Indonesia. Hosted by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Indonesian president Ahmed Sukarno, the Bandung Conference was an unprecedented effort by Third World leaders to create a non-aligned political bloc that would work to end colonialism. By excluding western countries and including the participation of representatives from twenty-nine African and Asian nations, the Bandung conference received extensive attention by the press and even greater skepticism by U.S. foreign policy makers. According to diplomatic historian Jason Parker,

²⁹ See, Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999) and Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

The meeting marked the first time that the decolonizing world had come together to attempt to find a shared voice, one capable of transcending race, region, and the Cold War dichotomy. The Bandung Conference posed a diplomatic challenge to both Cold War camps, but one “particularly discomfiting” to the United States.³⁰

Despite the over-representation of Cold War political interests, ideological differences, and political personalities, the delegates that attended the Afro-Asian conference forged a profound unity based upon a commitment to anti-racism and the sanctity of the right to self-determination. In one of the most astute reflections on the significance of the Bandung Conference historian Vijay Prashad explains,

...what is still important about Bandung is that it allowed these leaders to meet together, celebrate the demise of formal colonialism, and pledge themselves to some measure of joint struggle against the forces of imperialism. Despite the infighting, debates, strategic postures, and sighs of annoyance, Bandung produced something: a belief that two thirds of the world’s people had the right to return to their own burned cities, cherish them, and rebuild them in their own image.³¹

Though several international conferences of great importance would follow, it was the spirit of liberation cultivated at Bandung that reverberated throughout the Third World for decades afterwards.³²

This spirit of anti-colonial unity was sensed immediately by Richard Wright, the outspoken author with profound ties to Chicago. Granted a press pass that allowed him to travel to Indonesia, Wright provided an insightful report of the Bandung Conference in *The Color Curtain* (1956). Witnessing the development of a Bandung spirit of liberation firsthand, he wrote,

As I watched the dark-faced delegates work at the conference, I saw a strange thing happen. Before Bandung, most of these men had been strangers, and on the first day they were constrained with one another, bristling with charge and countercharge against America and/or Russia. But, as the days passed, they slowly cooled off, and another mood set in. What was happening? As they came to know one another better, their fear and distrust evaporated. Living for centuries under Western rule, they had become filled with a deep sense of how greatly they differed from one another. But now face to face, their ideological defenses dropped. Negative

³⁰ Jason Parker, “Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era” *Diplomatic History* 30, no. 5 (November 2006), 870.

³¹ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 32-33.

³² To this point theorist Samir Amin states, “The 1955 Bandung conference which saw the tide of Afro-Asian solidarity and of the Non-Aligned Movement (non-aligned on liberal globalization these days) set in motion a first round of national liberation movements which primed the world for coming changes. Whatever the limitations of the systems arising from this first phase of independence from imperialism, and whatever the illusions they may have inspired (not unusual in history), it was their decline which made possible dominant capital’s counter-offensive and the deployment of a new imperialism in the form of globalization.” in, Samir Amin, “World Conference on Racism: Asking the Real Questions” *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 49 (December 8, 2001), 4523.

unity bred by a feeling that they had to stand together against a rapacious West turned into something that hinted of the positive. They began to sense their combined strength; they began to taste blood.³³

As Wright understood, it was shared experiences of racial injustice that led to the overcoming of racial borders and the realization that Third World peoples were responsible for creating a peaceful world given the hyper-militarization that characterized geo-politics during the Cold War. Indeed, it was Wright – the former member of the communist party, prolific author, and student of the nefarious effects of racism in the United States – who was in the prime position to understand the political significance of the unity established at Bandung. He explained,

The results of the deliberations of the of the delegate at Bandung would be, of course, addressed to the people and the statesmen of the Western powers, for it was the moral notions—or lack of them – of those powers that were in question here; it had been against the dominance of those powers that these delegates and their populations had struggled for so long. After two days of torrid public speaking and four days of discussions in closed sessions, the Asian-African Conference issued a communiqué. It was a sober document, brief and to the point; yet it did not hesitate to lash out, in terse legal prose, at racial injustice and colonial exploitation. The Bandung communiqué was no appeal in terms of sentiment or ideology, to communism. Instead, it carried exalted overtones of the stern dignity of ancient and proud peoples who yearned to play a role in human affairs.³⁴

Among other significant statements, the communiqué referred to by Wright condemned “the existence of colonialism in many parts of Asia and Africa ... re-affirmed the determination of Asian-African peoples to eradicate every trace of racialism that might exist in their own countries” and “called upon the powers concerned to grant freedom and independence to such peoples.”³⁵ Given his transnational political background, and the opportunity to witness the process in which such ideas were agreed upon, it is no wonder that Wright was disturbed by the contrasting political message delivered at Bandung on behalf of blacks by Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr.

The fissure that developed during the 1950s between the liberal political leadership of the civil rights movement in the United States and Third World national liberation movements was exemplified

³³ Richard Wright, *The Color Curtain*, in *Black Power* (New York: Harper Perennials, 2008), 571.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 593.

³⁵ Homer A. Jack, “Africa At Bandung” *Africa Today* 2, no. 2 (May-June, 1955), 12-13.

by the actions of Adam Clayton Powell at the Bandung conference. A former member of the Council of African Affairs along with Du Bois and Robeson, Powell left the CAA in the late 1940s and embraced the Cold War notion that racial discrimination created the conditions for communism to thrive.³⁶ Though dissuaded by the State department from attending the Bandung conference, Powell traveled to Indonesia as part of the U.S. sponsored Philippine delegation. Tellingly, W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson were denied passports by the State Department and were only able to send letters of support and solidarity. As a result, it was Powell who stood to represent the political perspective of African Americans and the civil rights movement at Bandung. As most Third World leaders who attended the conference blasted imperialism and racialism, the Congressman from Harlem attacked communism and defiantly argued that blacks were experiencing considerable racial progress in the United States. Historian Penny Von Eschen explains,

New York Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. had been one of the most prominent participants in the liberal and left coalitions of the 1940s that had become impossible during the Cold War... In Bandung, despite attacking the Eisenhower administration for declining to send a message to the conference for its blindness in failing to recognize the significance of the meeting, Powell opportunistically stepped in as an unabashed defender of the West... Powell also went out of his way to rebuke Robeson and staunchly defended America though invoking the dominant Cold War pro-civil rights argument that “American must ‘clean up’ her own race problem as swiftly as possible in order to reassure the people of Asia.”³⁷

With Du Bois and Robeson unavailable to respond, it was Richard Wright who challenged Powell’s testimony of improved race relations in the United States. In the *Colored Curtain* Wright recalled, “en route to Bandung, [Powell] began holding press conferences to defend the position of the United States in relation to the Negro problem. The Congressman gave us Americans a cleaner bill of racial health than we deserve.”³⁸ Though he commended Powell for being the only delegate who “raised the Negro problem in the United States” it was obvious to Wright that Powell’s actions operated to sever the black

³⁶ Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, 170-71.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Wright, *The Colored Curtain*, 573-574.

liberation struggle in the U.S. from the anti-imperialist spirit of liberation built at Bandung, even though he may have recognized the significance of the meeting.

Adam Clayton Powell Jr. certainly did not speak for all African Americans or civil rights activists at Bandung. Nor was a transnational politics of anti-colonialism totally eliminated in the United States during the post-WWII era. Indeed, historian John J. Munro and others have shown, an active anti-colonial front comprised of intellectuals, artists, and activists continued to operate in the United States despite the repression that characterized the Cold War. According to Munro,

Despite anticommunism's ability to destroy the institutional structure of much of the labor and antiracist left in the U.S., 1945-1960 saw the continued development of an intellectual infrastructure of resistance, in which lines of communication remained open, ideas were exchanged in books, articles, and letters, and struggles were renewed at further gatherings and as a result of the achievement of independence itself.³⁹

The dynamic work performed by a constellation of anti-colonial activists and cultural workers, however, should not eclipse the qualitative and substantial political shift in racial politics that enveloped many influential civil rights activists and organizations during the late 1950s. In this sense, the tension between Wright and Powell at Bandung was symbolic as the liberal perspective of integration and improved governance in the U.S. expressed by the long-time Harlem civil rights leader overshadowed the anti-colonial understanding of a racial state maintained by Wright. In the final analysis, it must be admitted that state sanctioned political repression during the Cold War was a governmental strategy of obliteration that successfully pushed the liberal civil rights paradigm to the forefront of racial politics by the late 1950s. A closer look at the formation of the Council of Community Organizations in Chicago is illustrative of this process.

More than a decade before the horrific death of Emmett Till galvanized the civil rights movement across the country, the police murder of Elmo Vasser in May of 1943 brought together a

³⁹ John J. Munro "The Anticolonial Front: Cold War Imperialism and the Struggle Against Global White Supremacy, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 2009), 21. On popular front cultural production see Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Verso, 1997).

range of local anti-racist activists and organizations in Chicago. At a community meeting at the AME chapel in Morgan Park, for example, over eight hundred people gathered to strategize a united response to Vasser's death. According to the *Chicago Defender*,

Among the organizations represented were the Committee on Racial Equality, the Chicago Negro Council and the McDuffie Freeman Post No.822, of the American Legion. Cash and pledges were also received from Father John A. Ryan, pastor of Holy Name of Mary Catholic church; Atty. Oscar Howard, and president of the local branch of the N.A.A.C.P; State Representatives Corneal A. Davis and Ernest Greene, Assistant Corporation Counsel Fred (Duke) Slater, Ishmael Flory, C.I.O; State Senator C.C. Wimbish, Miss Irene McCoy Gaines, president of the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs; Atty. Thomas C. Clark, Z.T. Braden, defeated candidate for alderman of the third ward, and Rev. W.N. Reid, pastor of Arnett Chapel.⁴⁰

As the *Defender's* list indicates, a wide range of community, religious, labor, and political actors joined outraged residents of Morgan Park to challenge the racist murder of Elmo Vasser. The presence of local communist leader Ishmael Flory alongside CORE members, NAACP reps and catholic and protestant leaders attests to the fact that Chicago was also a location of dynamic interactions between liberal, Christian humanist, and radical anti-racist movements during World War II.⁴¹ On this particular occasion over three thousand dollars was donated towards a legal fund to prosecute the officer responsible.

Though most historical examinations of the impact of the Cold War ignore Chicago, local historians have continued to present research that unveils the city as a vibrant center of cultural production, community formation, and political activism during the post-World War II era. Adam Green's study of black life beyond insurgency in *Selling the Race: Culture Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (2007), for example, reveals the complexity of political and cultural agency in Bronzeville during the 1940s and early 1950s. He demonstrates that within the Black Belt were a variety of institutions and charismatic leaders that offered the community anything but a singular vision

⁴⁰ Sam Lacy, "Big Rally Demands Trial of Cop Killer of Youth" *The Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

⁴¹ Ishmael Flory worked closely with Paul Robeson and W.E.B. Du Bois during the 1940s. See Jon F. Rice, "Black Revolutionaries on Chicago's West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party" (Ph.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1998), and Martin Duberman, *Paul Robeson* chapter 22.

of resistance. Indeed, highly active women's clubs, artists associated with the Southside Community Arts Center, academics like Horace Cayton, and St. Claire Drake, black-owned business associations, a thriving music industry, and illicit organizations contributed to a dynamic process of identity and community formation in the rapidly expanding Black Belt.

The Packinghouse Labor Center located at 4859 S. Wabash Ave was at this time also a center of black labor resistance as many continued to participate in the labor movement and communist organizations.⁴² In fact, despite the reification of the Cold War, communists continued to maintain the respect of many residents in the Black Metropolis. Historian Jon F. Rice explains,

Historians have not recorded the radicalism in the black community before the 1960s. Yet, this radicalism involved some of the most talented men and women in the black community. Radical activists included Brown Squire, who ran for state office in 1932, political activists and writers Claude Lightfoot, attorney William Patterson, novelist Richard Wright; and their allies included writer Oscar Brown Sr., journalist Richard Durham of the *Chicago Defender* (and later *Muhammed Speaks*); Edward Dotey, founder of the Consolidated Trades Council, who ran for the state senate; and Joe Jefferson, founder of the Negro Labor Relations Board. These people were not afraid of being associated with the Communists and ignored the obvious risk of being identified as a Communist by the police, and/or blackballed by the economically powerful. There were evidently thousand more black people who admired the Communists but were afraid of making that admiration public.⁴³

Despite the fears of being associated with “subversives,” residents and workers from the Black Belt frequently attended political rallies, and events. For example, Green notes that after Robeson's return from the Paris Peace Conference in September of 1949, “several thousand listeners” crowded into a church to attend his concert.⁴⁴

It should not be forgotten, however, that community formation in Chicago during the post-WWII era – whether black, Puerto Rican, or Appalachian white -- occurred at the same time, and in relation to, the consolidation of a neo-liberal governmental regime that thrived upon racial borders and conflict in the city. In the same year that Vasser was killed, for example, the Chicago Plan Commission was

⁴² On black participation in the communist party in Chicago see, Jon F. Rice, “Black Revolutionaries on Chicago's West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party” (Ph.D. Dissertation: Northern Illinois University, 1998).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁴ Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 102.

formed and began working on urban renewal plans and the creative destruction of Chicago.⁴⁵ Furthermore, in the decade following the end of World War II, voices that championed working-class unity and inter-racial solidarity were gradually silenced. On April 27, 1945, for example, Paul Robeson shared the stage with Mayor Edward Kelly at an outdoor rally organized by the Packinghouse union. By the summer of 1952 Robeson was prevented from performing at the Jubilee for Peace and Freedom at the Tabernacle Baptist Church and was unable to secure an alternative indoor location due to the pressures of city officials. Thousands attended an impromptu concert in Washington Park, but a message of intolerance was clearly sent by city officials.

The election of Richard J. Daley in 1955 accelerated the management of radical political dissent and the containment of established race leaders in the Black Belt. Reflecting on the impact of Daley's election Green explains,

While black voters constituted the core of the coalition removing incumbent Mayor Martin Kennelly early in 1955, the advent of Richard J. Daley's reign brought neither expansion, nor even preservation of local black political authority. The newly elected mayor moved quickly to box in Congressman Dawson and other established race politicians, diminish and restructure the South and Westside Democratic ward organizations, and begin implementing the system of clientage that would come to be known as "plantation politics."⁴⁶

As Green acknowledges, Daley's election ushered in a new era in which a politics of dependency was effectively used to control black political and religious leaders and to maintain many community institutions safely within the orbit of the Democratic political machine.⁴⁷ Furthermore, black activists with connections to communist organizations were increasingly harassed. Indeed, Claude Lightfoot, the head of the Illinois communist party was convicted under the Smith Act in early 1955.⁴⁸ Therefore, around the same time that the death of Emmett Till shocked many people into action, and Third World nations like Ghana were on the verge of achieving national independence, the most outspoken voices of

⁴⁵ On the politics of creative destruction see David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

⁴⁶ Green, *Selling the Race*, 181.

⁴⁷ Rice notes that black politicians like Dawson were adversely affected by the elimination of illicit organizations in the Black Belt that could independently fund black politicians.

⁴⁸ Lightfoot was sentenced to five years in prison, though his sentence was later overturned.

working-class solidarity in black Chicago were displaced from the forefront of local civil rights initiatives.

The repression of militant activists does not mean that rich traditions of communism, Pan-Africanism, and anti-colonialism seized to exist in Chicago. For example, in an address to the first Black Arts Conference at Atlanta University in 1960 the renowned Chicago sculptor and communist Marion Perkins declared,

We must begin to see that the African liberation struggle aids our struggle. It is time that we should drink at the fountain of African culture in order to better know our brother. It is my hope that we can establish a cultural link with rising Africa, and the we darker people marching toward the goal of freedom will trample in the dust the legacy of arrogant superiority, prejudice, and race hate bequested by certain exponents in the Western World.⁴⁹

To be sure, the Nation of Islam and smaller militant organizations like RAM attracted many by advocating principles of black self-determination and community empowerment. There is no denying, however, that as a result of strategic governmental actions aimed at eliminating communism, that a politics of anti-colonial solidarity and self-determination was publicly denounced and pushed to the spheres of cultural production and everyday resistance.⁵⁰ As a result, organized efforts to desegregate the city's neighborhoods, schools, and job sites during the late 1950s and early 1960s replicated a politics of integration versus a politics of liberation.

In their biography of Daley entitled *American Pharoah: Mayor Richard J. Daley His Battle for Chicago and the Nation* (2000), Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor show that in December 1957 Daley and William Dawson conspired to oust Willoughby Abner as the head of the NAACP in Chicago. Abner, a former United Auto Workers official, was outspoken in his opposition to Daley's politics of dependency on the Southside. According to Cohen and Taylor,

[Abner] believed in demonstration rather than litigation. He had been the driving force behind the 1955 march outside City Hall to protest Daley's failure to act decisively on Trumbull Park.

⁴⁹ Marion Perkins, *Problems of the Black Artist* (Chicago: Free Black Press, 1971). Much gratitude is extended to Useni Perkins for sharing this speech with me and for the many conversations about his father's career.

⁵⁰ Richard Wright's *Native Son* explores the complicated relationship between white communists and the black community.

Abner also rallied Chicago blacks behind the civil rights struggle then unfolding in the South. He championed, in particular, the case of Emmett Till, the fourteen-year-old Chicagoan lynched in Mississippi in 1955. In June 1957, more than seven thousand NAACP members and sympathizers turned out to hear the Reverend Ralph Abernathy describe his work with Martin Luther King Jr. organizing the Montgomery bus boycott in Alabama. Abner's newly energized NAACP was attracting unprecedented levels of support in the black community.⁵¹

Using patronage workers to flood the rolls of the NAACP chapter and manipulate its elections, Abner's position was usurped by Theodore Jones, a businessman with ties to the machine. Cohen and Taylor explain that soon after the elections, "Daley quickly threw his support behind the politically neutered NAACP chapter. He declared a citywide "NAACP Tag Day" in May 1958, and urged Chicagoans to buy NAACP tags that volunteers were selling on street corners."⁵² The removal of Abner and the transformation of the Chicago NAACP chapter should not be underestimated. According to historian Christopher Reed,

Black discontent with the ubiquitous racial status quo was fueled by major events, such as the disturbances at the Trumbull Park Homes on the Far South Side between 1953 and 1957, the 1955 murder of fourteen-year-old Chicagoan Emmett Till while he was on vacation in Mississippi, and the epochal year-long Montgomery Alabama bus boycott. The only organization that concerned itself with all of these problems without regard to the consequences was the Chicago NAACP. Through its fearless advocacy, it achieved both institutional status and primacy among protest organizations during the decade...

Significantly, Dawson's action neutralized the city's primary civic force at a point in the city's history at which it appeared that, if Chicagoans were to experience racial equality, it would come as a result of the Chicago NAACP's succeeding in its ideological mission along militant lines.⁵³

With the transformation of the NAACP and firm control over Dawson and the black vote, Daley certainly had reasons to act confidently during Kwame Nkrumah's visit in July of the same year.

The repression of black radicals and Daley's control over community leaders and institutions were politically significant in and of itself. What was equally disturbing, however, was that the representation of racial domination and freedom disseminated to the public changed decisively. For

⁵¹ Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor, *American Pharaoh: Richard J. Daley His Battle for Chicago and the Nation* (Boston: Little, Brown, May, 2000), 205.

⁵² Ibid., 207. Also see, Christopher Robert Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership, 1910-1966* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

⁵³ Reed, *The Chicago NAACP*, 166, 191.

example, in 1948 one could listen to Paul Robeson publicly denounce local capitalists and political corruption, link segregation in Chicago to white supremacy in Africa, urge unity between all workers, and remind them that “In the end, the people – the people are the power.”⁵⁴ By the time of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, however, a liberal civil rights paradigm that centered upon ending *de facto* segregation and achieving African American integration predominated in the city. Indeed on the centennial of the emancipation proclamation in 1963 Dr. St. Clair Drake delivered a series of lectures at Roosevelt University entitled “The American Dream and the Negro: 100 years of Freedom.” The flyer for the series of three lectures on emancipation, education and integration read,

The story of the American Negro in America involves a prolonged struggle to break the shackles of slavery and a persistent faith on the part of both Negroes and their white fellow citizens that the key to eventual integration is education viewed in its broadest sense. The country is now re-appraising both the extent to which the efforts toward full emancipation have borne fruit and the assumptions underlying this faith. The problem of the moment is how the unfinished business of emancipation can effectively be concluded.⁵⁵

This concise statement, I argue captures the spirit of integration that characterized civil rights activism in Chicago and thus the existence of a political fissure with national liberation movements.

Undoubtedly groups like CORE, the Chicago Urban League, and the NAACP waged impressive anti-segregation campaigns, produced extensive studies and surveys on racial inequalities, and educated communities about the detrimental impact of segregation in Chicago. And certainly there was considerable debate and disparate viewpoints that existed within and between civil rights groups about organizing strategies and tactics. Nevertheless, the fact remains that as civil rights activists bridged the regional gap between northern and southern movements, a profound political fissure developed with Third World national liberation movements. In other words, as many political leaders in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and militant nationalists like Malcolm X of the Nation of Islam mobilized resistance by attributing oppression to the racial nature of imperialist governance, many civil rights activists no

⁵⁴ Quoted in, “Paul Robeson’s Chicago History, 1921-1958,” *Illinois Standard*, September 18, 1948; Available online, http://www.cpsr.cs.uchicago.edu/robeson/links/chicago/chi_tim6.html

⁵⁵ Claude A. Barnett Papers, Part 3: Subject Files on Black Americans, 1918-1967, Series B, Colleges and Universities, 1918-1967: reel 16.

longer addressed coloniality in Chicago and the right to self-determination. Instead of challenging local black political dependency, most religious and secular organizations in the city mobilized community protests and established an anti-racist solidarity during the early 1960s on the basis of citizenship and the liberal notion that the social contract could be rectified through equal access to housing, jobs, and educational opportunities.⁵⁶ This political fissure was clearly visible in the early 1960s when Chicago was a hotbed of civil rights activism and coalition building.

During the early 1960s activists staged wade-ins at segregated beaches, picketed businesses that refused to hire blacks, and waged an unprecedented struggle to desegregate the Chicago public schools. Building upon the pivotal *Brown v. Board* decision in 1954 and research articles and studies written afterwards that documented the persistence of school segregation in Chicago, activists organized a series of protests, actions, rallies, and conferences.⁵⁷ Disgusted at the overcrowded classrooms, the substandard education their children received, and the denial of segregation by school Superintendant Benjamin Willis, thousands of parents and youth joined the movement. According to Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, authors of *Confronting the Color Line*, the seminal study on the Chicago Civil rights movement, the spring of 1962 was an important period when organized conferences and political events brought a range of activists together and resulted in the creation of the first city-wide civil rights coalition. They explain that the civil rights movement in Chicago included the likes of outspoken alderman Leon Depres, Northwestern sociologist Raymond Mack, Edwin Berry Director of the Chicago Urban League, Raymond Harth a lead attorney for TWO's *Webb* case, among many others.⁵⁸ For example, at one city-wide seminar entitled "How to Achieve Quality and Equality of Education in Chicago Public Schools held on March 24, 1962, Pickering and Anderson explain that,

⁵⁶ For a similar but broader argument see, Singh, "Racial Justice Beyond Civil Rights" in *Black is a Country*. On the social contract see, Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997).

⁵⁷ Under Willoughby the NAACP published a scathing critique of school segregation in *Crisis* entitled "De Facto Segregation in Chicago Public Schools" in February of 1958.

⁵⁸ The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) filed *Webb vs. the Board of Education of the City of Chicago* on September 18, 1961 charging racial segregation in the Chicago Public Schools. The case was dismissed in July of 1962.

Representatives from community organizations, race relations agencies, organized labor, the Catholic Interracial council, American Jewish Congress, Citizens Schools Committee, PTAs, public and private welfare agencies, Protestant ministers, City Council members, other political figures, attorneys, and even the Chicago Commission on Human Relations were involved in leading workshops.⁵⁹

Soon, many of these activist and organizations joined the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO).

After a series of separate grassroots protests, the CCCO was formed in April of 1962 to initiate a united campaign to integrate the schools.⁶⁰ The coalition brought together an impressive array of community leaders including Reverend Arthur Brazier of The Woodlawn Organization, housing activist Florence Scala, radical educators Timuel Black of the Negro American Labor Council and Al Raby of the Teachers for Integrated Schools, and attorney Lawrence Kennon, among dozens of other dedicated activists. In the early fall of 1963 and again in the spring of 1964 the CCCO organized massive boycotts of the Chicago Public schools. During October of 1963 an estimated 224,770 students participated in a coordinated school boycott.⁶¹

In many ways, the period between the school boycotts in the fall of 1963 and the attendance of 75,000 people at Soldier Field for an Illinois civil rights rally on June 21, 1964 represented the highpoint of civil rights activism in Chicago. Historian Andrew Diamond explains,

A range of grassroots civil rights organizations developed out of this moment of school activism including the Parents Council for Integrated Schools and the Chicago Area Friends of SNCC (CAFSNCC), and several national organizations – the SNCC, the SCLC, and CORE – began to set their sights on Chicago’s increasingly militant school reform campaign as well spring of inspiration. As the end of the summer [of 1963] neared with increasingly militant protests against mobile classrooms springing up in several black neighborhoods, Chicagoans and the rest of the nation beheld what seemed like non-violence’s finest hour when more than two hundred

⁵⁹ Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 90.

⁶⁰ The CCCO is examined in several studies including, Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*, David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Harper Collins, 1986) and James Ralph, *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Boston: Harvard College, 1993), and Andrew Diamond, *Mean Streets: Chicago Youths and the Everyday Struggle For Employment in the Multiracial City, 1908-1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

⁶¹ Pickering and Anderson, *Confronting the Color Line*, 119.

thousand gathered in Washington to hear Martin Luther King evoke his “dream” of racial integration.⁶²

As Diamond suggests the series of school desegregation efforts propelled the CCCO to the forefront of anti-racist political leadership in Chicago. Like those that gathered at Bandung, political differences and fears of unity were overcome by a common outrage at the persistence of racial inequalities and white supremacy in the city. Unlike, the spirit of liberation that united political leaders at the Bandung conference, however, the CCCO did not make self-determination a fundamental element of freedom and solidarity. In fact, Bernard Lafayette, a leading SCLC activist in Chicago recalled that the decision to bring Dr. Martin Luther King to Chicago in 1966 was based on the existence of a strong non-violent movement for integration led by the CCCO. He explained,

The CCCO was perhaps the strongest organization of its kind in an urban city because we had real diversity. It was really interesting because you had non-clergy leadership in Al Raby. So it didn't just become a religious group of people as such which would have been fine. But you had the diversity with different people with different politics and orientations and yet had unity. You had the larger organization with local chapters like the NAACP and the Urban League also involved... But there was background and movement already in Chicago. And the truth of the matter is Martin Luther King never tried to start a movement in any place where was not already a community in motion. So Chicago was chosen because Chicago was already in motion.⁶³

It is certainly the case that the CCCO and the Chicago Freedom Movement coalition with King brought together a diversity of political perspectives, created an upsurge in community participation, and involved courageous efforts by community activists. Yet, the political leadership of the CCCO and later King ultimately decided upon implementing a political strategy which consisted of eliminating barriers to integration by preparing legal cases, pressuring businesses and institutions, shaming the mayor into action, and negotiating agreements.

There is no doubt that the work of CCCO organizations mobilized thousands, successfully exposed the “northern problem” and the violent nature of white supremacy in the city, resulted in important legal victories, and contributed to the removal of Superintendent Willis. It is also undeniable

⁶² Andrew Diamond, *Mean Streets*, 245.

⁶³ “Bernard Lafayette: The Roots of the Movement,” Available online, <http://cfm40.middlebury.edu/node/51>

that as an anti-racist coalition that featured “inter-racial” solidarity the CCCO was a forerunner to the Original Rainbow Coalition. However, it remains true that the political fissure between Third World movements and liberal civil rights leaders in Chicago continued to widen. In January 1966, the same month that Dr. King moved into an apartment on the Westside of Chicago and initiated the Chicago Freedom Movement, Third World leaders gathered in solidarity in Havana for the seminal Tri-Continental conference. As civil rights activists debated the strategies and tactics for an open housing campaign in Chicago that summer, in Cuba Third World leaders were considering a written message of solidarity sent by Che entitled “Create Two, Three, Many Vietnams.” Guevara, who was in Tanzania at the time of the conference, argued,

Let us develop genuine proletarian internationalism, with international proletarian armies. Let the flag under which we fight be the scared cause of the liberation of humanity, so that to die under the colors of Vietnam, Venezuela, Guatemala, Laos, Guinea, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil – to mention only the current scenes of armed struggle – will be equally glorious and desirable for a Latin American, an Asian, and African and even a European.

Every drop of blood spilled in a land under whose flag one was not born is experience gathered by the survivor to be applied later in the struggle for the liberation of one’s own country. And every people that liberates itself is a step forward in the battle for the liberation of one’s own people...

In our world in struggle, everything related to disputes around tactics and methods of action for the attainment of limited objectives must be analyzed with the respect due to the opinions of others. As for the great strategic objective – the total destruction of imperialism by means of struggle – on that we must be intransigent.⁶⁴

Guevara’s advocacy of armed struggle and proletarian internationalism as the means to achieve self-determination and liberation signaled a bridging of Third World national liberation movements and anti-imperialist class struggle. It also sharply contrasted the politics of non-violence and desegregation advocated by the Chicago Freedom Movement.

In the final analysis the efforts of the CCCO, the Chicago Freedom Movement, and Dr. Martin Luther King to desegregate Chicago were effectively contained. To understand why the spirit of

⁶⁴ Che Guevara, “Create Two, Three, Many Vietnams” in *Global Justice: Liberation and Socialism* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 2002), 61.

integration championed by the CCCO failed to desegregate the city, and why many activists in Chicago developed an oppositional consciousness of self-determination and solidarity, it is necessary to account for the evolution of governmentality in Chicago into the 1960s.

As described in the previous chapter, Chicago was a central location where a strategy of neo-liberal governmentality was consolidated in the decades following the Great Depression. As a response to class conflict and “inter-racial” solidarity at the point of production during the 1930s, a new regime of governance was implemented that no longer aimed at disciplining racial conduct or achieving racial harmony. Instead, the neo-liberal state that evolved in Chicago worked to govern human capital through the creation of institutions and the passage of laws that produce a legal and regulated environment of individual enterprise and personal responsibility. By producing an environment for individual competition, the neo-liberal strategy of governance considers income potential and wealth the signifier of an individual’s human capital and desirability to society.

The creation of a social formation governed entirely by market analysis does not mean that race no longer mattered and that a post-racial society was achieved. In fact, poor people or those that lack human capital are transformed into racialized subjects who lack the innate capacity to compete in a pure market-driven capitalist modernity. Moreover, neo-liberal governmentality thrives upon the hyper-visibility of segregation and the incitement of racial conflict as acts based upon race consciousness operate to reinforce the state as the non-racial guarantor of universal equality, and to guise the racialization of poverty. Unfortunately, scholars have failed to examine post-World War II urban politics in Chicago, the containment of civil rights activism, and the emergence of movements for self-determination and community control through this lens.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Historians have provided disparate reasons why civil rights activism and particularly the CCCO failed to transform Chicago. Scholars such as Pickering and Anderson have built upon earlier arguments made by Arnold Hirsch that highlight the virulent resistance to integration posed by ethnic whites that remained in the city when many others fled to the suburbs. According to this perspective, whites were able to effectively mobilize resources, were willing to use violence, and were able to influence politicians and institutional leaders to retain segregation and white privilege. In this sense, the failed outcome of local civil rights movements were the result of an urban politics that pitted black communities, civil rights organizations and

Though compartmentalized studies of white flight, housing, community formation, urban renewal, and the impact of deindustrialization have unveiled critical aspects of post-World War II racial formation and urban politics in Chicago, they have ignored the historical development of governmentality in the city.⁶⁶ Similarly, scholars have failed to place civil rights activism, Black Power, and collective white resistance to desegregation in relation to the racial politics of neo-liberal governance. As a result, researchers have been unable to adequately theorize the political paralysis of the CCCO and the Chicago Freedom Movement, the persistence of segregation in the city, and the evolution of urban politics and local social movements once Dr. Martin Luther King left Chicago in 1967. Even a minor consideration of governmentality during the postwar era reveals that demands for desegregation were contained because they advocated an equality of opportunities and thus worked in tandem with the objectives of neo-liberal governmentality in the city.

Several scholars have demonstrated that Chicago was a center of wartime and post-WWII migrations. Due to termination programs thousands of indigenous peoples were displaced to urban centers like Minneapolis and Chicago.⁶⁷ Facing increased racial hostility and the prospects of

allies against racist white communities and political bureaucrats who shared a “civic credo” and disdain for an integrated society. Other historians, such as Andrew Diamond and Adam Fairclough have attributed the inability of the non-violent civil rights movement to achieve its goals to political tensions over black power that ultimately resulted in the fracturing of the civil rights movement. In this case, internal disputes over the politics of militancy resulted in the creation of new organizations and the emergence of political leaders that pursued militant strategies of social change.

Building upon the perspectives of William Julius Wilson Urban sociologists have argued that de-industrialization and the abandonment of the inner city by manufacturing industries created conditions ripe for urban rage and radicalism to germinate. Finally, John Rice has proposed that the Chicago civil rights leaders were profoundly aware of repression and the perils that could befall those who pursued a political strategy that threatened to undermine the machine. Rice points to the 1963 murder of Westside Alderman Benjamin Willis as a political message that reverberated throughout the movement and prevented many from embracing militancy. Certainly, each of these interpretations provides significant insights into the local political environment prior to the arrival of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1966. By attributing the demise of civil rights struggles to the internal dynamics of organizations, the desires of white communities, and the manipulations of Mayor Daley, however, scholars have silenced the ways neo-liberal governmentality effectively foreclosed the possibility of desegregation in Chicago.

⁶⁶ I am thinking here of studies such as Amanda Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's Westside* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), D. Bradford Hunt, *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) and Nicholas De Genova and Ana. Y. Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Citizenship* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

⁶⁷ See, Rachel Buff, *Immigration and the Political Economy of Home: West Indian Brooklyn and American Indian Minneapolis, 1945-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) and James B. LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native*

employment, African Americans from places like Mississippi and Alabama also moved in large numbers to Chicago during the Second Great Migration. They were joined by poor whites from the south who were systematically displaced by the expansion of industrial mining in the Appalachian region, and many Puerto Rican laborers who were recruited to fill labor shortages in places like Chicago through Operation Bootstrap.⁶⁸ Of course, other ethnic groups including many Asian-Americans also migrated to Chicago during this era and began the complicated processes of community formation and home-building.⁶⁹ Despite the migration of hundreds of thousands of whites to suburban areas, Chicago's population only fell by 1.9 percent during the 1950s. According to census data, a sixty five percent increase in the black population of Chicago, and a 328,000 total population increase of non-whites during this period offset the out-migration of whites.⁷⁰ Notably, the anxiety for urban planners – the canaries in the coal mine of social instability – was not overall population loss or an increase in the non-white population. Instead, planners exhibited anxieties over the loss of human capital to the suburbs and the growth of the population of poor people in the city.

These anxieties were made visible in 1963 when the Chicago Community Inventory published its *1960 Local Community Fact Book* through the University of Chicago. Unlike previous studies, this edition featured statistics on Chicago neighborhoods and suburban communities.⁷¹ In the preface, the editors Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber explained,

Americans in Chicago, 1945-75 (Champaign Urbana: University of Illinois, 2002). Using census data LaGrand notes that “Chicago’s American Indian population grew from 274 in 1940 to 775 in 1950, then to 3, 394 in 1960, and to 6,575 in 1970 – more than a twentyfold increase” (3).

⁶⁸ An important study of displacement in Appalachian communities is John Gaventa’s, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980). On the politics of Operation Bootstrap and Puerto Rican migration see, Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

⁶⁹ See Jacalyn D. Harden, *Double Cross: Japanese Americans in Black and White Chicago* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003). On home-building see, Yen Le Espiritu, *Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

⁷⁰ Evelyn Kitigawa and Karl E. Taeuber, *Local Community Fact Book: Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1963).

⁷¹ The focus on regional communities speaks to Robert O. Self’s argument that “Telling urban and suburban histories together moves us beyond generalizations like “white flight” and “black power” to the specific context in which each was

This Local Community Fact Book differs significantly from earlier ones. For the first time it includes detailed data for the entire Chicago-Northwestern Indiana Standard Consolidated area including both the Chicago and Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas... While most of the basic data are drawn from statistics of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, this Fact Book also contains more non-census types of data and analytical data than its predecessors. These items include components of population change between 1950 and 1960, including estimates of net migration and key birth and death rates for community areas and cities of 25,000 or more; data relating to unemployment compensation beneficiaries, public assistance recipients, mental patient admissions, and juvenile delinquency; and data on parks and recreation personnel, and selected institutions.⁷²

To compile this comprehensive knowledge of communities the study drew from a consortium of institutions and relied on committees comprised of leading academics and heads of local and state agencies. Again the preface is revealing as the editors noted,

Many persons and agencies associated in the preparation of this volume. Dr. Alma F. Taeuber revised the 1950 histories for the community areas and assisted in the writing of the histories for the 24 suburbs of 25,000 or more population. Mr. Sheldon Nahmod did the basic research for the suburban histories. A Committee on Supplementary Data for the 1960 Fact Book undertook responsibility for the collection of the non-census materials summarized in Part IV. This committee comprised: Barbara Wallace (Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago), Chairman; Elizabeth Slotkin (Illinois State Employment Service) Zane Polemis (Illinois Public Aid Commission; Edmund D'Elia (Illinois Department of Mental Health; Henry McKay (Institute of Juvenile Research); Vernon Hernlund (Chicago Park District); Frank Bauer (Chicago Board of Health); Paul Zimmerer (Department of City Planning, City of Chicago) Robert Kirchsten (Chicago Board of Education); Richard Myers (Church Federation of Greater Chicago); Evelyn Kitigawa, Beverly Duncan, and Karl Taeuber (Chicago Community Inventory)...

Acknowledgement must also be made of the significant contribution of the Chicago Census Tract Committee which was responsible in cooperation with the U.S Bureau of the Census, for the preparation of the 1960 census tract grid for the Chicago-Northwestern Indiana Standard Consolidated Area. This committee, organized as a subcommittee of the Census Statistics Committee chaired by Philip M. Hauser, Census Tract Key Person for the Chicago Area, included Harold Mayer (Department of Geography, University of Chicago), Chairman; Frank Bauer (Chicago Board of Health); Rudolf T. Ericson (Illinois Bell Telephone Company); John Hamburg (Chicago Area Transportation Study); Evelyn Kitagawa (Chicago Community Inventory, University of Chicago) Ray Nehmer (Chicago Tribune); Robert Seidner (Chicago American); De Ver Sholes (Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry); Edward Taaffe (Department of Geography, Northwestern University); Barbara Wallace (Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago); Thornton K. Ware Jr. (Northeastern Illinois Metropolitan Area Planning Commission); and Paul Zimmerer (Department of City Planning, City of Chicago).⁷³

embedded. Telling them together demonstrates the centrality of metropolitan history to postwar American history," in *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 2.

⁷² Kitigawa and Taeuber, *1960 Local Community Fact Book*, iii.

⁷³ Ibid, iv.

What is important about the above list of committee members and organizations is that it unveils the mobilization of a coalition of urban planners, academics and state agencies at the exact moment when the political leadership of civil rights organizations in Chicago were organizing joint protests and building the relationships that resulted in the CCCO. More importantly, this state sanctioned coalition embarked on a hegemonic neo-liberal project of consolidating knowledge about communities and population that would be central to poverty and urban removal programs throughout the 1960s.

The 1960 Local Community Fact Book also stands out as a significant resource to understand the consolidation of neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago as it produced a new framework for studying and knowing communities. In the introduction the editors explained,

The 75 community areas within the City of Chicago were first delineated more than 30 years ago, through the work of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago... Community areas comprise complete census tracts, so that the regularly published census data for hundreds of tracts can be compiled into more convenient form for studying the characteristics and changes in the characteristics of local communities.

Community areas at the present time are best regarded as statistical units for the analysis of varying conditions within the City of Chicago at a given time and for studying changes over time in conditions within local communities... When community area boundaries were delineated more than 30 years ago, the objective was to define a set of subareas of the city each of which could be regarded as having a history of its own as a community, a name, an awareness on the part of its inhabitants of common interests, and a set of local businesses and organizations oriented to the local community... Over time, there have been major changes in distribution of people and in specific patterns of land use. Rather than revising the boundaries of community areas at each census in an attempt to take account of these changes, there has been a deliberate effort to maintain a constant set of subareas within the city in order to analyze changes in the social, economic and residential structure of the city during the past 30 years.⁷⁴ (emphasis added)

The critical aspects of this statement are twofold. First, the emphasis on gathering knowledge of local communities for regional interests versus national interests illuminates a shift towards a local governmental orientation during the 1960s. Second, the conceptualization of communities as abstract statistical units versus ethnic enclaves unveils an effort on the part of the state to eliminate local histories and ethnic differences. In other words, by the early 1960s civil rights activists in Chicago confronted

⁷⁴ Ibid., xiii.

not only a political machine that repressed militants and dominated through dependency, and white communities that resisted desegregation through violence -- they also faced a neo-liberal growth machine that enumerated *all* communities as comprised of abstract citizens competing for human capital.⁷⁵

With this in mind, it is possible to see that the CCCO, the Chicago Freedom Movement and Dr. Martin Luther King did not fail to desegregate Chicago because of any lack of organizing energy, community participation, or moral deficiency. The movement for desegregation, and the “inter-racial” coalitions that were precursors to the Original Rainbow Coalition, failed to achieve their goals because the spirit of integration that determined the political direction of the movement fit the designs of neo-liberal governmentality. Indeed, W.E. B. Du Bois sensed this when he reflected upon his own career and wrote,

As I now look back, I see in the crusade waged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1910 to 1930, one of the finest efforts of liberalism to achieve human emancipation; and much was accomplished. But the essential difficulty with the liberalism of the twentieth century was not to realize the fundamental change brought about by the world-wide organization of work and trade and commerce.⁷⁶

In other words, the political paralysis that continually stifled groups striving for integration and racial equality in Chicago was due to a failure of political leaders to account for the evolution of state capitalism and neo-liberal governmentality. In fact, demands to eliminate *de facto* barriers to racial equality in order to improve opportunities for blacks in Chicago actually reinforced state sanctioned neo-liberal designs to produce a regulated environment of individual competition.

In 1964, the same year that the last major civil rights act was passed at the federal level, Ruth Moore of the Chicago Plan Commission wrote a small booklet entitled *What Sort of City Should Chicago Be?* In the introduction Moore explained that, “Chicago, like other cities, suffered the

⁷⁵ On the coloniality of enumeration see, Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁷⁶ Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, 765, in Huggins ed. *Du Bois*.

consequences but did not attempt to control the economic and social forces that threatened the city. In proposing these changes Chicago again is pioneering.”⁷⁷ Moore’s pamphlet, which anticipated the release of the Comprehensive Plan of Chicago in 1967, included charts and graphs that demonstrated the growing gap in income between suburban and Chicago communities over time. Consequently, she explained that Chicago was at a decisive moment in its history. She wrote,

The sort of city Chicago should be is the basic question now before its citizens... Is Chicago willing to support a multifaceted effort to control and redirect forces that shape the modern city? Is it willing to build neighborhoods that will hold and attract a diversified people?... Will it counter the changes in technology that draw factories to the outskirts? Can it provide the recreation and cultural riches demanded in an era of increasing leisure? Can the grime, decay, ugliness that are all too prevalent be changed into distinctly urban handsomness? So far no large city has attempted to meet these problems – the problems of all cities – by planning, debating, and choosing a course of action.⁷⁸

The conspicuous absence of any mention of segregation and the civil rights movement in Moore’s analysis is significant. To be certain, she and other planners, politicians, and academics were not oblivious to the movement for racial equality and desegregation in Chicago. Instead, I argue that Moore’s deletion of civil rights demands reveals that the neo-liberal growth machine in Chicago was not troubled by the persistence of segregation in the city.⁷⁹ Indeed, one could say that plans for the creative destruction of Chicago thrived upon the hyper-visibility of segregation and urban despair. After all, hegemonic urban renewal and conservation projects were always justified as programs aimed at eliminating poverty and dilapidated housing in order to improve quality of life.

It is well known that during the postwar era Chicago lost hundreds of thousands of jobs to the suburbs.⁸⁰ There is also consensus that state sanctioned deindustrialization and the movement of industry

⁷⁷ Ruth Moore, *What Sort of City Should Chicago Be* (Chicago: Chicago Plan Commission, 1964).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷⁹ On the politics of growth machines see Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). Notably, Daley was disturbed by TWO’s ability to acquire federal funds and bypass local political dependency.

⁸⁰ Paul L. Street notes that, “Between 1947 and 1961, the city’s share of the metropolitan area’s industrial employment fell from 71 to 54 percent... Chicago’s share of the metropolitan areas labor force fell to less than half by 1969 and to barely a third (34.6 percent) by 1975...In the five years following King’s ill-fated summer in Chicago, the city lost 117,000 such

and capital from Chicago to the suburbs was directly responsible for the creation of an urban “underclass” and spaces of profound despair. Yet, it is often ignored that a regime of neo-liberal governmentality evolved in relation to deindustrialization and regional changes in capital accumulation. In other words, the movement of capital to the suburbs during the post-World War II era required the consolidation of a political machine in Chicago ran by Daley *and* a new hegemony that would control a growing urban populace that was increasingly non-white and impoverished. More importantly, this neo-liberal form of governmentality did not seek to end poverty or to discipline racial conduct. Ironically, as capital accumulation in Chicago increasingly became dependent upon federal dollars for housing, urban renewal, and War on Poverty programs it was spaces of segregation, overcrowding, and poverty that were required to attract federal funding.

It can be said then that over the course of the 1960s Daley’s political machine maintained a colonial politics of dependency while a neo-liberal growth machine also operated in a colonial fashion to enumerate Chicago neighborhoods. Both sides worked to enact a highly profitable campaign of creative destruction. Unfortunately, the civil rights movement and histories of community formation were never divorced from these hegemonic processes. As calls for desegregation by civil rights leaders seemingly fell on deaf ears, Latino, black, and poor whites, among others, were increasingly subjected to a process that sociologist Yen Li Espiritu describes as “differential inclusion.” According to Espiritu,

I define *differential inclusion* as the process whereby a group of people is deemed integral to the nation’s economy, culture, identity, and power – but integral only or precisely because of their designated subordinate standing. Edward Said has described such outcast populations as people whose existence always counts, though their names and identities do not; they are valuable precisely because they are not fully present.⁸¹

In the next chapter I explore how it was experiences of differential inclusion and racialized poverty in Chicago’s outcast communities that shaped the creation of the ORC.

jobs” in *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 116-124.

⁸¹ Yen Lie Espiritu, *Home Bound*, 47.

4.1 Conclusion

At the same time that political leadership in Chicago ignored local dynamics of coloniality and determinedly demanded inclusion into American exceptionalism, in the Third World a profound political transformation was underway. In the decade following the Bandung Conference incidents like the atrocious CIA backed assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961, and acts of U.S. aggression in Vietnam moved many political leaders from a position of non-alignment to one of revolutionary armed struggle against the forces of imperialism. The enormous political gap between Third World national liberation movements and the struggle for desegregation in Chicago was most noticeable with the Summit Agreement in August of 1966. Whereas national liberation movements in places like Vietnam maintained military struggles to achieve self-determination, freedom from colonialism, and to prevent what Nkrumah described as neo-colonialism, Dr. King and local civil rights leaders negotiated an agreement with Daley that did little to end segregation and crippled the movement in Chicago.

In the final years of his life W.E.B. Du Bois chose to close the political fissure that he tried for so long to resist by moving to Ghana at the request of Kwame Nkrumah.⁸² On the day of his funeral on August 29, 1963 Nkrumah broadcasted a tribute to W.E.B. Du Bois which stated,

We mourn the death of Dr. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, a great son of Africa. Dr. Du Bois, in a long life-span of ninety six years, achieved distinction as a poet, historian and sociologist. He was an undaunted fighter for the emancipation of colonial and oppressed people, and pursued this objective throughout his life.⁸³

Du Bois would be followed to Africa in the years to come by many militants including Malcolm X, and James Forman, among others. Like Du Bois, they were dismayed at the failure to achieve social change in the United States and inspired by the ways a commitment to self-determination and anti-colonial

⁸² In contradistinction to the 1960 Local Community Fact Book, Du Bois embarked on writing the *Encyclopedia Africana*. In his last public speech Du Bois explained, “The encyclopedia hopes to eliminate the artificial boundaries created on this continent by colonial masters” in Foner, *Du Bois Speaks*, 323.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 325.

solidarity won several nations their independence. In the case of Malcolm X, experiences abroad transformed his ideas of maintaining a politics of racial separatism in the United States.⁸⁴

Significantly, it would be a group of black youth from West Oakland who at the beginnings of their political careers were inspired by the militancy of Malcolm X that created an organization that would definitively close the political fissure with Third World national liberation movements. Led by Huey P. Newton, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense was founded in 1966, and in the words of historian Donna Murch the Party “channeled migrant youth’s alienation into an organized program of self-defense and community service.”⁸⁵ In a short time the BPP evolved into a national and transnational political force based upon its ten point platform, militant commitment to black self-determination, and anti-colonial politics of solidarity. A Panther chapter would not emerge in Chicago until the critical year of 1968. Yet, due to conditions created by neo-liberal governmentality, the existence of established grassroots movements for community control, and organic intellectuals trained in outcast communities, the Black Panther Party’s politics found fertile ground. To understand why other organizations such as the Young Lords and the Young Patriots quickly grasped the Black Panther Party’s politics of solidarity, it is necessary to further consider the impact of deindustrialization and compare the ways the neo-liberal state governed poor people in Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park.

⁸⁴ Ahmed Shawki, *Black Liberation and Socialism* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006).

⁸⁵ Donna Jean Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010), 120.

Chapter 5: Up from Poverty and Out of the Ghetto?: The Politics of Community Control in North Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park

Unable to flee the city, they realized that the power of the state – not as it then existed but in greatly augmented form – would have to be enlisted in their aid. The result was that those economic and institutional interests that had the money, time, personnel, and influence to conduct surveys, make plans, draft legislation, and implement renewal did so. They exerted positive power by guiding the machinery of government.

Arnold Hirsch

Our society will never be great until our cities are great. Today the frontier of imagination and innovation is inside those cities and not beyond their borders.

Lyndon B. Johnson

The journey to Chicago was long, and it was difficult to leave behind family members, spouses, friends, and land that was often labored upon for generations. But for those who descended from places like the Mississippi Delta, mountain towns in Tennessee, and *Jibaro* communities in Puerto Rico, Chicago was a city of promise and opportunity during and after World War II. The metropolis on the edge of Lake Michigan, it was said, offered jobs and the prospect of escaping the grinding poverty that increasingly afflicted families back home. Traveling by train or bus, they were greeted by an immense skyline of belching smokestacks and ageing beaux arts buildings. Carrying their possessions, they soon encountered the hyper-organized Chicago grid with all of its sharp sounds and high-paced movements: a good sign the city was brimming with production and commodity flows. Many times, family members who already moved to Chicago awaited them to offer shelter and a bit of advice on where to find work.

In an oral history with legendary historian and educator Timuel Black, civil rights lawyer Stan Willis explained that his parents migrated to Chicago from “a little town called Madison, Arkansas.” Asked to elaborate on why his parents decided on Chicago, Willis answered,

It was for the same reason that so many left. There was a change in the economy in the south because the technology had changed and cotton picking was no longer quite so labor-intensive. So a fair amount of those unemployed workers in the South just were sucked right up into the military industry that developed in the North during the early years of the war.

...but there also seems to be some sort of determining relationship between certain urban areas and the train routes coming up from the South. Wherever the train stopped first, if that place was a major industrial hub, then that's where the people got off – and when people from Arkansas got on a train, that was a train that went right to Chicago.¹

Immediately reminded that his parents followed a similar route years earlier during the First Great Migration, Timuel Black exclaimed, “That was the old Illinois Central! You know when my folks left Birmingham they just got on that same train and came directly to Chicago... Pretty soon my daddy got his job out in Cicero in the metalworks and he stayed there working at that job for almost thirty years.”² Jobs and transportation supremacy over other cities, Willis and Black pointed out, had determined that Chicago was a central destination for black labor. Pushed, pulled, cajoled, and recruited from the Jim Crow south, families moved to northern cities in ever greater numbers and contributed to two of the greatest labor migrations of the twentieth century.³

During the era of the Second Great Migration, when the parents of Stan Willis made their way to Chicago, migrants of other backgrounds and nationalities also held onto similar hopes of economic opportunity and dignity. Displaced from their reservation lands by state sponsored termination programs, thousands of indigenous people were relocated to cities like Chicago and Minneapolis during the 1940s and 1950s. In communities such as Uptown, which hugged the lakefront on the north side of downtown, American Indian families lived alongside poor white families who could no longer subsist in Appalachian communities that stretched from West Virginia to Alabama. From the windows of their crunched kitchenette apartments in Uptown, these southern white migrants observed a growing Japanese-American community haunted by recent experiences of internment, and many other migrants

¹ Standish Willis, Interview by Timuel D. Black, in *Bridges of Memory: Chicago's Second Generation of Black Migration* (Evanston: Northwestern University, 2007), 314-315.

² Ibid.

³ Social histories of the First and Second Great Migrations to Chicago include, James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), Timuel D. Black, *Bridges of Memory: Chicago's First Wave of Black Migration* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007), Timuel D. Black, *Bridges of Memory: Chicago's Second Generation of Black Migration* (Evanston: Northwestern University, 2007), Davarian Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, The Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

who left distant shores and crossed borders to come to Chicago. Just south of Uptown, in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, Puerto Rican migrants who were funneled to Chicago by imperialist labor agreements on the island found domestic work and jobs in the areas many warehouses and old hotels. Displaced from the gateway barrios of La Clark and La Madison, many remained in the area until the forces of urban renewal pushed them out once again.

In light of these other labor migrations to Chicago, it is more accurate to say that a rainbow migration transformed the city during World War II and the years that followed. Most scholars, however, have compartmentalized migration histories according to ethnicity in order to excavate important social histories of community formation in Chicago and to demonstrate the saliency of race for certain groups. In contrast, this chapter compares post-Great Depression histories of migration and governmentality in Lawndale, Lincoln Park, and Uptown.

Linking the politics of deindustrialization and conservation efforts in these communities, it demonstrates that the neo-liberal state racialized the growing number of poor people in the city. To maintain hegemony in times of vast economic and demographic transformations, I argue, the neo-liberal state disseminated and sanctioned ideas of community conservation and control that demarcated those with human capital as ideal citizen-subjects, and to re-conceptualize communities such as Lawndale, Lincoln Park, and Uptown as inhabited by bio-political enemies of the city. In addition to conservation associations, local politicians, urban planners, real-estate brokers, and business leaders, it was grassroots community organizations inspired by Saul Alinsky's vision of pragmatic radicalism, and community control opportunities sponsored by War on Poverty programs that were crucial to the racialization and management of the poor. It was not by chance, I contend, that the revolutionary politics of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party resonated with members of organizations from outcast communities where lived experiences of displacement, unemployment, housing, health, education, violence and grinding poverty confirmed to many that they too were governed as the wretched of Chicago.

No other area of Chicago changed as profoundly into an outcast community than Lawndale. Like many other black families who moved to the west side, Stan Willis explained that his family first moved to the south side of Chicago. He explained,

In our case, we had a cousin whom we always called Aunt Olive, and she already had an apartment, so whoever came and didn't have a place of their own to stay, they could stay with her. As it happened, she lived on the South Side, and so my folks moved into the Ida B. Wells area at first – I was about two or three years old at the time – and then they moved to the West Side and stayed in an apartment with another relative. That is where we lived until I was nineteen.⁴

Growing up in North Lawndale, Willis witnessed firsthand the historical development of what historian Arnold Hirsch described as the Second Ghetto. Unable to find adequate housing in the overcrowded Black Belt -- the First Ghetto described so vividly by Richard Wright in *Native Son* -- many moved to the west side of the city where an enclave of black families historically resided. Indeed, the lack of housing on the south side produced tremendous pressure to find homes outside of the Black Belt. Hirsch, for example, notes that during the late 1940s, “375,000 blacks resided in an area equipped to house no more than 110,000.”⁵

The prospect of homeownership or the opportunity to move into new public housing units motivated many to save their earnings and move despite racial violence and intimidation. And though black labor was constrained by a racial division of labor and often excluded from unions, communities like Lawndale were near manufacturing factories that employed black workers. For example, Sears-Roebuck, Western Electric, and an array of candy factories spread out across western suburbs like Cicero and Maywood were in close proximity. Between 1940 and 1950, the number of black folks in North Lawndale rose from 380 to 13,146 which represented thirteen percent of the total population of the area. By 1960 the black community grew to 113,827, and at the end of the decade, blacks comprised

⁴ Willis, interview, 315.

⁵ Arnold Hirsch, *The Making of the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 23.

ninety-six percent of the population in the community.⁶ Yet, the evolution of Lawndale into an outcast community was not because blacks arrived. Rather, scholars have shown that racialized processes of white flight, segregation, deindustrialization and housing exploitation were crucial to the deterioration of the community.

The story of white flight from west side neighborhoods such as Lawndale and the rapid growth of the black population are well documented by historians. Building upon Hirsch's pioneering study *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* which documented the efforts of politicians, downtown business owners, public housing officials, and white ethnic communities to contain the movement of the growing black population of the city, new social histories have provided in-depth analysis of demographic and economic transformations in the area. In *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side*, for example, historian Amanda Seligman demonstrates that the decision of many white homeowners to abandon the area came after a series of efforts to prevent the "invasion" of blacks into their neighborhoods. She notes,

In the years preceding African American settlement in their neighborhoods, whites offered a variety of responses to long-standing problems they perceived in their physical surroundings. When African Americans arrived in their immediate locale, West Siders also worked to keep them out. On some occasions, African Americans moved into the neighborhood in the midst of ongoing campaigns to improve the areas infrastructure; in such cases, white activists added to their list of the efforts potential benefits the deterrence of further black settlement. Rhetoric against the "blighting" of their neighborhoods by deteriorating housing, schools, and parks became suffused with racist assumptions about the effects of African Americans on their surroundings. When African Americans continued to arrive, whites finally departed, one block at a time.⁷

Similarly, *Family Properties: Race, Real Estate and the Exploitation of Black America* by Beryl Satter demonstrates that following the rapid evacuation of Lawndale by the mostly Jewish community that resided there, black families who sought to buy homes in the area were exploited by a highly lucrative contract sales economy. Satter reveals that people moving from the Black Belt to the west side were

⁶ Amanda Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 34.

⁷ Ibid., 4.

manipulated into buying property on contract only to lose them to the original real estate agent under bogus conditions a short time afterwards. The impact of the contract economy, and state sponsored disinvestment in the area through red lining produced what one scholar has described as a “viciously circular apartheid process” in which “real estate interests made huge profits by purchasing and converting buildings and then packing them with poor black families.”⁸ Collectively, these scholars argue that the replication of ghetto conditions on the west side by the 1960s were the result of state sanctioned practices of racial exclusion not the cultural deficiency of black migrants who moved to the area.

Other scholars, on the other hand, have explained the “urban crisis” in black communities such as Lawndale developed as a result of the spatial concentration and growth of a black underclass. Writing in the late 1980s, sociologist William Julius Wilson explained that the lack of “social organization” and pathological behavior was due to the gradual isolation of poor blacks during the post-World War II era. He wrote,

In the 1940s, 1950s, and as late as the 1960s such communities featured a vertical integration of different segments of the urban black population. Lower class, working-class, and middle-class black families all lived more or less in the same communities (albeit in different neighborhoods), sent their children to the same schools, availed themselves of the same recreational facilities, and shopped at the same stores. Whereas today’s black middle class professionals no longer tend to live in ghetto neighborhoods and have moved increasingly into mainstream occupations outside the black community, the black middle-class professionals of the 1940s and 1950s (doctors, teachers, lawyers, social workers, ministers) lived in higher income neighborhoods of the ghetto and serviced the black community. Accompanying the black middle class exodus has been a growing movement of stable working-class blacks from ghetto neighborhoods to higher- income neighborhoods in other parts of the city and to the suburbs. In the earlier years, the black middle and working classes were confined by restrictive covenants to communities also inhabited by the lower class; their very presence provided stability to inner city neighborhoods and reinforced and perpetuated mainstream patterns of norms and behaviors.⁹

Drawing upon empirical evidence from Chicago, Wilson argued that by the 1970s “changes in the demographic characteristics of the black population” had led to increased concentrations of poverty in

⁸ Paul L. Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 103.

⁹ William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987), 7.

certain neighborhoods. The outmigration of “middle-class” blacks coupled with soaring rates of unemployment, Wilson argued, locked certain segments of the black population into a permanent underclass.

In recent years historians, ethnic studies scholars, and sociologists have challenged much of Wilson’s assertion that the exodus of the black middle class left a cultural void that devastated the black underclass. Denouncing the notion that poor blacks exhibited cultural deficiencies, historians such as Robin D.G. Kelley, Robert Self, and Thomas Sugrue have provided ample evidence that poor black folks in northern cities were anything but passive actors in urban affairs and politics. Similarly ethnographic studies by Stephen Gregory on Corona, New York, Elijah Anderson on Philadelphia, and Sudhir Venkatesh and Mary Patillo McCoy on Chicago reveal that the social isolation of the black underclass was overstated. Nevertheless, scholars generally agree with Wilson that the rapid rise of unemployment in northern cities due to deindustrialization was a determining factor in the urban crisis.

The ravages of black unemployment in Chicago are rooted in the structural transformation of the capitalist mode of production following World War II. In *The Condition of Postmodernity*, geographer David Harvey summarized the postwar consolidation of the Fordist/Keynesian economy. He wrote,

Living standards rose, crisis tendencies were contained, mass democracy was preserved and the threat of inter-capitalist wars kept remote...The postwar era saw the rise of a series of industries based on technologies that had matured in the inter-war years and been pushed to new extremes of rationalization in World War II. Cars, shipbuilding, and transport equipment, steel, petrochemicals, rubber, consumer electrical goods, and construction became the propulsive engines of economic growth, focused on a series of grand production regions in the world economy – the Midwest of the United States, the Ruhr—Rhinelands, the West Midlands of Britain, the Tokyo—Yokohama production region. The privileged workforce in these regions formed on pillar of a rapidly expanding effective demand. The other pillar rested on state-sponsored reconstruction of war-torn economies, suburbanization, particularly in the United States, urban renewal, geographical expansion of transport and communications systems, and infrastructural development both within and outside the capitalist world.¹⁰

Yet, scholars that examine the racial history of the postwar era argue that communities of color were deeply impacted by the deindustrialization of urban areas and policies that privileged a white workforce

¹⁰ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990), 132.

and suburban areas. In other words, historians have documented that the consolidation of the Fordist/Keynesian milieu in the United States was fractured along racial lines. Beginning in the late 1940s, scholars explain, industrial production in northern cities like Detroit and Chicago was already moving from urban centers to suburban manufacturing zones. Lucrative tax incentives and the construction of massive interstate transportation networks, they reveal, facilitated the movement of factories to suburban areas. Moreover, intense resistance from white workers and unions to black employment and promotion, and exclusionary housing practices that prevented the movement of black families to the suburbs effectively meant that the consolidation of Fordism economically benefited newly suburbanized white working-class families more than others.

In effect, scholars explain that the macro-economic processes that David Harvey described were a racial formation linked to the movement of white workers to the suburbs and the implementation of various state sponsored programs that subsidized the growth of the white “middle-class.” In this light, state sanctioned suburbanization and the deindustrialization of urban centers such as Chicago operated to lock many black families into an urban job market divested of good paying jobs and tax bases to fund public education, housing, and other urban services. Despite the best efforts of the working poor to combat the developing urban crisis, by the mid-1960s the impact of deindustrialization produced devastated environments of poverty, unemployment and despair, particularly for black youth.

The post-World War II history of Chicago reveals that deindustrialization was certainly a major force in the transformation of North Lawndale. Whereas during the war, black workers were able to find relatively good paying jobs in the manufacturing, steel, and meatpacking industries of the city, by the 1960s many of these jobs were gone. Paul Street, for example, has emphasized that “between 1947 and 1961, the city’s share of the metropolitan areas industrial employment fell from 71 to 54 percent.” According to Street, Chicago’s black community was particularly impacted. He reveals,

It didn't help black Chicagoan's economic situation in the civil rights era for their industrial workers to be concentrated in unskilled and semi-skilled positions that were especially targeted for elimination and/or export beyond city limits.

An especially important example of post-WWII proto-deindustrialization for the city's black community took place in Chicago's fabled stockyards district... When changing technologies and transportation methods (and perhaps a desire to escape the reach of aggressive industrial unionism) led to the closing of the city's legendary Wilson (shuttered in 1955), Armour (1959), and Swift (1959) plants during the late 1950s, the city's black community lost perhaps as many as 20,000 jobs, including many relatively well-paid semiskilled knife positions, in a four year period.¹¹

In the midst of multiple labor migrations to Chicago, the corporate flight from the city resulted in a severe shortage of factory jobs available to black workers. The situation was exacerbated during the late 1960s when Western Electric, International Harvester, and Sears Roebuck – all companies with large factories located in or near the west side-- also re-located. Historian Adam Green has cautioned against “accounts of inexorable community declension” and has pointed to lower unemployment rates and higher levels of median income among blacks in Chicago during the forties and early fifties as evidence of improved collective material conditions.¹² By the sixties, however, it was undeniable that the loss of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs had produced a black working-class in Chicago stratified by jobs, and education: what neo-liberal ideology constructed as human capital. In North Lawndale, where recent migrants often moved, a growing populating of the poor and unemployed increasingly outnumbered those with good paying jobs. Indeed, those who could afford to often moved out of Lawndale to “descent” neighborhoods. For many, dreams of gaining economic stability and “middle-class” homeownership were dashed by realities of unemployment, and overcrowded housing conditions.

¹¹ Paul Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., July 2007), 117.

¹² In *Selling the Race*, Green writes,

Black median income in 1950s Chicago -- \$1,919—was higher than all other cities except for Detroit, the leader in wage levels because of the auto manufacturers. Black unemployment between 1948 and 1955 remained under 6 percent for half of the eight years, reaching as low as 4.5 percent in 1953... At Ford by 1960, blacks held 37 percent or nearly 2,000 jobs, 17 percent of which were salaried, as opposed to hourly positions. Supreme Liberty Life Insurance employed 2,000 black workers mainly in white collar and clerical positions (11).

It is important to note that Green's portrayal of a black “middle class” in Chicago does not contradict scholarship that documents the impact of deindustrialization and unemployment. If anything, it provides important evidence that the post-war era witnessed intra-community bifurcations based upon the acquisition of human capital.

Scholarship that focuses on deindustrialization and racialized housing practices are certainly critical to explaining the development of the urban crisis in black communities like North Lawndale. Still, most post-World War II narratives of black community formation are limited by a black/white binary of economic experiences and racial politics, and also fail to address the evolution of racialized governmentality in Chicago. In other words, scholars have artificially isolated the dynamics of the Second Great Migration to Chicago from the experiences of other racialized groups that moved to the city.¹³

Compartmentalized social histories of postwar community formation that fail to consider the consolidation of neo-liberal governmentality that was underway in Chicago at the time make it difficult to understand the emergence of revolutionary coalition building in poor communities during the late sixties. Such an oversight, I contend, prevents an acknowledgement that many poor blacks, whites, Latinos, and others shared experiences as residents of outcast communities. Despite being spatially segregated, they were wrangled by welfare officials, subjects of War on Poverty campaigns, victims of exploitative landlords, and targets of urban renewal plans. Compartmentalized studies silence the ways housing struggles waged by black community activists in North Lawndale were linked to the housing struggles of poor whites in Uptown who also suffered from overcrowded conditions, and to Latinos in Lincoln Park who were facing displacement. Furthermore, the evolution of race as a productive strategy of power that is linked to the historical development of the mode of production can hardly be addressed by atomized scholarship that sees racial power as deviant practices that exclude particular ethnic groups from equal access to political and economic markets. Even scholars that advocate an urban/suburban

¹³ Historian Scott Kurashige's recent commentary on the limits of the traditional narrative of black segregation in Los Angeles, are entirely applicable to Chicago. In *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multi-Ethnic Los Angeles*, he noted;

Black/White relations have played a critical role in the shaping of American politics... I maintain that it is impossible to grasp the predicament of African Americans or envision viable forms of African American political struggle without taking into account the many concerns that arise from multi-racial dynamics (26).

As in Los Angeles, during the post-World War II era black migrants in Chicago worked, married, fought, and united politically with members of the other migrant groups in the city. Such multi-ethnic interactions were crucial to the ways that racial and ethnic identities were learned and reproduced.

framework to study anti-racist politics overlook governmentality and thus cannot fully capture the politics of the urban crisis. Why, for example, in the midst of deindustrialization and suburbanization were there efforts to transform Lincoln Park into the first inner-city suburb? For my purposes, the egregious failure to consider the post-Great Depression development of governmentality in Chicago, accounts for why important histories of anti-racist urban politics and grassroots coalitions such as the Original Rainbow Coalition rarely receive explication.

One way to clarify the importance of governmentality and to link lived experiences that contributed to the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition is to unpack and compare the politics of conservation and community control that developed over the course of the 1950s in Lawndale, Lincoln Park, and Uptown. Advancing from the progressive era tactic of slum removal, local agents of governmentality embraced neighborhood conservation as the way to manage the demographic growth of poor people in a rapidly deindustrializing metropolis. On July 14, 1953, for example the Illinois Senate approved the Urban Community Conservation Act. It declared,

It is hereby found and declared that there exist in many urban communities within this State conservation areas...that these conservation areas are rapidly deteriorating and declining in desirability as residential communities and may soon be slum and blighted areas if their decline is not checked...as a result and concomitant of the decline of conservation areas, there is a growth of delinquency, crime, and of housing and zoning law violations in such areas, together with an abnormal exodus of families; that the decline of these areas threatens to impair the tax base of such communities and produce the conditions characteristics of slum and blighted areas which threaten the health, safety, morals, and welfare of the public it is necessary to provide for the protection of such conservation areas and prevent their deterioration into slum and blighted areas. The granting to municipalities of this State of the power herein provided is directed to that end, and the use of such rights and powers for the prevention of slums is hereby declared to be a public use essential to the public interest.¹⁴

Notably, the acts emphasis on the exodus of families and the erosion of the tax base reflected a consciousness of deindustrialization during the early 1950s.

¹⁴ "Urban Community Conservation Act," Lincoln Park Neighborhood Collection, De Paul University Special Collections; Available online, <http://digicol.lib.depaul.edu/cdm/search/collection/lpnc6>

As a quintessential neo-liberal policy, however, the Urban Community Conservation Act expressed concerns that Chicago was losing human capital to the suburbs and responded by empowering urban municipalities to develop institutions and strict rules over neighborhood and economic development. It was, according to historian Arnold Hirsch, a groundbreaking culmination of a series of legislative policies that allowed downtown capital to survive. He noted, “Powerful, but severely threatened, private interests devised and implemented the legislation in each case. Unable to save themselves, they harnessed greatly augmented public powers to ensure their own survival.”¹⁵ In other words, whereas many white citizen-subjects were departing the city or fighting tooth and nail to prevent the “invasion” of blacks into areas like Lawndale and Trumbull Park, the Urban Community Conservation Act exemplified that business interests implemented an interventionist state empowered at the community level to manage the re-configuration of space and human capital in Chicago.

The movement for a new governmental attitude and aggressive spatial practices was voiced by Hyde Park Alderman Robert Merriam. On October 26, 1953 Merriam delivered a speech to the City Club of Chicago entitled “Are We Saving Our Neighborhoods.” The former director of the Metropolitan Housing Council in Chicago when the Blighted Areas Development Act was passed in 1947, Merriam explained to city elites that slum clearance initiatives were insufficient. He stated,

There can be no doubt that Chicago today has the largest array of weapons and has done more thinking about neighborhood conservation than any other city. And added to the tangible gains are committees and advisory committees, studies and investigations, coroner’s juries, public speeches and more speeches, newspaper article after newspaper article, and many of the other ingredients necessary to attract public attention to our problems. But have we solved our problems? Is this enough?¹⁶

Chiding the production of knowledge about the removal of slums, he called for “adequate powers (home rule), effective organization (consolidation and simplification), and aggressive leadership,” and argued that what Chicago really lacked was the determination to protect neighborhoods. City leaders, he

¹⁵ Hirsch, *The Making of the Second Ghetto*, 101.

¹⁶ Robert E. Merriam, “Are We Saving Our Neighborhoods,” Lincoln Park Neighborhood Collection, De Paul University Special Collections; Available online: <http://digicol.lib.depaul.edu/cdm/search/collection/lpnc6>

argued, must exhibit the will to push forward and utilize “new laws and authority,” in order to maintain the vitality of the city. He concluded,

But the most important element in saving our neighborhoods today and in the future, remains the same as it has in the past: A revitalized “I Will” spirit; an unshakeable and unswerving determination to preserve and beautify our good neighborhoods, no matter what the obstacles, no matter how long and complicated the job, to substitute action and results for un-kept promises, talking and watery compromise.¹⁷

Merriam’s call for aggressive political leadership may have hinted at a future mayoral campaign in 1955 against Daley, but his discourse also reveals that local agents of government also anticipated the War on Poverty by conceptualizing poverty, blight, and neighborhood deterioration as the new frontier of political struggle.

Indeed, a consensus among local politicians, public housing officials, private real estate agents, downtown business groups, universities, urban planners, and civic groups that fighting blight was a public purpose and a civic duty indicates that a hegemonic coalition was united by a common understanding that the demographic growth of poor people had to be contained. Whereas in 1943 the outbreak of black/white race riots produced serious governmental anxieties and was cause for the re-organization of the city’s commission on race relations, a decade later the creation of new institutions to protect neighborhood vitality signaled that government was focused on the instability supposedly created by the increase of poor people. The passage of legislation such as the Urban Community Conservation Act, the enhancement of the power of city officials, and the delegation of state power to public housing, neighborhood conservation councils reveals that those who lacked human capital were widely considered a contaminating force that had to be combatted. A comparative analysis of conservation efforts and governmentality in Lawndale, Lincoln Park, and Uptown in light of the new political milieu inaugurated by the Urban Community Conservation Act reveals stark evidence that the

¹⁷ Ibid.

management of poverty in Chicago was racialized and structured by neo-liberal ideas that reconciled poverty and affluence.

In 2012, Lincoln Park stands as a model of urban affluence. In the 1950s, however, Lincoln Park was losing human capital and evolving into a multi-ethnic working-class community. The comprehensive *1960 Local Community Fact Book* noted,

In the two decades following the first World War, 1920-1940, the population of Lincoln Park increased from 94,247 to 100,826, and it became even more heterogeneous. In 1930, though persons of German stock made up nearly one-fourth of the total population, there were sizable numbers of Italians, Irish, Poles, Austrians, English, and Rumanians... A significant development was the appearance of a small Negro settlement in the mid-1920s on Maud Street near Armitage and Racine Avenues.

... The population remained stable between 1940 and 1950 and then declined 13 percent during the 1950s. A new feature in the community was the sharp increase in Japanese residents between 1940 and 1960 – the number of non-whites other than Negroes rose from 130 in 1940 to 2,874 in 1960. A further development was the growth of the Negro population during the 1950s, though Negro's were still a negligible share of the total population. Germans, Italians, and Poles were the dominant groups among the foreign stock in 1960. A small Puerto Rican community also resided in Lincoln Park in 1960, concentrated in the south central part of the community.¹⁸

Immediately north of downtown and adjacent to the lakefront, Lincoln Park offered low priced apartments in aging housing stock and public housing units in the Francis Cabrini Homes. Prevented initially from occupying public housing units by those who wanted to keep the project all-white, black families gradually moved into Cabrini and the surrounding neighborhood. In 1960, for example, one neighborhood near the Cabrini Homes was counted as 86.7 percent black.¹⁹

Although few Latinos lived in Lincoln Park during the early part of the decade, many Puerto Rican families began to move to the area during the late fifties and early 1960s. Displaced from the gateway communities of La Clark and La Madison located further to the south, Puerto Rican migrants rapidly transformed Lincoln Park into a Latino community. Christina Vital, a member of one of the only Mexican families to reside in the area recalled in a recent oral history,

¹⁸ Evelyn M. Kitigawa and Karl E. Taeuber, *1960 Local Community Fact Book: Chicago Metropolitan Area* (Chicago Community Inventory: University of Chicago, 1963), 28.

¹⁹ Harold M. Mayer and Richard C. Wade, *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 397.

There weren't any Mexicans in the neighborhood I grew up in when I was young. My family was still living in the Lincoln Park area. The immediate vicinity where we lived was still primarily White...The first wave of Puerto Ricans began to settle in the area in the early 1960s when White families moved away because they believed the neighborhood was in decline. Gangs of White boys formed and so too, did rival Puerto Rican clubs. *West Side Story* played itself out on the streets of my neighborhood.²⁰

Of course, the development of youth gangs such as the Young Lords in 1959 was not the only result of Puerto Rican in-migration. Puerto Ricans soon created important social networks, opened businesses, and brought cultural institutions such as the Caballeros de San Juan and Las Damas de Maria to St. Michaels Church in Old Town. Recalling the features of the Puerto Rican community in Lincoln Park, Young Lord Carlos Flores has written,

...there was a true sense of community. Families related to other families, children played with other children, merchants and business owners knew their customers well. In other words, you knew and you interacted with your next door neighbor and with their families.²¹

As thousands left the area for the suburbs, Puerto Ricans and other working-class families contributed to the evolution of a vibrant community.

In fact, Lincoln Park was also an eclectic arts and cultural hub during the 1960s. Bruce Berman, for example, remembered moving to Lincoln Park as a young photographer,

I moved into a place I could afford, an 85 dollar apartment that I scored. I used to share the rent with my ex old lady, 42.50 a month (laughs). Bottom line, that's the way it was because it was urban renewal all the way around us.

...I guess it's the same reason bohemos descend on a place -- you could get by. My apartment was 85 bucks, you know. That was it, it was rubbly, it was a broken neighborhood, it was up by the Biograph Theater. That had been like a palace at one time now it was a 25 cent movie, it was a mess.

...Any place that that happens in the rubble the developer sees the future big bucks. In the rubble, bohemians see a temporary place to get by with low rent. I was the latter. I was trying to be that bohemian young photographer.²²

In Lincoln Park, one could listen to musicians like Muddy Waters at local taverns and encounter surrealists at the Solidarity Bookstore run by Penelope and Franklin Rosemont. Though buildings were

²⁰ Leonard G. Ramirez et al., *Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 106.

²¹ Carlos Flores, "Shades of Lincoln Park: Armitage Avenue in the 1970s" *Dialogo*, (Spring 1996): 19-20.

²² Bruce Berman, Interview by the author, El Paso, Texas, September 9, 2009, 18.

certainly aging, apartments were often cramped, and racial tensions persisted, Lincoln Park was a thriving multi-cultural community that began to increase in population over the course of the 1960s.

Unfortunately, the community formations and transformations that took place in Lincoln Park during the 1950s and 1960s were considered to be evidence of neighborhood decay by certain civic groups in the area. In the early 1950s, the Old Triangle Association, The Mid-North Association, and the Lincoln Park Community Council began to work together to designate the neighborhood a conservation area due to “a great lethargy in the Lincoln Park area.”²³ Comprised of local home and property owners, these organizations worked closely with the Office of Housing and Re-development Coordinator under the direction of prominent real-estate consultant James Downs. After a speech by Downs to the Lincoln Park Community Council in the fall of 1953, for example, the three civic groups initiated discussions to form the Lincoln Park Conservation Association (LPCA). According to a history of conservation in the area disseminated by the LPCA, “it was determined that the scope of a conservation program required a separate organization with direct community support.”²⁴ Notably, “community support” signified active property owners, as renters and low income families were considered to abuse property and major contributors to “the usual urban pattern of descent to slum.” Considering that over the course the 1950s, the occupation of housing units in Lincoln Park by property owners dropped to fourteen percent, efforts to galvanize “community support” centered upon a small minority of Lincoln Park residents.

In addition to being in league with real-estate speculators like James Downs, conservation advocates in Lincoln Park were also supported by business owners who desired to maintain a lucrative downtown retail economy. A week after the passage of the Urban Community Conservation Act, for

²³ “A History of Conservation,” Lincoln Park Neighborhood Collection, De Paul University Special Collections; Available online, <http://digicol.lib.depaul.edu/cdm/search/collection/lpnc6>

²⁴ Ibid.

example, Earl Kribben, the Vice President for Civic Affairs of Marshall Fields Co. sent a letter to conservationists in the area that explained the implications of the legislation. He wrote,

Heretofore no major city has faced up to the problems created by creeping blight in residential areas, and certainly none has yet found the complete answer. The sorry fact is that slums are being created in major cities faster than they are being cured by existing machinery.

The purpose of the three so-called “slum prevention” bills is to establish a plan and to utilize public powers to arrest and reverse these trends, to the end that these residential neighborhoods may be preserved and the underlying tax based maintained.²⁵

Assuring that “city officials will be strongly urged to reorganize municipal machinery in a way to permit early and effective use of these powers,” Kribben explained that community councils would have direct contact with the city’s new Conservation Board which was organized to guide neighborhoods plans through city council approval. Essentially, Kribben announced that plans approved by a new conservation association in Lincoln Park would be sanctioned by city hall.

It was no coincidence then that in April of 1954 the Lincoln Park Conservation Association (LPCA) was chartered. By the end of 1956 the LPCA boasted of 650 members, a board of directors with 36 representatives, and a monthly newsletter. With the requisite “community support,” in 1956 Lincoln Park was designated a conservation area. More importantly, the individuals and organizations who joined the LPCA committed to preserving “the life of the community.” As agents of conservation on the urban frontier, members of the LPCA upheld the notion that poor people were a plague to the community. In this light, the surveillance of property for building violations and conversions, rent hikes, the creation of the Lincoln Park Community Conservation Council (LPCCC) and categorization of Lincoln Park as an urban renewal zone in 1962, and the development of the Carl Sandburg Homes in 1964, comprised an arsenal of weapons aimed at “curing” the area of poverty. Acts of arson were also common. Under the auspice of protecting the quality of life in Lincoln Park, agents of conservation and

²⁵ “A Brief Explanation of the Urban Community Conservation Act and Related Legislation” Lincoln Park Neighborhood Collection, De Paul University Special Collections; Available online, <http://digicol.lib.depaul.edu/cdm/search/collection/lpnc6>

urban renewal exercised new governmental powers at the neighborhood level in order to salvage Lincoln Park.

By viewing those in poverty as threats to the very life of Lincoln Park, the LPCCC joined a hegemonic coalition in Chicago that no longer considered poor people to be saddled by deviant conduct or to be laden with cultural deficiencies. Rather, the consensus that developed among conservationists, real-estate brokers, university regents, urban planners, and others across Chicago was that the lack of human capital signified an innate deficiency and that one was a bio-political enemy of the city. In Lincoln Park, Hyde Park, and the Near West side, among other areas, thousands of poor families were displaced by slum clearance programs, highway construction, and urban renewal plans. The notion that the poor were, as Arnold Hirsch words it, “gangrenous appendages that had to be sacrificed to preserve the health of the larger organism,” was in the final analysis the ideological basis that bound this hegemonic coalition in Chicago.²⁶ Of course, this did not mean that previous explanations of poverty that relied upon crude ideas of racial, ethnic, and color difference were eviscerated and no longer structured lived experiences.²⁷

In fact, in the neo-liberal milieu that evolved in de-industrializing Chicago, whiteness, one’s location in the descending scale of the racial order, and ethnic background served as indicators of one’s potential for the acquisition of human capital. Disparities in experiences of slum removal, conservation and eventually displacement through urban renewal confirmed that certain groups were considered more of a bio-political threat than others. Though historian Arnold Hirsch has argued that class worked as a “back-up” for the anti-black racism maintained by powerful advocates of conservation and segregation, the experiences of Latinos in Lincoln Park, and southern whites in Uptown also indicates that the neo-liberal conversion of poverty to the domain of bio-politics meant that all who suffered poverty were

²⁶ Hirsch, *The Making of the Second Ghetto*, 170.

²⁷ On the politics of color in Chicago see Thomas Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

racialized and subject to removal or quarantine. In this light, intense anti-black violence in places such as Trumbull Park and Cicero revealed that many working-class whites internalized and contributed to the racist notion that blacks had the most potential of any group to reproduce poverty, blight and despair. It was this seamless incorporation of biological and cultural ideas of race into the neo-liberal management of poor people that distinguished racialized governmentality in Chicago.

In comparison to North Lawndale which witnessed incredible black demographic growth during the post-World War II era, Uptown's black community declined during the 1950s and 1960s. According to the *1960 Local Community Fact Book*, out of 127, 682 residents, Uptown's black population numbered 423 in 1960, more than three times lower than in Lincoln Park. Despite the lack of a white flight scenario, Uptown's total population declined during the post-World War II era as the area was not insulated from the forces of deindustrialization and suburbanization. By the 1950s the film industry that once thrived in the area had long moved to California, and most of the community's affluent residents abandoned their residencies in Uptown for suburban living. Sociologist Roger Guy has explained,

Up until World War II, Uptown boasted some of the finest hotels and nightlife in Chicago. The success of the area as an entertainment district rather than a residential area carried the seeds of decline. Beginning in the 1940s, a housing shortage led to the conversion of older hotels into rooming houses. The demand for housing during the war and the arrival of white southern migrants in the 1950s and 1960s led landlords to divide many of the spacious apartments into smaller single occupancy dwellings.²⁸

Still, much of the population loss in Uptown was replaced by various labor migrations, particularly the southern white diaspora. Describing the arrival of southern whites to Uptown James Tracy and Amy Sonnie have written,

By the 1960s nearly seven million southern born whites lived outside of the South. Uptown received economically displaced southerners by the busload. Although the 120 block area on Chicago's north side was never exclusively white or southern, white southerners made up nearly 40 percent of all newcomers, accounting for more than 60 percent in certain census tracts.²⁹

²⁸ Roger Guy, *From Diversity to Unity: Southern and Appalachian Migrants in Uptown Chicago, 1950-1970* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2007), 3.

²⁹ Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists: Urban Race Rebels and Black Power* (New York: Melville House, 2011), 21.

As a result of southern white, American Indian, Puerto Rican, and Japanese American migrations, among others, Uptown's overall population in 1960 only declined by four percent from 1940.

The transformation of Uptown into Hillbilly Heaven, however, also meant that rates of poverty in the community rose significantly during the same time period. In a corridor that ran between expensive lakefront properties to the southeast and neighborhoods of single family homes parallel to Ravenswood Avenue, were sections in which in 1959 over a quarter of households earned less than three thousand dollars a year, and only 4 percent of families earned more than ten thousand dollars a year. Though the authors of the *1960 Local Community Fact* book declared that Uptown was ninety six percent "white" in 1960, the statistics of household income indicate a sharp bifurcation between the minority of affluent residents and the growing population of poor people in the community who were often unemployed or reduced to temporary jobs. And in the case of Uptown the face of poverty was overwhelmingly southern white. Roger Guy explains, "because rapid decline coincided with their arrival in Uptown, southern whites were linked with neighborhood blight."³⁰ It's important to consider that in the 1950s and 1960s a similar narrative was projected upon southern blacks in Lawndale, and Puerto Ricans in Lincoln Park.

Significantly, unlike conservationists in Lincoln Park which were supported by powerful downtown business interests, and Hyde Park conservationists which followed the agenda of the University of Chicago, conservation efforts never gained traction in Uptown during the 1950s. It wasn't, however, for a lack of effort. Political scientist Larry Bennett has shown that the formation of the Uptown Chicago Commission (UCC) in 1955 included several local business owners and important political insiders. He explained,

In its early days, the UCC fancied itself speaking for a "city within a city," and befitting such an identity, quite an impressive array of business and civic figures supported its activities. Executives from three local financial institutions, the Uptown National Bank, Bank of Chicago, and Uptown Federal Savings and Loans, served on the UCC Board. Two insurance companies

³⁰ Guy, *From Diversity to Unity*, 3.

with headquarters in Uptown, Kemper and Combined Insurance, also supported UCC initiatives, and a number of real estate firms were affiliated with the group. Also serving on the UCC Board was the wife of one of the Daley administrations leading city planners, Ira Bach. The Bachs were Uptown residents. One of the UCC's advisors was James C. Downs Jr. head of the Real Estate Research Corporation and another important advisor to Mayor Daley.³¹

Despite "community support," and the production of serious studies including a 10-year General Urban Renewal Plan proposal (1957) and *Uptown: A Planning Report* (1962) the city's Community Conservation Board refused to designate Uptown a conservation area. Indeed, it was not until the late sixties that urban renewal plans took hold in Uptown. The question is why?

One could get easily bogged down in the minutiae of local personalities and politics to explain the failure of conservation efforts. In the final analysis, however, the refusal to grant conservation status in Uptown was a deliberate decision by a new governing body based upon a cost/benefit calculation that considered the security of affluent ideal citizen-subjects in Chicago. In other words, except for select areas in the community, Uptown was determined to have more governmental value as a space of poverty than as a conservation area. Bennett, for example, quotes one insurance representative in 1963 who was frustrated with the conservation board as stating that efforts to uplift the area were stonewalled because, "There are many people living in Uptown who don't belong there."³² Certainly, the same statement could have been made at the time about Lincoln Park, and the LPCA was no more savvy or politically connected than the UCC.

In this light, it must be acknowledged that the Community Conservation Board made calculated decisions about the future development of neighborhoods in the city based upon knowledge that disclosed the potential of residents to acquire human capital. Census data, comprehensive sociological research on the poor, and the production of urban planning documents served to precisely identify which city spaces should be conserved for ideal affluent citizen-subjects, and which neighborhoods were "infested" by bio-political threats and therefore could be neglected or displaced through urban renewal.

³¹ Larry Bennett, *Neighborhood Politics: Chicago and Sheffield* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 76.

³² *Ibid.*, 78.

Such a Manichean bifurcation of neighborhoods on the basis of the racialization of poverty, I contend, was qualitatively different than previous forms of racialized spatial politics.

Moreover, in a city undergoing rapid de-industrialization, losing human capital to the suburbs, and attracting multiple labor migrations, it was imperative that certain sections of the metropolis were reserved for the poor, and allowed to evolve in a state of poverty and despair. Indeed, during the late fifties and sixties it became increasingly necessary to preserve a quality of death in certain communities, otherwise there would be no visible evidence from which to demarcate communities that offered a quality of life. The conflation of the city with affluent areas perhaps was best expressed by Richard J. Daley at a Democratic Party dinner on June 7, 1955 when he stated bluntly “We are a city of fine neighborhoods.”³³ Indeed, during Daley’s long tenure as mayor it was obvious that certain communities were allowed to deteriorate, and were governed through law and order. Stated differently, if state sanctioned conservation interventions were successful throughout the city, and poverty and substandard housing were eliminated in Chicago, there would be no empirical proof to draw the neo-liberal conclusion that affluent citizen-subjects exhibited personal responsibility and the innate drive to succeed in a strictly regulated and equal labor market. More importantly, the management of the conduct of ideal citizen-subjects who did not leave to the suburbs required an active, interventionist state that was committed to protecting quality of life. Such a milieu would be impossible if poverty and spaces of despair were eliminated.

Uptown was certainly a prime example of a community left to the forces of deindustrialization until War on Poverty funds made social work and urban renewal programs profitable in the latter years of the sixties. Yet, due to rapid demographic transformations during the 1950s, North Lawndale best demonstrated the ways neo-liberal governmentality required a quality of death in certain communities. In North Lawndale, for example, the entire community was designated an urban renewal zone in 1957,

³³ Peter Yessne, *Quotations From Mayor Daley* (New York: Putnam, 1969).

three years before the census confirmed the neighborhood transformed from white to black. This maneuver, however, also occurred just prior to the election of Benjamin Lewis, the first black politician to be elected alderman in the area.

Though a businessman, Lewis' election represented one of the first demonstrations of independent black political strength in Chicago. Unlike south side black politicians – candidly dubbed the “silent six” because of their loyalty to the Democratic Party – Lewis' directly undermined the west side democratic machine then under the control of Democratic Chairman Jacob Arvey.³⁴ Arvey, who was responsible for the slating of Richard J. Daley for Cook County Clerk in 1950, and who once referred to Marshall Field as “Boss” in a November 1953 letter to the *Chicago Sun Times* had built, according to one source, “the strongest ward organization in the history of Chicago.”³⁵ The rapid demographic change of Lawndale into a solidly black community and the election of Benjamin Lewis in 1958 undoubtedly stunned the leaders of the 24th ward, as the area was once considered the “Number One Democratic Vote-getter in the USA” by Franklin Delano Roosevelt.³⁶

The unthinkable election of Benjamin Lewis and then a landslide re-election victory in 1962 effectively ended any state sanctioned efforts to uplift North Lawndale.³⁷ Afterwards, the community's value to governmentality was exclusively as a ghetto -- or as the example par excellence of racialized poverty and the notion that black space was the principle bio-political threat to the city. Significantly, the final tactic in the accomplishment of this arrangement was the political assassination of Ben Lewis. On February 28, 1963 a group of armed men raided his office at 3604 Roosevelt Avenue, handcuffed him to a chair, and then shot the alderman three times in the head. The assassination of Alderman Ben Lewis, commonly attributed to organized crime, nevertheless ensured that the black community on the

³⁴ Lewis, the first black alderman on the west side, had defied west side machine politicians such as Jake Arvey and Arthur Elrod by selling insurance to black homeowners.

³⁵ Edward H. Mazur and Paul M. Green, “Jacob Arvey Reports on His first Visit to Israel” *Chicago Jewish History* 32, no. 4, (Fall 2008): 8.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Notably, a 1.5 million dollar development project in Kedvale Square was abandoned in 1962. See, Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: Race, Real Estate and the Exploitation of Black America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009).

west side would be represented by political leadership loyal to Mayor Daley. Such a brazen act of political violence meant that a large segment of the black community in Chicago would have no representation at the city level at a time when local government was vested with new powers over neighborhood transformation.

Scholars have aptly demonstrated that segregated blacks on the west side were deeply impacted by de-industrialization and the loss of jobs. They have also documented that many were victims of contract sales, absentee landlords, and local business owners refused to hire blacks and that price gouged. Oral histories with those who grew up in Lawndale during this time period also confirm that the community, as an entirety, was also governed as a bio-political threat. After the murder of Lewis, Prexy Nesbitt, for example, explained that Lawndale became a “latifundia... controlled by outside forces.” He noted,

We moved to Lawndale specifically, Albany and 15th street not far from the Sears Roebuck, into what was an all Jewish ghetto. When we moved there in 1948 there were not probably more than 25 African American families west of Western Avenue. And I watched in the course of the years from roughly 52’ to 55’ that neighborhood go from being all Jewish to becoming all black. ...So it had all the characteristics of being occupied, essentially. When black folk then came to take it over, it remained in the same machine like characteristics even though they had black aldermen. I remember the election of – man I can’t remember this guy’s name—he was so corrupt there was no end to it.³⁸

Often described as run by plantation politics by other observers, the Bloody 24th Ward was reconstituted as the center of Democratic Machine politics after Ben Lewis’ assassination. Nesbitt explained that despite the deterioration of the area, his community was only valued because local politicians could deliver votes. He shared,

One of the events that very much impacted me – I grew up in the 24th ward which was one of the most machine run wards in the city. That was the ward when Kennedy was in trouble in the 1960s election and said to Daley, “I need this election.” He called Daley said “how many votes do you need?” and he got them out of the 24th ward.³⁹

³⁸ Prexy Nesbitt, Interview by the author, Oak Lawn, Illinois, February 20, 2010, 1.

³⁹ Ibid.

The exploitation of the community as a voting bloc was abominable, but perhaps the best evidence that the residents of Lawndale were treated as a bio-political threat involved the incremental neglect of the areas youth.

As the efforts to desegregate Chicago schools shook the city in the early sixties, black parents also denounced the inadequate education received by their children. Overcrowded classrooms, a lack of books and resources, and racial discrimination from teachers were commonplace in Chicago, but on the west side it seemed even worse. Nesbitt, for one, experienced firsthand the failure of the public schools. Recalling an incident at Nathaniel Pope Elementary that in his mind exemplified the neglect of black children in Lawndale, he explained,

The west side went through a lot of changes when I was there. As it deteriorated and as the schools got worse and worse, my parents decided to pull us out of public school. Symbolizing this was when my father, who was a teacher, walked up to my fifth grade classroom and found me teaching the reading class. He said “what are you doing Prexy?” and I said, “Well I always teach reading class while the teacher gets some coffee.”⁴⁰

Soon afterwards, Nesbitt’s parents dis-enrolled him from the school. Others also recalled that their education suffered. Though younger than Nesbitt, Nwaji Nefajito (formerly Brenda Harris), who grew up near 18th and Hamlin and attended Farragut High School, recalled that many of her elementary school teachers showed little interest in educating and mentoring students. She noted,

Some of the teachers I liked, some of the teachers, most of the teachers were okay. Some teachers had more dedication to the students. Like some teachers would take you places outside of school, and some teachers they just... it seemed like they didn’t put as much into the students. When I was in grammar school, my favorite teacher, some of my favorite teachers they were usually black except this one man, Mr. Girsch. He was, I guess he was German. He wasn’t like a regular teacher, he was like, he put more into the children than the other white teachers, I think. He would talk to us, you know, he would talk to us and try to tell us about life and doing well. So he put more of his heart into it, while some of the other white teachers, you could tell some of them were just there. But there was this one teacher, I really didn’t like him. He was black, but he was light skinned, and he had freckles, and he had a very noticeable color bias.⁴¹

She recalled one incident that stuck in her memory,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Nwaji Nefahito, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, 4.

There was these three little girls that were sitting up front, and he would talk to them all the time, and they were all light skinned, they had long hair. But then I noticed that, like one time it rained really, really hard and everybody was wet. He took off their shoes and wrapped newspaper around them, but he didn't do it for the other students. And so there was another little girl. She was real dark, and you could tell her family was very poor. Like her clothes didn't fit her very well, and she had one loose eye, and he picked on her all the time. And so one time -- she used to talk to me -- me and her we were good friends and I am much lighter than her -- he kept telling her to be quiet, be quiet. But he never said anything to me, right. And so he just got up of his chair in this rage and he told her to get out of his class. And she said "I am not doing anything" because I am talking to her just as much as she is talking to me, right. And we really weren't talking that much. But anyway, he grabbed her and dragged her out the classroom right. He dragged her out the classroom. So that was like, really you could see how interracial color, you know, affected some people and you don't know what kind of scar that left on her. Being dragged out the room like that, and she was crying and everything, and screaming. I never saw her after that.

...But it is a problem because this one little girl, she, like everybody, we all straightened our hair, right? So, if you didn't straighten your hair, if you were a little girl, then the children would pick on you. Like, I don't know, like some little girls they would just have a little short fro and they would get picked on... So we had really been affected by being in a white supremacist society. You know, our standards, especially the physical standards, you know, really affected how we looked at each other.⁴²

To be sure, not all teachers were hostile and not all classroom experiences in North Lawndale schools were as traumatic as the incident described by Nefajito. But hers and Prexy Nesbitt's testimonies reveals that public schools were not places of education but inculcation. They were spaces where students learned the politics of whiteness, gender, and racialized poverty at a young age.

Outside of the classroom, North Lawndales' youth were intensely educated in their expendability as bio-political threats through racial violence and experiences of policing. Lawrence Kennon, a civil rights lawyer whose family moved from the near west side to Lawndale in 1948, recalled in an oral history that as a youth growing up in the late 1930s and early forties anti-black racial violence was not too acute on the west side. He explained,

I was living on at Damen and Polk, which was right on the border of a white community. The south side of the street was black and the north side of the street was white, but when we first moved there in 1934 or 1935, it was still white on our side of the street as well. So we lived in

⁴² Ibid.

an integrated building... We lived in the same building with Italian families, and some days we kids would have our fights, but the next day we'd all be playing baseball together!⁴³

Kennon recalled that at that time it was in other areas of the city where black youth faced intense violence. In fact, as a thirteen year old returning from a field trip to a White Sox game he was beaten in Bridgeport by a group of “seventeen or eighteen white teenagers that were playing baseball.”⁴⁴ According to Kennon, a police officer who witnessed the attack threatened to arrest Kennon and his groups of friends, saying to them “Don’t worry about them. They were just playing.” By the 1960s, however, the west side was a central location of racial violence and police brutality, and the surveillance of racial borders.

Perhaps the most heinous incident was the murder of seventeen year old Jerome Huey in May of 1966 in Cicero. On his way to the Burlington Railroad Employment offices to look for a job, Huey was beaten to death with bats by four white teenagers. Of course, there was active resistance to acts of racial violence. Huey’s murder, for example sparked outbreaks of violence. According to one news report:

Fights erupted after a Negro woman began taking pictures of several white women, believed to be the mothers of the accused youths. Someone grabbed the woman’s camera and slammed it to the floor. Fighting began inside and outside the County Morgue hearing room.⁴⁵

Observing the murder of Jerome Huey, and other acts of racial terror, it was obvious to many who grew up in North Lawndale that the police treated black youth as subhuman and also worked to incite racial conflict. At a 2010 panel discussion, for example, Black Panther Stan McKinney recalled that as a student in North Lawndale he even witnessed the police escorting white students to school.⁴⁶ Such observations of police protection coupled with experiences of police brutality undoubtedly communicated the expendability of black youth on the west side. In this sense, Mayor Daley’s infamous “shoot to kill” order during the community uprising following Martin Luther King’s assassination in

⁴³ Lawrence Kennon, Interview by Timuel D. Black, in *Bridges of Memory*, 57.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴⁵ “Inquest Stirs Racial Clash,” *The News and Courier*, June 3, 1966.

⁴⁶ Stan McKinney’s comments were made during a panel presentation entitled “All Power to the People: What We Want, What We Believe” on June 10, 2010 at the Du Sable Museum of African American History in Chicago, Illinois.

April of 1968 only confirmed what many in North Lawndale already knew about the politics of expendability.

In this light, it was not a coincidence that the Black Panther Party found fertile ground among the oppressed people of North Lawndale and opened its headquarters in the community. As with west Oakland where the organization initiated its work, the Panther's ten point platform squared directly with the needs of a community that during the 1960s suffered from high infant mortality rates, staggering rates of youth unemployment, police terror, overcrowded and dilapidated housing, inadequate healthcare, hunger, and the emergence of powerful street organizations.

In fact, the high rate of participation of youths in street organizations and violent activities was another indication that North Lawndale was permitted to evolve into a quality of death community. Historian Andrew Diamond's description of the intensification of gang violence in the area is important to consider. According to Diamond,

...youth workers were frequently reporting handguns and shotguns being used or brandished by gang members, and the friction and rumbles that in previous years had yielded cuts and bruises were resulting in a great many more hospitalizations and fatalities... The number of homicide arrests rose from 240 in 1958 to 504 in 1964 as the overall population of the city minimally decreased.

In addition to the upheaval caused by racial migrations, several different factors interacted to produce this change: the alarming flight of jobs out of the city, the disruptions caused by periodic short-term economic downturns, and perhaps most important, the incalculable social dislocations inflicted by the city's massive urban renewal and public housing programs. The period between 1958 and 1962 witnessed the staggeringly rapid culmination of the first phase of the Daley's administration's public housing vision for black Chicago with the opening of the Rockwell Gardens, Stateway Gardens, Green Homes (adding to the pre-existing Cabrini Homes, and Robert Taylor Homes projects... Not surprisingly, these circumstances had a profound emotional impact on residents and thus generated optimal conditions for waves of crime and gang violence.

... This was the backdrop for the fighting gang culture that developed in the late 1950s... By 1958 the Lawndale neighborhood to the southwest of the Addams area had given rise to Chicago's most vicious gang milieu. The rapid proliferation of fighting gangs in this black ghetto neighborhood had led to the spread of coercive recruitment campaigns and a veritable arms race on the streets. While guns were becoming more frequent in other parts of the city as well, violent recruitment tactics were still somewhat unheard of outside of Lawndale, which was home to dozens of large street fighting groups, the most reputable being the El Commandoes, Van Dykes, Braves, Cherokees, Morphines, Continental Pimps, Imperial Chaplains, Imperial Knights,

Comanches, Vice Lords, Clovers, and Cobras. By 1962, most of these gangs had been absorbed, in most cases forcibly, by either the Vice Lords or the Cobras, both of which had become immense federations of street corner groups capable of rallying several hundred young men for battle.⁴⁷

Diamond is certainly correct to highlight the psycho-affective impact of urban renewal programs and discriminatory public housing policies as shaping the emergence of street organizations. Unfortunately, he overlooks the evolution of neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago, and the ways state power thrived upon the incitement of youth violence during the late fifties and sixties in certain sections of the city.

Writing from jail, for example, George Jackson described Lawndale as “the wildest of the nation’s jungles” and remembered that as a young person growing up in the fifties the police had little interest in curbing his criminal activity. He wrote,

My mother and father will never admit it now, I’m sure, but I was hungry and so were we all. Our activities went from stolen food to other things I wanted, gloves for my hands (which were always cold), which I was always wearing out, marbles for the slingshots, games and gadgets for outdoorsmen from the dime store. Downtown we plundered at will. The city was helpless to defend against us.

After Warren Street we moved into the Troop Street projects, which in 1958 were the scene of the city’s worst riots.... I was caught once or twice for mugging but the pig never went much further than to pop me behind the ear with the “oak stick” several times and send for my mortified father to carry me home.⁴⁸

Jackson’s recollections demonstrate that prior to the era that Diamond describes so powerfully, the police cared little to discipline the conduct of black youth. It must be acknowledged that crime and youth violence in certain neighborhoods was allowed to proliferate as such features of neighborhood crime fulfilled every expectation of racialized poverty. The contradiction, as historian Jon Rice shows, was that the Black Panthers were able to recruit heavily among the youth “warriors” of the west side.

Though lived experiences in North Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park were never identical, poor people in these areas shared a sense of what it meant to be racialized and treated as bio-political enemies of the city. As members of outcast communities who were at best differentially included, or

⁴⁷ Andrew Diamond, *Mean Streets: Chicago Youths and the Everyday Struggle for Empowerment in the Multiracial City, 1908-1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 215.

⁴⁸ George Jackson, *Soledad Brothers: The Prison Letters of George Jackson* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1970), 15.

valued only for votes and labor, poor residents of these areas also shared important histories of grassroots resistance. North Lawndale, after all, was the community where Dr. Martin Luther King moved his operation to in 1966 to highlight northern racism. The west side was also a center of local activism as members of the Warren Avenue Church, the West Side Organization, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Deacons for Defense, Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), the Better Boys Foundation, Operation Breadbasket, and the Contract Buyers League, among others, struggled to meet the needs of the community.

Similarly, beginning in the mid-1960s Uptown was a center of grassroots anti-poverty and anti-racist activism directed by residents involved with Jobs or Income Now (JOIN). As an outgrowth of Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP) led by Rennie Davis and others organizers linked to the Students for a Democratic Society, JOIN activists led by Peggy Terry introduced the concept of a community union to Uptown.⁴⁹ And in Lincoln Park, the exclusionary practices of conservation organizations, and urban renewal plans for the community, led to the formation of Concerned Citizens of Lincoln Park (CCLP). Those affiliated with the CCLP such as attorney Dennis Cunningham and activist Pat Devine consistently challenged the efforts of the Lincoln Park Conservation Association to displace poor people.

Though historians have generally narrowed the history of mid-sixties activism in Chicago to the demise of King's open housing campaign in the city in 1966 and the rise of Black Power, Chicago actually remained an important center of local activism across the city. Indeed, at the same time the Black Panther Party was organizing in Oakland and garnering significant national attention for their militant tactics, organizations such as the WSO, JOIN and the CCLP were beginning to organize for more community control over neighborhood politics and economic development in Chicago. In some cases, particularly in the case of welfare rights and police brutality, WSO and JOIN worked together and

⁴⁹ On the history of JOIN and ERAP see, Jennifer Frost, *"An Interracial Movement of the Poor": Community Organizing and the New Left in the 1960s* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), and Sonnie and Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists*.

with other groups such as the Latin American Defense Organization (LADO) and the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO). More importantly, the politics and activities of these organizations offered a critique of racialized poverty in Chicago that began to compete with visions of community control proposed by followers of Saul Alinsky's methods of radical social change, and programs associated with the War on Poverty. In fact, the trajectory of grassroots activism in Chicago during the post-King years – and to that extent the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition -- is undecipherable if one overlooks the ways the War on Poverty and Alinsky-style community-based organizing intensified the racialization poor people and contained revolutionary social change.

Until the initiation of the War on Poverty, it was Saul Alinsky's ideas of community action and participation that shaped local poverty politics in the city during the post-World War II era. It is important to consider that Alinsky was a sociology student at the University of Chicago during the Great Depression under the guidance of Robert E. Park and Ernest Burgess. According to Lawrence J. Engel,

Alinsky attended the University of Chicago from the fall of 1926 through the spring of 1932, majoring in sociology...During Alinsky's tenure at the university, the sociology department was chaired by Ellsworth Faris. Full professors were Robert Ezra Park, William F. Ogburn, Ernest Watson Burgess, and Edwin H. Sutherland. During his five years at Chicago, Alinsky completed twenty-eight courses within the department. Eighteen of these courses were under the direction of three sociologists: Faris, Park, and Burgess.

... They mentored their students in firsthand empirical investigations of Chicago's neighborhoods, investigations that led to the development of the University of Chicago's Sociology series. The most notable students works were Nels Anderson's *The Hobo* (1923), Ernest R. Mower's *Family and Disorganization* (1927), Louis Wirth's *The Ghetto* (1928), and Harvey Zorbaugh's *The Gold Coast and the Slum*.⁵⁰

As Engel indicates, at the time that Alinsky was a student at the University of Chicago, the Chicago School of sociology was producing rigorous empirical studies that examined the urban poor. This shift from producing sociological knowledge on the "Negro problem" or the "Oriental Problem" to studies of the urban poor reflected a powerful desire to know and direct the political consciousness and actions of

⁵⁰ Lawrence J. Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School" *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (2002): 51-53.

marginalized communities. And in Chicago, no one was more effective at applying the Chicago school's perspective and guiding the collective actions of poor people than Alinsky.

After internships at the Institute for Juvenile Research and the Chicago Area Project, Alinsky applied his training in the Chicago School of Pragmatic Sociology through the Back of the Yards Organizing Council (BYOC, 1939) and the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF, 1941). Whereas the earlier progressive era strategy of settlement houses focused on facilitating the integration of impoverished immigrants to mitigate ethnic isolation, Alinskys' BYOC and ISO articulated a new strategy of integration that emphasized community participation and "legitimate representation" as solutions to the urban crisis.⁵¹

Considering that in the early twentieth century era the existence of a Hull House, for example, allowed sociologists to attribute the persistence of urban poverty and ethnic conflict to irrational and anachronistic practices of racial solidarity, the creation of the BYOC and ISO in the post-Great Depression era produced the conditions to attribute sustained poverty and despair to community disorganization. In this light, Alinsky's successes in cultivating "indigenous" leaders, organizing community councils, and agitating "enemies" to address local needs operated to displace the responsibility for the preservation of quality of death conditions from deindustrialization to members of outcast communities who may or may not transcend self-interest and improve their collective lives.⁵²

⁵¹ For example in a commentary on the black power movement in the afterword for *Reveille for Radicals*, Alinsky wrote; Organization is not only for the purpose of power, but unless a people have become organized and their membership roster is open for public inspection, unless they have met in convention, agreed upon policy, programs, constitution, and elected officers, you will not find that necessary combination of circumstances from which legitimate, bona fide, accredited representation can be either selected or elected. Across the nation our ghettos are appallingly lacking in those combinations or organizations that can claim to legitimate representation.

...The void of leadership in the black ghettos or, similarly, in the white ghettos or the gilded ghettos of the middle class – in short, the general lack of leadership in America – is ominous for the democratic future. The democratic process cannot function without the essential mix of legitimate representatives who can meet with accredited representatives of other sectors of society in order to face up to the pushing, hauling, dealing and temporary compromises that are part of the pressure of democracy. Without this kind of representation the democratic process comes to a halt. This is what is happening today. Where are the leaders of the black ghetto who truly bear the credentials to represent their communities?

⁵² Of importance here is Alinsky's many polemics against causality and advocacy of relativism.

This is not to say that organizations in Chicago that embraced Alinsky's practices did not introduce ideas of grassroots activism and organizing techniques that envisioned the oppressed as agents of social change. Rather, the hegemonic implications of Alinsky's version of grassroots pragmatism and radical realism become clear once one considers the ways Alinsky defined "legitimate representation." According to Alinsky, "legitimate representation" comprised "indigenous" residents of a community that exhibited morality and understood that they had the unfettered ability – due to the exceptional freedoms provided in the United States -- to change community conditions and society. Questioning the legitimacy of New Left activists and Black Panther organizers in his revered *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, for example, Alinsky wrote,

Power comes out of the barrel of a gun is an absurd rallying cry when the other side has all the guns... Let us in the name of radical pragmatism not forget that in our system with all its repressions we can still speak out and denounce the administration, attack its policies, work to build an oppositional base. True, there is government harassment, but there still is that relative freedom to fight. I can attack my government, try to organize to change it. That's more than I can do in Moscow, Peking, or Havana... Let's keep some perspective.⁵³

Though couched in the rhetoric of organizing strategy, Alinsky's critique of militancy signified "legitimate representation" as those native leaders who accepted the tenets of American exceptionalism and had a strict faith in American democracy as a progressive system that provides the opportunities for the "Have-nots" to gradually transform society. For this reason, Alinsky's work thrived during World War II and the Cold War era. Engel notes that he was even labeled a genius by the *Washington Post* in 1939 and the BYOC was commended as an "orderly revolution."⁵⁴

For my purposes, however, I contend that Alinsky's pragmatic "rules" for radical grassroots activism operated to discipline activists and contain social movements for community control and self-determination in Chicago. In particular, his construction of "legitimate representation" contributed greatly to the notion that poverty and despair persisted in certain sections of Chicago because of

⁵³ Saul D. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), xxi.

⁵⁴ Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School," 62.

illegitimate representation, residents who practiced self-interest and evaded communal responsibility, and “closed-society organizers with... proscribed ideology.”⁵⁵ As a result, activists and organizations that took a militant stance were demarcated as deviant and thus de-legitimized.

The displacement of responsibility for the urban crisis onto the poor and oppressed also melded perfectly with neo-liberal governmentality that required poverty and despair in certain communities. Indeed, the existence of active and “legitimate” poor people’s organizations such as the BYOC and The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), among others, provided further empirical evidence that community deterioration was not due to a lack of opportunities. Since neighborhood institutions with “legitimate representation” supposedly provided opportunities for poor people to change their lives, the inability to improve neighborhood conditions was evidence that certain urban dwellers maintained an innate deficiency and a propensity for disorganization. Furthermore, community uprisings and implosions of violence that destroyed property such as the Division Street Riots of 1966, and any of the episodes of rage and anger that occurred in North Lawndale during the late sixties, were considered obvious confirmations that certain neighborhoods were inhabited by bio-political enemies who failed to grasp the American tradition of moral community action.

By embracing these ideas of “legitimate representation” many activists and community organizations that followed the practices of Saul Alinsky were part of the post-Great Depression hegemonic bloc that evolved in Chicago. As proponents of a pragmatic vision of community control, sociologists, activists, and organizers adhered to the neo-liberal notion that a quality of life only required an environment of equal opportunity. In this sense, they were also parcel to a hegemonic coalition comprised of business owners, politicians, academics, planners, civic groups, churches, community organizations and others, whose well-intentioned activities nevertheless racialized those who failed to capitalize upon opportunities provided in a free society and improve their human capital.

⁵⁵ Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (New York: Random House, 1969), Introduction.

Not surprisingly, the racialized politics of this hegemonic coalition in Chicago was intensified by state sanctioned War on Poverty efforts, Model Cities initiatives that tellingly designated Uptown and Lawndale as major focal points, and urban renewal programs and development plans such as the 1967 Chicago Plan that worked to displace thousands in Lincoln Park. All of these programs and plans that addressed the urban crisis offered incentives and unprecedented opportunities for poor people to participate as “native” community members in state sponsored community control efforts and economic development plans. It was symbolic that the central institution that coordinated the War on Poverty was named the Office of Economic Opportunity. In a speech to the National Conference of Catholic Charities Annual Convention on October 12, 1966, for example, Sargent Shriver, a manager at the Merchandise Mart in Chicago during the fifties and the first director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, extolled,

Our emphasis on the local control has finally sunk in with political leaders around the country. Their support includes the old pros of welfare politics like Mayor Daley of Chicago, but also Republican mayors as well.

...As the war on poverty moves into its third year, the difference between a bureaucracy and a democracy is becoming clear. A bureaucracy thinks the people are free while a democracy frees the people to think. And that is what is happening in the local communities. A democracy of all types of citizens is deciding how to run the war on poverty. Businessmen, the clergy and local people of every kind: rich, middle-class and poor--all of them are thinking, all of them are using their imagination and muscles to eliminate poverty on the only level it can be eliminated: the local level.

And communities are becoming autonomous -- developing themselves, and moving in a direction that is both up and out. Up from poverty and out of the ghetto.

This is happening because the community action programs are run by local councils. The poor are represented on these. They have a piece of the action because it is their future that is gradually being unfolded. And the businessmen, religious leaders, and all local people are involved because they live in the community also.⁵⁶

Shriver explained that “the New Deal had evolved out of its original form” as War on Poverty programs like Head Start, Job Corps and VISTA were specifically intended to leave community councils, activists,

⁵⁶ “Address by Sargent Shriver to the National Conference of Catholic Charities Annual Convention,” Available online, <http://www.sargentshriver.org/speeches/address-by-sargent-shriver-to-the-national-conference-of-catholic-charities-annual-convention?p=1>

and volunteers “terrifyingly on their own.” He noted, “We have learned that over-ambitious planning in Washington can lead to under-ambition in communities. And no ambition in the citizen.” Provided with funding, autonomy, plenty of incentives to escape poverty, and “no federal interference” the poor no longer lacked opportunities. Shriver made it clear that the War on Poverty was not about welfare and hand-outs, rather, it put the poor in an optimal position to display their ambition. The “I will spirit” that Alderman Robert Merriam called for local politicians to embrace was now the responsibility of the poor to cultivate.

5.1 Conclusion

The development of the political consciousness that led to the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition was never insulated from the racialized politics of community control that evolved in Chicago during the era of the Great Society. In North Lawndale, Uptown, Lincoln Park, as well as other outcast communities, local residents were subjects of knowledge production about poverty and racism, and observed local and federal officials embrace community control and “native” participation. They witnessed urban progress centers open in their neighborhoods, for example, and were encountered by an army of social workers and volunteers who had the authenticity of “legitimate representation.” Yet, despite all of these “autonomous” efforts to produce opportunities and cultivate the ambition of the poor, most did not move up from poverty and out of the ghetto as Sergeant Shriver promised.

Instead, during the era of the War on Poverty, many of the urban poor were locked into a deindustrialized labor market in Chicago that offered fewer and fewer skilled and semi-skilled job opportunities. One flyer disseminated in Uptown by JOIN that called for a Poor Peoples Campaign, for example, had pictures of children and simply read “Heard Times Gotta Go.” In other words, other than producing federally funded jobs that were often used by machine politicians to consolidate their power, the War on Poverty could not mitigate the economic realities wrought by deindustrialization. As such, programs associated with the War on Poverty, Model Cities and urban renewal plans should not be

considered sincere and benevolent efforts to alleviate the urban crisis in Chicago. Rather, they should be remembered as policies and practices that operated effectively to control conduct and to produce and demarcate bio-political enemies of the city.

Inasmuch as scholars, politicians, and community activists adopted and advocated pragmatic ideas of social change they joined a hegemonic coalition united by the belief that all that was needed to excel in a free society was individual ambition, and civic responsibility. It was the core neo-liberal values of personal responsibility and equal opportunity that racialized the poor and structured their experiences of governmentality during the period of rapid deindustrialization in Chicago. Racialized as lacking ambition, social responsibility, and the innate capacity to compete for human capital, poor people in Lawndale, Uptown, and Lincoln Park were governed differently. As bio-political enemies of the city they endured intense mistreatment, abuse, exploitation, and displacement. Anthropologist Gina Pérez, for example, has documented that Puerto Ricans who lived in Lincoln Park were often displaced numerous times in Chicago. Reflecting upon the experiences of displacement continually voiced by local informants for her research, Pérez has written,

People's life histories were also filled with myriad stories about moving. In the fifteen years Juan and Carmen de Jesus lived in Chicago, for example, they moved twenty four times: They first lived in pre-urban renewal Lincoln Park near the factories and warehouses where they were employed. They were evicted from several apartments after landlords sold their homes to private developers and like many Puerto Ricans in the late 1960s and 1970s, they moved west to Humboldt Park, where they continued to move regularly in search of the "right place"... Loss of networks, in fact, informed the decisions of some first generation migrants to return to Puerto Rico.⁵⁷

Multiple experiences of displacement confirmed that the racialized poor in Lincoln Park, and Uptown and the segregated people of North Lawndale shared experiences as bio-political enemies of the city.

Poor parents and children who grew up in these areas of the city endured humiliation and abuse from landlords, real-estate agents, welfare officials, teachers and school administrators, healthcare

⁵⁷ Gina Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families* (Berkeley: University of California, 2004), 133.

providers, and particularly the police. Reviled by the officers who worked their neighborhoods, they were often beaten, harassed, and even killed with little recourse to justice. Tellingly, the community control of police was a major demand in each community. In outcast communities such as North Lawndale, Uptown and Lincoln Park youth violence and crime were never the subjects of disciplinary efforts. Street organizations flourished, and when community uprisings occurred and riots and violence imploded, they were looked at as further proof that residents of these areas were pathological and irrational. In these ways, poor people in Lincoln Park, North Lawndale, and Uptown lived in communities which were valued because they exhibited a quality of death.

Of course, Uptown, North Lawndale and Lincoln Park were not only characterized by oppression, poverty, and despair. They were also centers of resistance and grassroots activism in which local residents waged inspiring struggles to change their lived conditions. By the late sixties, many had learned through experience that the War on Poverty, Model Cities, and urban renewal plans were bogus. In fact, it did not take long for local activists to declare that the War on Poverty was really a War on the Poor. Some even grew weary of Alinsky-style organizing tactics that brought little change. The constrained version of community control that pragmatic organizers advocated seemed to always limit the demands of the community to “winnable” struggles.

It was from these lived experiences of racialized governmentality in Chicago that the Young Lords and Young Patriots became convinced that self-determination and revolutionary change was needed. They did not, in other words, have to be convinced or manipulated into militant solidarity by the Black Panthers. Many residents in their communities, however, did have to be convinced that strong ideas of racial difference and powerful feelings of racial resentment and fear worked to limit their power as members of outcast communities to come together and create social change. It was into this difficult milieu, that the Black Panther Party’s revolutionary politics of solidarity intervened. Given the evolution of racialized governmentality in Chicago, It was not a coincidence that the Black Panthers

encountered other organizations in Lincoln Park, and Uptown who were prepared to grasp the tactic of the Original Rainbow Coalition and seize the time.

Chapter 6: ‘We Know What the Pigs Don’t Like’: The De-Colonial Politics of the Original Rainbow Coalition of Chicago

I don’t really have to tell you my story, these brothas already did it. We all niggas it seem like.

Bob Lee

The Original Rainbow Coalition was an “inter-racial” alliance in the sense that it united the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Organization, and the Young Patriots, groups that despite their political and ethnic complexities were racialized as Black, Latin, and White organizations, respectively. In reality, the Rainbow Coalition was a political tactic enacted by these organizations to raise revolutionary class consciousness in Chicago’s outcast communities.¹ Indeed, the very formation of the coalition was an acknowledgement that ideas of racial difference operated powerfully to undermine social change in the city and needed to be strategically counteracted. The Rainbow Coalition was at its core an anti-racist alliance that reflected the development of an oppositional consciousness that racial power was crucial to the reconstitution of the hegemony of capital in the city.

The next two chapters demonstrate that the creation of the Rainbow Coalition in late January of 1969 disrupted the racial politics that structured neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago. First, by uniting organizations that were otherwise divided by urban borders of space and race, the Rainbow Coalition provided activists an effective way to expose the hegemonic nature of racial divisions in the city. As a model of both working-class solidarity and self-determination, the alliance worked to stem the incitement of racial antagonism that local agents of governmentality such as Mayor Richard J. Daley thrived upon. Second, each organization was committed to establishing community service programs that served the immediate needs of poor people in Chicago. Drawing upon the example of the Black

¹ After the initial formation of the Rainbow Coalition by the Young Lords, Young Patriots, and Black Panthers, other organizations such as Rising Up Angry, RYM II, and the Brown Berets united with the alliance.

Panther Party, the Young Lords and Young Patriots created breakfast for children programs, health care centers, legal-aid programs, and community newspapers, among other initiatives. These “survival programs” addressed urgent needs in poverty stricken communities that often lacked basic services. In doing so, they literally usurped the power of the state as the caretaker of life. The organization of free community service programs throughout the city, moreover, exposed that the urban crisis cut across racial and spatial borders. They also demonstrated that neo-liberal governmentality and the urban renewal economy required racialized spaces of despair, dependency, and grinding poverty.

Finally, the Rainbow Coalition complicated essentialized notions of radicalism and racial identity. During the late 1960s the legitimacy of the state as the protector of abstract citizen-subjects increasingly rested upon the threat of race leaders and violent revolutionaries. In contrast, the Rainbow Coalition presented a model and language of flexible hybridity and communal praxis that undermined the cultivation of a benevolent capitalist state. In other words, a unity built upon class struggle, community service, and self-determination challenged racial explanations of oppression and vulgar leftist politics that ultimately reinforced the liberal model of the social contract and abstract citizenship.

Focused on the Original Rainbow Coalition as a local political tactic, this chapter resists the tendency to provide a comprehensive social history of each organization that initially formed the alliance.² Thus far, scholarly efforts to study the alliance have relied upon social histories of one group or another, and generally locate the significance of the Rainbow Coalition in the political influence of

² Social histories of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party include, Jon F. Rice, “Black Revolutionaries on Chicago’s West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party” (Ph.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1998), Jon F. Rice, “The World of the Illinois Panthers” in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), and Jakobi E. Williams, “Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago: A Case Study of Fred Hampton, the Illinois Black Panther Party, and the Origin of the Rainbow Coalition” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2008). On the Young Patriot see, Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists: Urban Race Rebels and Black Power, Community Organizing in Radical Times* (New York: Melville House, 2011). For the history of the Young Lords Organization in Chicago see, Felix Padilla, *Puerto Rican Chicago* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), Judson Jeffries, “From Gang-bangers to Urban Revolutionaries: The Young Lords of Chicago” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 96, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 288-304, Lilia Fernández, “Latina/o Migration and Community Formation in Postwar Chicago: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Gender and Politics, 1945-1975” (Ph.D. diss., University of California San Diego, 2005), Johanna Fernández, “The Young Lords and the Social and Structural Roots of Late Sixties Urban Radicalism,” *Dialogo* 11 (Summer 2008) 26-33, and Kerwin Secrist, “Space and Displacement in Puerto Rican Chicago” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2009).

the Black Panther Party.³ At the surface level this was definitely the case. During the late 1960s, the Black Panther Party was by far the organization in Chicago that actively sought political alliances across racial borders. Lynn French, a member of the Illinois chapter recalled in a recent interview that the BPP, “were the coalition builders of the era.”⁴ Yet, the compartmentalized approach that highlights the political and cultural influences of the Black Panthers often misrepresents the politics of solidarity practiced by the BPP and over-inflates the cross-fertilization engendered by the Rainbow Coalition. Though the Young Lords and Young Patriots were inspired by the Black Panthers and borrowed much from their political strategy and militant ethos, a closer analysis of the Rainbow Coalition discloses that the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots upheld the right to self-determination. As such, the Rainbow Coalition was an alliance based upon the explicit agreement that each organization wage its own class struggle in their respective communities and neighborhoods. In other words, scholars that study the phenomenon of the Rainbow Coalition have romanticized the alliance and minimized the organic political contributions of the Young Lords and Young Patriots.

In reality, the Rainbow Coalition was a calculated tactic agreed upon by the leaders of separate organizations that had little desire to relinquish ethnic identities and self-determination. More importantly, the cross-fertilization theory proposed by many scholars and observers fails to consider that the roots of the Rainbow Coalition are grounded in the historically specific realities of racial domination in Chicago. As the previous chapters have shown, the evolution of a racialized form of neo-liberal governmentality effectively contained the civil rights movement in Chicago through the transformation of labor into human capital and the incitement of racial consciousness in outcast communities. The Rainbow Coalition was an acknowledgement of this material condition, and at its core was a political tactic that aimed to disrupt the cycle of grassroots political paralysis.

³ A recent exception is Andrew Diamond’s study *Mean Streets: Chicago Youths and the Everyday Struggle For Employment in the Multiracial City, 1908-1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009) which places the Rainbow Coalition in the context of the history of youth sub-cultures and alliances between street organizations in Chicago.

⁴ Lynn French, Interview by the author, Washington D.C, March 22, 2010, 14.

In addition, it must be acknowledged that the Rainbow Coalition was one of several political tactics enacted by the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots to build a broader community based social movement in Chicago. Other initiatives included the development of community service programs, the politicization of gangs, speaking tours, campus organizing, political education classes, the takeover of community institutions and meetings, protest marches, and the dissemination of political propaganda, among others. Oral histories with movement participants are instructive here. According to a recent interview José “Cha Cha” Jiménez of the Young Lords, explained forthrightly that the “The Rainbow Coalition was a strategy of class struggle, of organizing.”⁵ Similarly, Lynn French described in an interview that the alliance merely signaled that each group “had each other’s back”⁶ and Black Panther Field Marshall Bob Lee has been quoted as stating that the Rainbow Coalition “was just another name for class struggle.”⁷ These commentaries should not be read as suggesting that the coalition was insignificant or minor. Rather, if the voices of activists are given careful consideration it becomes apparent that one can grasp the political significance of the Original Rainbow Coalition without having to perform rigorous social histories that disclose the internal dynamics of each organization. As Jiménez explains, “It was about who was best to organize in their communities, that’s all it was.”⁸

Romantic representations of “inter-racial” solidarity also silence the fact that members of Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots labored in numerous areas of struggle. Many rank and file members, for example, never had time for comprehensive interactions with members of other groups as they worked intensely feeding children in the breakfast programs, treating patients in health care centers, distributing newspapers, and attending meetings. In this respect, the Original Rainbow Coalition was not more important than any of the other vehicles that the Panthers, Lords and Patriots used to raise revolutionary consciousness in Chicago. Yet, as this chapter shows, given the racial nature of neo-

⁵ José “Cha Cha” Jiménez, Interview by the author, Audio Interview, Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 24, 2010.

⁶ French, interview, 16.

⁷ Quoted in Sonnie and Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists*, 79-80.

⁸ Jiménez, interview.

liberal governmentality in Chicago, it was one of the more effective political tactics that these organizations used to strike a blow against the hegemony of capital. And since the political leadership of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panthers, Young Lords Organization, and Young Patriots were responsible for the implementation of political strategy and tactics, it is entirely appropriate to search for the de-colonial politics of the Rainbow Coalition in their discourses and actions.

The formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition represented the explicit recognition by the political leaders of the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots that Chicago's working-class outcast communities experienced class oppression through race. Certainly, it can be said that the Rainbow Coalition was the culmination of several earlier attempts to come to terms with the power of racial divisions in Chicago. Yet, in contrast to previous social movements, the creation of the alliance was a conscious effort to challenge racial divisions through educating against the widespread tendency to react to racialized class oppression through integration or intra-racial solidarity. "The race question has got people so divided they don't even have a chance to come together and talk. If they did come together, they'd understand very clearly that this is a class struggle," shared Chairman Fred Hampton of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party during a *Chicago Tribune* interview just prior to his incarceration in early June of 1969.⁹ At first glance, it appears that Hampton dismissed race in favor of a mechanical class analysis of society. A closer look at Hampton's speeches and interviews, however, reveals that nothing could be farther from the truth. In fact, when Chairman Fred Hampton discussed race in his public oratories it was often as a critic of racial essentialism and what is now considered post-colonial nationalism.

Though he is often remembered for his declaration that "You can the kill the revolutionary but you can't kill the revolution," Hampton was also the one of the most eloquent speakers to signify against

⁹ "The Illinois Black Panthers: Leader Talks About His Aims," *Chicago Sun Times*, May 25, 1969, 5, 78.

cultural nationalism and those who advocated intra-racial unity. In a speech entitled “It’s a Class Struggle Godamnit” that was delivered at Northern Illinois University, for example, he explained,

The pork chops will tell you in a minute “The pigs don’t want you to get black. They don’t want you to get no black studies program. They don’t want you to wear dashikis. They don’t want you to learn about the motherland and what roots to eat out of the ground. They don’t want that - because as soon as you get that, as soon as you go back to 11th century culture, you’ll be alright.

Check the people who went back to 11th century culture. Check the people that are wearing dashikis and bubus and think that that’s going to free them. Check all of these people, find out where they’re located, find out the addresses of their office, write them a letter and ask them in the last year how many times have they been attacked. And then write any Black Panther Party, anywhere in the United States of America, anywhere in Babylon, and ask them how many times the pigs have attacked him. Then when you get your estimation from both of them then you can figure out what the pigs don’t like. That’s when you figure out what the pigs don’t like.

We’ve been attacked three times since June. We know what the pigs don’t like. We’ve got people ran out the country by the hundreds. We know what pigs don’t like. Our Minister of Defense is in jail, our Chairman’s in jail, our Minister of Information’s in exile, our Treasurer, the first member of the Party, is dead. The Deputy Minister of Defense and the Deputy Minister of Information Bunchy, Alprentice “Bunchy” Carter, and John Huggins from Southern California, murdered by some pork chops, talking about a BSU program. We know what the pigs don’t like.¹⁰

In this remarkable polemic, Hampton explained that the Black Panther Party learned through practice that a politics based upon racial essentialism and intra-racial unity was a bankrupt practice of conviviality.¹¹ More importantly, it was the reactions of the police towards a Black organization that emphasized working-class solidarity and community service that confirmed to the Panthers that any resistance movement built exclusively upon cultural nationalism was paralyzed. In calling upon the audience to evaluate politics according to “what the Pigs don’t like,” Chairman Fred Hampton emphasized that state reactions to the Panthers unveiled which political strategy of liberation really had the potential to transform society. In other words, police anxieties and state repression served as an indicator of which forms of resistance were considered a real political threat to hegemony.

¹⁰ *Fred Hampton* (Chicago: Peoples Information Center, February 1972), 20-21.

¹¹ On the politics of conviviality, see Achille Mbembe, “Notes on the Post-colony,” *Journal of the International African Institute* 62, no. 1 (1992): 3-37.

Chairman Fred Hampton was also remarkable in his ability to convey with profound clarity that the politics of class struggle practiced by the Black Panther Party was not the product of any innate ability, ideology, or the genius of leadership. Rather, the Panthers developed their political positions from considering the reality of the conditions in their communities, implementing a practice, and observing its political effectiveness. He explained,

When Huey P. Newton got to reading, and he's not like a lot of us. A lot of us read and read and read, but we don't get any practice. We have a lot of knowledge in our heads, but we've never practiced it; and made many mistakes and corrected those mistakes so that we will be able to do something properly. So we come up with like we say more degrees than a thermometer, but we're not able to walk across the street and chew gum at the same time, because we have all that knowledge but it's never exercised, it's never been practiced. We never tested it with objective reality. You might have any kind of thought in your mind, but you've got to test it with what's out there. You see what I mean.

... That's the only way. That's objective reality. That's what the Black Panther Party deals with. We're not metaphysics, we're not idealists, we're dialectical materialists. And we deal with what reality is, whether we like it or not.

A lot of people can't relate to that because everything they do is gauged by the way they would like things to be. We say that's incorrect. You look and see how things are and then you deal with that. We runnin around talking about "we gonna love all black people. We have an undying love for black people."¹²

The Black Panthers, Hampton explained, learned their political perspective of working-class solidarity from studying history and from witnessing that a politics based solely on Black unity was nonsensical. He proclaimed,

Malcolm was standing right like this in a room, where white people weren't even allowed. You hear me? They wouldn't allow no white people in there. But Malcolm's dead. Now what happened. What's that fools name James Whitmore.

... The man that testified against Chairman Bobby in the Conspiracy Trial down in Chicago was a black man. The man that has Chairman Bobby on a murder trial in Connecticut is a black man. The man who murdered Malcolm X is black man. The judge that denied Eldridge Cleaver bond after a white man had granted him bond – a nigger who investigated on his own and said "Nigger, I don't think you ought to be on the street," was a black man, Thurgood Marshall, Thurgood Marshall that the NAACP put in. That's one of things about sittin' in and dyin in and

¹² *Fred Hampton*, 26-27.

waitin' in and cryin' in got us... And we runnin' around lettin' niggers tell us we got to love all black people.¹³

At first, these extended quotes from Chairman Fred Hampton appear to emphasize deep rifts within the black freedom movement during the late 1960s, and a fractured and dysfunctional relationship among black leaders and organizations. If one considers that equally powerful political differences existed among leaders from other oppressed groups struggling for freedom at the time, and that equally powerful political debates characterized earlier eras of the black freedom struggle (e.g. Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois), then it becomes clear that Hampton's denunciations of other black leaders are unremarkable. The point is made even further if one considers that the critiques of cultural nationalism by Hampton and other Panther leaders did not prevent them from working with other organizations to denounce acts of police brutality and the systematic oppression of the black community in Chicago.

What is remarkable is that Panther leaders like Chairman Fred Hampton made it clear and understandable that the ability to develop an internationalist political consciousness did not require intensive formal study in a university, innate skills, or a leap of faith. It only required a sincere reflection upon the oppression black people historically experienced in the United States, an honest evaluation of the current objective conditions, and the willingness to implement and learn from practice. In essence, the leadership of the Panthers emphasized observation and participation.

The formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition was never isolated from or detached from the politics of observation and participation voiced by Chairman Fred Hampton. In fact, it would be accurate to state that the alliance was possible because in the Young Lords and Young Patriots, Panther leaders saw other organizations that rooted their struggles in local conditions. In the Young Lords and Young Patriots, the Black Panther Party observed groups led by organic intellectuals who through years of involvement in street organizations had come to their own understanding of what the pigs didn't like.

¹³ Ibid., 28-29.

Almost a decade prior to the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition, the Young Lords began as a street organization in Lincoln Park that was immersed in the everyday ethnic, racial, and spatial politics of a neighborhood targeted by urban planners for transformation. And in Uptown many of the Young Patriots such as Hy Thurman, Bobby Joe McGinnis, and Junebug Boykin, had long cut their political teeth as members in JOIN and the Goodfellows and were deeply immersed in the community politics of the area. If Panther leaders like Chairman Fred Hampton and Bob Lee saw revolutionary potential in the Young Lords and Young Patriots, the leadership of the Young Lords and the Young Patriots also had a range of experiences that made them receptive to the anti-racist politics of working-class solidarity advocated by the leadership of the Chicago Panthers.

In addition to local experiences of oppression in Chicago, the Young Patriots and the Young Lords could look to history to connect with the revolutionary positions the Panthers took. For the leaders of the Young Lords Organization, the imperial domination of Puerto Rico by the United States and histories of anti-imperialist resistance on the island provided a powerful foundation to comprehend the politics of the Black Panther Party. In the history of Puerto Rico since it became a U.S. colony in the aftermath of the War of 1898, the Young Lords found myriad examples of the ways capital, patriarchy, and white supremacy devastated the island. In the blatant racism expressed by U.S. imperialists like Albert Beveridge, the Insular Cases that defined Puerto Rico as an “unincorporated territory,” and in the sterilization programs that impacted thousands of Puerto Rican women, the Young Lords could identify numerous ways that white supremacy structured U.S. imperialism. Diplomatic historian Jason Colby, for example, has noted that despite racial anxieties involving the potential incorporation of Puerto Ricans into the union, leading politicians and businessmen argued that U.S. imperial domination of Puerto Rico was a necessity given that Puerto Ricans were racially unfit to govern. According to Colby,

Although these years witnessed the nationwide acceptance of Southern Jim Crow, symbolized by the Supreme Court’s 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, domestic racism remained primarily an obstacle to overseas empire. Nevertheless, by the 1890s political and business elites throughout

the nation generally agreed that dark-skinned peoples were incapable of maintaining public order and protecting private property, which were the hallmarks of responsible government.¹⁴

And according to legal scholar Juan F. Perea, the perceived racial composition of Puerto Ricans continually determined the exploitation and political disenfranchisement of Puerto Ricans. He explains,

The experiences of Puerto Rico was shaped by mechanisms similar to those used in the conquest of Mexico [by the U.S.]. When the Spanish-American War was settled by the Treaty of Paris in 1898, no Puerto Ricans participated in the negotiation and the language of the treaty left the civil and political rights of Puerto Ricans to the discretion of Congress. This treaty language was supported by Supreme Court decisions that allowed Congress to determine the specific rights that Puerto Ricans would enjoy. As in the case of conquered Mexicans and their subsequent struggles for full citizenship and representation, the racial mixture of blacks and Spaniards and the racism of the conquering United States played a profound role in determining the ultimate status of Puerto Ricans at every stage of the United States' relationship with the island.¹⁵

Perea's comparison with the experience of Mexicans who experienced US colonialism is notable considering that the Young Lords also included many members of Mexican descent.¹⁶ In the history of U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico or U.S. colonialism in northern Mexico many Young Lords could find common ground with other oppressed groups throughout the world.¹⁷

It was also not hard for the Young Lords to understand the Panther's critiques of intra-racial unity and cultural nationalism. Though most were born in the United States, many of their parents were forced to migrate from a Puerto Rico that was dominated by a comprador elite and governed by the U.S. supported Luis Muñoz Marín. Historian Laura Briggs notes,

In the late 1940's and early 1950's as the Third World became a battleground, Puerto Rico became (largely through massive federal government subsidies) a political showcase for the

¹⁴ Jason M. Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2011), 56.

¹⁵ Juan F. Perea, "Fulfilling Manifest Destiny: Conquest, Race, and the *Insular Cases*" in Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall eds., *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, American Expansion, and the Constitution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 155-156. Also see, Ramón Grosfoguel, *Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003).

¹⁶ Jiménez, interview. According to Cha Cha Jimenez and Omar López about thirty percent of the Young Lords were of Mexican descent.

¹⁷ Scholars have debated the influence of transnational politics on local social movements in Chicago. See Kerwin Secrist, "Space and Displacement in Puerto Rican Chicago," and Gina M. Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

prosperity and democracy promised by close alliance with the United States. Puerto Rico was a proof-text for assertions about the benevolent mission of the United States overseas.¹⁸

The history of the Cuban Revolution is crucial here as Puerto Rico was targeted by the U.S. to be the antithesis to a communist Cuba in the Caribbean. It stood that if the Cuban Revolution and revolutionaries like Fidel Castro and Che Guevara rejected U.S. imperialism, Puerto Rico would be a model of capitalist modernity in the Caribbean. The Cold War and the notion that the modernization of Puerto Rico reflected the benevolent nature of U.S. rule prompted decades of racial anxieties about the development of the island that centered upon impoverished Puerto Rican women and overpopulation. In accepting the language and logic of modernization, facilitating the entrance of U.S. capital, and profiting from a series of strategies to depopulate the island including sterilization programs and Operation Bootstrap (1947), the Puerto Rican comprador elite were complicit in U.S. imperialist domination.

If there were plenty of examples in Puerto Rican history to understand the Panther's denunciation of intra-racial solidarity, it did not take much of a leap to grasp the Panther's anti-capitalist focus either. Eager to capitalize upon the resources and labor of the island, U.S. business owners rushed into Puerto Rico, privatized the land, and influenced politics in their favor. Large scale agricultural production, particularly sugar plantations, were key to the transformed economy, as was the introduction of pharmaceutical companies that promoted and profited immensely from the politics of overproduction. Puerto Ricans were also displaced by government sponsored programs like Operation Bootstrap that sought to attract capital to the island while funneling labor to the United States. According to anthropologist Gina Pérez, Operation Bootstrap created new economic and cultural institutions that manipulated migration as a path to modernity. She notes,

Beginning in 1947, the Puerto Rican legislature passed a number of important laws ushering in Puerto Rico's export-oriented industrialization program, Operation Bootstrap... In tandem with these changes in economic policy, the Puerto Rican government initiated a culture change campaign that focused in large part on creating Puerto Rico's "new man" by promoting mass

¹⁸ Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, and US Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 2.

migration to the United States, shifting its focus to urban rather than rural development, and, ironically, constructing an “official” Puerto Rican cultural tradition based on folkloric notions of rural life... *Pepinianos*’ oral histories of this period employ a variety of metaphors for this migration, as migrants described themselves as “fugitives” or as victims afflicted the “fever” that drove them to Puerto Rico’s growing cities and even to places like New York and Chicago. The fever afflicting them was a deliberately engineered one, as government officials used powerful visual images, radio, and television to feed a fever soothed only by migration.¹⁹

For leaders of the Young Lords such as José “Cha Cha” Jiménez, it was easy to see that their own family histories of displacement and migration were rooted in the entrance of U.S. capital into Puerto Rico. In a 2012 interview he explained,

For us, it was simple. It was not anything theoretical. It was just like what we saw at Lincoln Park. Other people came to take over the neighborhood and the U.S did the same thing in Puerto Rico. The whole issue of housing displacement, then, served as a way to explain the issue of U.S. colonialism in Puerto Rico and vice versa.²⁰

As Cha Cha Jiménez indicates, community struggles in Lincoln Park assisted in understanding capital and coloniality in Puerto Rico, and histories of displacement in Puerto Rico were vital to comprehending urban politics in Chicago. It was no coincidence that the Young Lords named their clinic after Ramon Emeterio Betances, a Puerto Rican revolutionary who led an anti-colonial Lares uprising for the liberation of Puerto Rico in 1868, and also adopted the slogan “Tengo Puerto Rico en mi Corazon.”²¹ The YLO also organized a large march to honor the Puerto Rican revolutionary Pedro Albizu Campos in October of 1969.

The Young Patriots were also able to rapidly tap into the politics of anti-racist working-class solidarity proposed by the Black Panthers. Though the organization was ethnically diverse, most of the Young Patriots traced their roots to Appalachian communities and came to Chicago as part of a massive exodus of southern whites from the south during the post-World War II era. Just as in Puerto Rico the

¹⁹ Gina Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families* (Berkeley: University of California, 2004), 44-45.

²⁰ José Cha Cha Jiménez, quoted in “The Young Lords, Puerto Rican Liberation, and the Black Freedom Struggle: Interview with José “Cha Cha” Jiménez,” Interview by Angel G. Flores-Rodriguez, *OAH Magazine of History* 26, no. 1, (January 2012): 63.

²¹ At the urging of Mexican members the Young Lords embraced “Tengo Aztlán en mi Corazon” in recognition of the Chicano Movement.

infiltration of large scale production was the force behind the impoverishment and displacement of working-class whites in the south. The introduction of corporate mining devastated numerous Appalachian communities that were dependent upon access to local coal deposits.²² As a result extraordinary rates unemployment and poverty many were forced to move. In a recent interview, for example, the Young Patriot Hy Thurman recalled that he came to Chicago,

From Tennessee, a very small town in Tennessee. Basically, what I came here for, I actually dropped out of school and came here to find a job. Just thought it would be better here than where I was living cause we were pretty much in poverty there. At that time there was a large migration of southern people coming into Chicago and specifically Uptown. Naturally we would come to an area where we considered our people lived at that time. I came here, my brother was here. Shortly after that he got drafted and went to Vietnam.²³

Similar to the Second Great Migration of Blacks to northern cities, and the post-World War II migration of Puerto Ricans to the U.S., Hy Thurman confirmed that many southern whites migrated to Chicago because of poverty and displacement from the land. Significantly, those who came from Appalachian communities were also subjected to experiences of racial domination.

Deservedly, the horrific violence and brutality experienced by blacks in the south during the era of Jim Crow has come to epitomize the nature of racial domination in the region. Yet, the recognition of slavery and anti-black violence does not have to come at the expense of negating the practices of racial domination endured by working-class Appalachian communities. In fact, the evolution of rural white communities in the Appalachian region from agents of U.S. colonialism in the early nineteenth century into obstacles to progress and modernity in the late nineteenth and twentieth century should be considered alongside the development of Jim Crow segregation. During the Jacksonian era frontier settlers in places like Tennessee were valorized for their masculine virility, democratic spirit, economic independence, and bravery in killing Indians. By the twentieth century these same qualities were re-

²² See, John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 125-127.

²³ Hy Thurman, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, April 26, 2010, 2.

racialized as backwards once industrial production became predominant in the area.²⁴ According to Gaventa,

Into the hills came a new way which... justified itself as 'progress.' Like the ideology of colonialism in the Third World, it proclaimed the virtues of 'civilization', and would not pause to ask about the virtues of the culture there before...

The exaggerated attractiveness of the industrial order, on the one hand, carried with it the degradation of the culture and society of the mountaineers, on the other. Students of colonialism observed that degradation by the colonizer of the colonized usually takes the form of racialism. While the mountaineer was not exactly of another race, he could be portrayed as a breed whose lifestyle represented a deficient way of existence. For instance, while the Middlesboro was said to represent 'true social enjoyments', 'health', a 'fine climate, natural beauty', and 'good things', the older culture was said to consist of 'wilder mountaineers', who were usually not attractive, but were 'rather yellow and cadaverous looking, owing to their idle and shiftless ways, and the bad food upon which they subsist, and perhaps also to their considerable consumption of moonshine whiskey.'²⁵

If Gaventa's comparison of racial domination in Appalachian areas to Third World communities appears to be a stretch, one should also consider that Appalachian whites were also subjected to overpopulation programs. In her profound assessment of birth limitation programs in Puerto Rico, Laura Briggs notes that "Similar programs were developed throughout the rural south in the 1930s, particularly in Appalachia."²⁶ This is not to say that those from Appalachian communities endured a similar form of oppression as blacks in the south, or to say that they were innocent of anti-black racism. Rather, it is to point out that those who formed the Young Patriots migrated from communities that experienced displacement at the hands of capital, and knew racial differentiation.

In fact, the racialization of southern whites became more intense once migrants arrived to places like Uptown in Chicago. Crowded into kitchenette apartments, exploited as day laborers, and brutalized by the police, the community that embraced the Young Patriots understood clearly that they were not fully white citizen-subjects. Viewed as backwards southerners, it was often the attitudes and actions of

²⁴ A similar process in northern Mexico is described by Ana Maria Alonso, *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995).

²⁵ Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness*, 61-65.

²⁶ Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, 103.

the police that let it be known that southern whites were undesirables. Remembering his arrival to Chicago, Hy Thurman recalled,

I guess I was naïve there for a while, thinking that at that particular time that the police were there to really care about you and help you and they really weren't. They had an attitude towards anybody from the south and I think especially with my last name because my brother had been involved in some organizing against police brutality. So there was harassment that had started that I wasn't sure of why until I found out exactly how a person – you know we were treated as dirt basically in the community, we were just nothing. You couldn't walk down the street without cops stopping you, harassing you.²⁷

Of course, even the possibility of being naïve about policing was never available to most blacks and Latinos in Chicago at the time, but what is important to consider here is that the Panthers critique of intra-racial solidarity resonated with Young Patriot leaders like Hy Thurman and Junebug Boykin because they already had experienced the fragility of their whiteness firsthand. Bruce Berman, a budding photographer at the time who covered Chuck Geary of the Poor Peoples Coalition in Uptown and the Young Patriots recalled in an 2009 interview that the Young Patriots exhibited tremendous pride in their background. He explained,

Of course ethnicity is always a pride thing, but I really think in Uptown with the Young Patriots, for example, there was a pride thing in beating back the border. It was a new pride, not from being Appalachian but being from somebody who's making, pushing out the boundaries so you could exist in this new frontier basically.²⁸

Asked if southern whites who migrated to Uptown experienced discrimination, Berman proclaimed,

Absolutely! You're the loser of the world if you're a hillbilly. You're a joke. Your bars, your music. This is Chicago man... it's a major city. And here come these guys with their twangy Hank Williams... It was a joke to the sophisticated yuppies, as is a yuppie today with mariachi for example. It's a bunch of crap, you know.²⁹

In this light, the Patriots adoption of the Confederate flag was not a political claim on whiteness and an expression of a pro-slavery and anti-black identity, rather than an affirmation of their southern roots directed at racist police and citizen-subjects in a hostile northern city.

²⁷ Thurman, interview, 3.

²⁸ Bruce Berman, Interview by author, El Paso, Texas, September 9, 2009, 18.

²⁹ Ibid., 20.

All of the historical experiences in Puerto Rico and in Appalachian communities would have been a negligible influence on the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition had it not been for prior struggles that put people in contact with one another. As the previous chapter demonstrated Chicago was a hotbed of grassroots activism particularly around issues of welfare rights, urban removal, and police brutality. For example, in their first political action in Lincoln Park, the Young Lords disrupted an urban renewal meeting and destroyed a planning model of the neighborhood in September of 1968. At the urban renewal office, Cha Cha Jiménez told planning officials “This meeting is over... you can’t meet no more [sic] until you get black, white, and Latino representation.”³⁰ Though Jiménez recalled being an inexperienced organizer at the time and that “I couldn’t think of anything else” to say, his call for diverse representation reflected a heightened understanding of racial politics in the city. In Uptown, those that formed the Young Patriots witnessed “inter-racial” organizing efforts for years and participated in a major anti-police brutality demonstration in front of the notorious Sunnydale police department in November of 1968 that undoubtedly caught the attention of Black Panthers like Bob Lee.³¹ Community organizing institutes that trained activists were also pivotal as they put Panther organizers like Lee in direct contact with community organizers in Uptown.

The formation of a Rainbow Coalition then was not an aberration, rather, it was a political tactic that was groomed from a series of local social justice efforts and from common historical experiences of displacement and racial domination. In a recent interview, Omar López, the Minister of Information of the Young Lords Organization explained that the decision to form the alliance should not be romanticized. He recalled,

The concept of the Rainbow Coalition is something that evolves... There was all of this interaction and interactivity, so all of that contributed to the concept. There came a point where we said, if we come together as a coalition, we’ll have more power city-wide. And the fact is we all have the same problems, we all have to deal with the same authorities, so we need to come

³⁰ Jiménez, interview.

³¹ It was mentioned in some interviews that Bob Lee was previously a member of the Young Lords before becoming a member of the Black Panther Party.

together as a coalition. And nothing is stronger than having a multi-national coalition, a multi-racial coalition. I don't know exactly who came up with the name the Rainbow Coalition, but it came out of all of that work that was going on already. It was a question of just structuring it and naming it.³²

Similarly, Slim Coleman remembered that the Rainbow Coalition was the result of previous interactions and conversations among activists. He recalled,

I was doing some work with the Lords and a little bit with the Patriots. They had a Lincoln Park chapter, we set that up with some guys down there. But Bobby Lee actually was assigned to put that together. So "okay let's start meeting," "Alright, lets meet once a week here." We would sit up there and have meetings and "what's the next strategy?, where should we go? And stuff like that. They [Black Panthers] wanted bigger input.

... We would meet in different places. Sometimes on the west side, we had a little office that we used up on Diversey actually. We had meetings there and Fred went into Uptown and spent time with them. "What's going on, let's talk about this." He was a strong personality, and Fesperman, we would call him Preacherman, had a pretty good rap and they were trying to build, and trying to build things in other places. At the same time, the Young Lords were spreading to different places, principally in New York.

... So it wasn't like it sprang from nowhere. There was a history of organizing, some ideology and philosophy and so forth. But it became guided by the Panther Party. They all wrote a ten point program that reflected the Black Panther ten point program that tried to relate to their own communities. Then that formed the Rainbow Coalition.³³

If, as Coleman and Omar López suggest, the meeting of leaders and the formal organization of the Rainbow Coalition was a fluid process that occurred organically, the matter of organizing communities and building revolutionary class consciousness was much more difficult.

At one event captured in the documentary *American Revolution 2*, the Young Patriots were invited to address a meeting of the Concerned Citizens of Lincoln Park. To a skeptical audience they explained the purpose of their organization and asked those present to support the poor people of nearby Uptown. Moving to the front of the room, June Bug Boyken described the neighborhood as a southern white ghetto and told of the police brutality they endured in the neighborhood. The next speaker, Hy Thurman, showed the crowd a button. Thurman explained. "This button here, it's got all colors -- red, yellow, black, brown, whatever. It's a coalition in Uptown of different organizations gettin together."

³² Omar López, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, January 10, 2010, 29-30.

³³ Slim Coleman, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, July 9, 2010, 13.

After several frustrated efforts to win-over the crowd, the Young Patriots introduced Illinois Black Panther Field Marshall Bob Lee. Immediately, Lee proclaimed, “I don’t really have to tell you my story, these brothas already did it. We’re all niggas it seem like.” Pushing the crowd to support the Young Patriots, he added, “We all should be right now tryin to help these cats get their thing together, where they can go into the community. They can also get the people in the community together and see if they want it.” This exchange unveils that it was far easier for leaders like Bob Lee, Thurman, and June Bug Boykin to build unity with one another than it was to come together with community members. Yet, by proposing the very notion that poor people of every background shared experiences of exploitation and were “all niggas,” as Bob Lee put it, the Rainbow Coalition worked to directly challenge the racial nature of neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago during the late 1960s.

The creation of the Rainbow Coalition provided a way for the Young Lords, Black Panthers and Young Patriots to advocate on behalf of separate racial communities, and as one working-class community. This flexible hybridity which recognized and transcended racial borders worked to undermined entrenched ideas of racial politics in Chicago. The ways the flexible hybridity introduced by the Rainbow Coalition altered the terrain of racial politics is visible in a May 25, 1969 *Chicago Sun Times* interview with Fred Hampton. Asked about the origins of the alliance Chairman Fred Hampton explained,

This coalition took place around five months ago. We had a section chief who was working out on the North Side, and he ran into these people. He worked with them. We gave them books to read, and things like that, and they started, you know, to come along those lines. We talked about common interests, and common enemies, and then we found we had these things in common we decided to form a coalition. The coalition was also to show that we believe in solidarity in practice.³⁴

Hampton’s use of the pronoun “we” during this discussion of the origins of the Original Rainbow Coalition deserves attention. At first, the subject “we” refers to the Illinois Black Panther Party, a chapter of the revolutionary organization founded in Oakland, California in 1966. Then, it subtly

³⁴ “The Illinois Black Panthers: Leaders Talk About his Aims,” *Chicago Sun Times*, May 25, 1969, 78.

changes to signify the Rainbow Coalition (previously “these people”), before returning to refer to the Chicago Panthers once again. This fluid use of the pronoun “we” by Hampton could be considered an aberration or an insignificant exercise in semantics. However, if one considers that during the late 1960s Chicago was a vibrant center of Black Power politics including being the national headquarters of the Nation of Islam and home to Operation Breadbasket led by Jesse Jackson, than Hampton’s use of the signifier “we” has important substance.

Among other efforts, the Nation of Islam was a powerful force of racial consciousness at the grassroots level, as was Operation Breadbasket, whose direct action campaigns for fair employment and black owned businesses also served to shape black racial identity in Chicago. Slim Coleman, a white organizer and former member of SNCC and SDS, for example, recalled,

You had other forces coming in. Jesse [Jackson] played a much stronger role and so forth. Remember this is also the headquarters of the Nation of Islam. You know Fred had a lot of debates with the Nation in terms of coalitions... I remember one time at 2350 W. Madison I was up there and this brother from the Nation came in and he [Fred Hampton] said “Come here, you think that’s the Devil? Show me he’s the Devil. He’s a supernatural muthafucka? Are you afraid of this supernatural muthafucker? Because the Devil can kill you. Is that what you think he is? (Laughs) And they were in struggle, all those kinds of debates were happening when Fred was alive.

...I think it’s important to see that Fred, he felt it was good to build a coalition for itself. But the most important thing about building a coalition was the effect it had on the black community. From his perspective, and he was very clear about that. No question that the Party was nationalist in form and intent on building black unity. But he saw within that that there was a class struggle in the black community that they had to win.³⁵

In this light, it can be understood that even the slightest challenge to entrenched notions of racial politics such as Hampton’s discourse of flexible hybridity was going against the grain. And by not seeking to integrate or separate groups, and instead juxtapose them in solidarity, the Rainbow Coalition was certainly challenging the existing paradigms of racial politics and critiques of coalition building at the time.

³⁵ Slim Coleman, interview, 16.

But the Rainbow Coalition's politics of solidarity in practice allowed for much more than just discursive interventions. The public appearance of an unexpected alliance comprised of racially differentiated activists who were advocating for revolutionary change together undermined the racial grid of intelligibility desired by paternalistic neo-liberal agents of government and reinforced by civil rights integrationists, cultural nationalists, and advocates of racial separatism. At news conferences, political rallies, university settings, and community events, members of the Young Lords, Black Panthers, and Young Patriots often spoke on why they came together and delivered a common message that people needed to overcome race consciousness. Though other descriptions of the Rainbow Coalition could be cited, Fred Hampton's uncanny ability to capture the political spirit of the alliance is second to none. Hampton explained in a speech, "Power Anywhere Where there's People,"

We got to face the facts. That the masses are poor, that the masses belong to what you call the lower class, and when I talk about the masses, I'm talking about the white masses, I'm talking about the black masses, and the brown masses, and the yellow masses too. We got to face the fact that some people say you fight fire best with fire, but we say you put out fire best with water. We say you don't fight racism with racism – we're gonna fight racism with solidarity. We say you don't fight capitalism with no black capitalism; you fight capitalism with socialism.³⁶

Again, Hampton's use of the pronoun "we" is significant here as it illuminates that the Black Panthers envisioned the Original Rainbow Coalition as a way to contrast their politics with other organizations that advocated racial consciousness, and liberation through integration, separatism, or Black capitalism. In this sense, the Rainbow Coalition allowed for organizers like Chairman Fred Hampton to educate communities in Chicago about the ways race operated as a hegemonic strategy of power.

In forming the Rainbow Coalition, the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots confronted the tendency to react to racial oppression and domination in Chicago through a stronger sense of group and racial affiliation. On April 1, 1968, for example, the *Chicago Defender* reported that several local black political organizations and gangs had formed a new coalition called the Black United Front. The new alliance, the article explained, was influenced by the leadership of Stokely Carmichael

³⁶ Fred Hampton, 9.

and resolved that it “would not affiliate with any of the current black-white coalitions now springing up throughout this area or nationally.”³⁷ It’s temporary Chairman Paul Guest was quoted as stating, “These coalitions are always white financed and white controlled and always end up being ineffective because of outside controls... Organizations that have bi-racial memberships are excluded from participation in the Black United Front activities.”³⁸ Prexy Nesbitt remembered that the Black United Front often accused black revolutionaries who formed alliances across racial borders as manipulated by white Marxism. Nesbitt explained that “serious papers” were produced that even accused Third world revolutionaries like Amilcar Cabral of suffering from “blonde breastitis.”³⁹

On February 6, 1969 the *Chicago Defender* carried the reactions of west-side activist Russ Meek to the formation of a new Urban Coalition in Chicago under the direction of John Gardener, the former U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. Meek described the alliance as a “clever move to entice the integrationists and mesmerize the so-called grassroots organizations.”⁴⁰ He added that the Urban Coalition “is a continuation of the white liberal movement’s attempt to reverse the trend towards black self-sufficiency and to resume control of the destiny of black people.”⁴¹ In light of these two examples, it becomes clear that the Rainbow Coalition intervened in a political milieu characterized by serious differences involving the formation of “inter-racial” alliances in Chicago. Slim Coleman, for one, remembers that Chairman Fred Hampton’s vision of a Rainbow Coalition was controversial.⁴² He explained,

It was pretty profound... there was a lot of argument and discussion on this. They would say “Well you shouldn’t be building these coalitions.” And he would see their argument – maybe these are not the strongest allies blah blah blah. That really didn’t faze him, because he said

³⁷ “New Black Coalition in ‘Get Together’ Move” *Chicago Daily Defender*, April 1, 1968, p. 8; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Prexy Nesbitt, Interview by author, Oak Lawn, Illinois, February, 20, 2010, 10.

⁴⁰ “Russ Meek Opposes Formation of an Urban Coalition in Chicago” *Chicago Daily Defender* February 6, 1969, Available online from: ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

⁴¹ It must be noted the Russ Meek was a supporter of the Panthers efforts on the west side and was critical here of the liberal politics of solidarity that often stunted the civil rights movement.

⁴² Coleman, interview, 16.

“we’re never going to unify the black community unless we deal with this whole I want to be in the middle class and leave my people behind” stronghold that was really going on in the black community. That was really discrimination against those with less education and so forth. Fred had a strong working-class perspective within the black community.⁴³

The tactic of a Rainbow Coalition, as recalled by Coleman, resisted both the integrationist politics represented by the groups like the Urban Coalition and the separatist approach of the Black United Front. More importantly, the alliance forged between the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots allowed political leaders like Hampton to introduce a de-colonial politics of solidarity that reconciled the contradiction of self-determination and unity with other oppressed groups. Slim Coleman explained, “the coalition gave him the reason to argue about that. So there was discussion about that and he was pretty eloquent.”⁴⁴

Conveying to community residents that their experiences of housing discrimination, inadequate education, labor exploitation, police brutality, and displacement were shared by other groups in the city, the groups that formed the Rainbow Coalition unveiled that color-blind and racial separatism were flawed reactions to racial domination that failed to grapple with the reality of capitalism. This is not say that Rainbow Coalition leaders believed that black, southern white, and Latino experiences of racial domination were indistinguishable as it was understood that black communities endured the harshest forms of racism. In his speech, “It’s a Class Struggle Goddamit!” Hampton clarified,

People talking about the Party’s coopted by white folks. That’s what the mini-fascist, Stokley Carmichael, said... If we were coopted by white people, then check the locations of our offices, our breakfast program, our free health clinic is opening up probably this Sunday at 16th and Springfield. Now does everyone know where 16th and Springfield is at? That’s not in Winnetka, you understand. That’s not in DeKalb. That’s in Babylon. That’s in the heart of Babylon brothers and sisters.

And that free health clinic was put there because we know where the problem is at. We know that black people are the most oppressed. And if we didn’t know that, then why the hell would we be running around talking about the black liberation struggle has to be the vanguard for all liberation struggles? If there’s ever going to be any revolution in the mother country, ever going

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 17.

to be any liberation in the colony, then we got to be liberated by the leadership of the Black Panther Party and the black liberation struggle. We don't negate that fact.⁴⁵

Chairman Fred Hampton's polemic indicates that in contrast to other prominent organizations and leaders, the Black Panther Party's efforts to build working-class solidarity never dismissed self-determination and the reality of distinct histories of racial domination and racial formation. Instead, through the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition, the Black Panther Party could discuss the oppression faced by black folks and every other group of poor people in Chicago thus shining light on the fact that oppressed groups shared a common political enemy in capital. In short, it was a tactic that effectively demonstrated that integrating into the system, or fighting fire with fire through black capitalism and racial separatism were politically bankrupt strategies of liberation.

If the Panther's envisioned the Original Rainbow Coalition as a way to expose the failures of other "anti-racist" strategies at work in Chicago at the time, the Young Lords and Young Patriots were able to use the alliance for similar political purposes. Undoubtedly, the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition certified these groups as "real" revolutionaries in league with the most hated organization in the country. Yet, the unity forged with the Black Panther Party also provided a way for the Young Lords and Young Patriots to challenge racism and racial consciousness in their own communities. In a June 7, 1969 interview published in the Black Panther newspaper, for example, Cha Cha Jiménez was asked about the Rainbow Coalition and the unity between the Young Lords and the Black Panthers. He responded,

Well you see, we're still looking for that way in which we can help our people. Now we're starting to realize who our people really are, who are friends are and who our enemies are. And as we read and studies other organizations that are appearing now in the United States, we see and we recognize the Black Panther Party as a vanguard party, a vanguard revolutionary party.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Fred Hampton, 22-23.

⁴⁶ "Interview with Cha Cha Jiménez Chairman – Young Lords Organization" in David Hilliard, *The Black Panther: Intercommunal News Service, 1967-1980* (New York: Atria Books, 2007), 31.

Jiménez was then asked if he “would you say that the people are beginning to recognize, or they do recognize that the movement is one of a class struggle rather than a race struggle?,” to which he responded,

I think our organization just by the people, just by the content, just by being Puerto Rican, you just have to understand it's a class struggle, because we have light skinned people like myself, I'm very light, we have dark skinned people, we have red, we have yellow, all kinds of people, a rainbow of people. And this is why we can easily understand it is common sense to us that this is a class struggle. I can't relate black people hating white people and white people hating black people and Puerto Ricans getting hated by anybody, and people can't relate to that, you know, we look to see which is our enemy, which is our common enemy and we just see that the pigs are the body guards of the capitalist pigs that are oppressing and exploiting our people. We look to see that this octopus, the United States has been sucking all the resources from Puerto Rico and we see who our enemy is. We see that the United States is our enemy. And we look out for allies, you know, we look at Cuba, we look at Mao, we look at all these other countries that have liberated themselves from the monsters.⁴⁷

Jiménez's responses to these questions illustrate that the Rainbow Coalition made it easier for the Young Lords to emphasize to the communities they worked in that racial consciousness was obscuring who the real enemy was. By pointing to their participation in the alliance, Cha Cha Jiménez could also show that working-class solidarity was a concrete reality. Yet, a careful consideration of his response also indicates that while he could speak with certainty about the class consciousness of the Young Lords it was difficult for Jiménez to communicate with certainty whether a similar transformation occurred among community residents in places like Lincoln Park. In other words, the formation of the Rainbow Coalition acknowledged that educational work needed to be done. A similar challenge existed for the Young Patriots in Uptown.

In Uptown, the formation of the Rainbow Coalition pushed the Young Patriots to the center of community politics in a neighborhood with a strong history of anti-racist grassroots activism. On the foundation built by JOIN and the Uptown Poor People's Coalition the Young Patriots advanced the struggle against racial consciousness to another level by joining forces with the Black Panthers and

⁴⁷Ibid.

Young Lords. For example, a flier providing details for a talk on schools in Uptown by Young Patriots Mary Ellen Kenniston, Bobby Joe McGinnis and June Bug Boykin announced,

The Young Patriots is a revolutionary group of men and women in the Uptown area, with a common idea about what is coming down, in this country, Chicago, and Uptown. The Uptown ghetto is made up of many kinds of people, and so is the Young Patriots – southern whites, Latins, American Indians, hippies, blacks, and Italians. We know that racism is a trick bag to keep different nationalities fighting each other; or different gangs; and we reject these ideas. Our struggle is a class struggle.

We have made alliances with the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords (Puerto Rican- Latin Group) who we respect for their work in their own communities. By means of these alliances, we intend to help each other with work programs and the problem of self-defense. *Also we know these alliances will help us in education. We understand the power of different groups of people fighting together for freedom.*⁴⁸ (emphasis added)

This last sentence is crucial as it demonstrates that the formation of the Original Rainbow Coalition was designed as an educational tactic to make the point of a revolutionary class struggle explicit. The Young Patriots, Black Panthers, and Young Lords understood that the power of the alliance rested in its potential to communicate revolutionary politics to fellow community residents. But in this understanding of transference was also the recognition that many people in Uptown maintained a racialized political consciousness and still had to be convinced otherwise. Thurman, for example, noted that among southern whites in Uptown was “still a lot of racism.”⁴⁹

Though many historians and observers commonly represent the late 1960s as an era full of Third World protest and radicalism, the reality in Chicago was that the many community residents in Uptown, Lincoln Park, and Lawndale were not involved in radical social movements and many were skeptical of militancy. In fact, oral histories testify to real fears in the community about militancy and an internalization of ideas that activists were gang members and subversives. Black Panther Nwaji Nefahito (formerly Brenda Harris), for example, recalled witnessing as a young person discussions among adults in her neighborhood in Lawndale. She explained,

⁴⁸ “Representatives from Young Patriots will Talk About the Schools in Uptown and the Food Program for Hungry People,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, IL.

⁴⁹ Hy Thurman, telephone conversation with author, March 25, 2012.

My parents weren't very politically minded, and if my father was, he basically discussed these things with his friends. He didn't talk as much at home, so I really don't know most of his views. My mother, I would hear my mother and our land lady. She lived upstairs, they were an elderly couple, and we related to them like grandparents. So her and my mother they would talk and they, you know at first a lot of black people, well some black people, I can't say how many, when Martin Luther King was on the scene a lot of black people didn't like him. They thought he was the troublemaker. I guess they weren't aware enough to appreciate a person like that. But then, after he was killed, then they had a change of heart.⁵⁰

Certainly, Nefajito's account does not speak for everyone in the community. For example, Prexy Nesbitt, another longtime Lawndale resident who worked with Martin Luther King while he was on the westside in 1966, recalled that upon returning from a study abroad program in Dar es Salaam his mother "immediately said to me, you need to get involved with Dr. King at the Warren Avenue Church, at our church."⁵¹ Nesbitt eventually worked closely with SCLC organizers on the west side and described King's presence in the community as one of two or three "real high moments of morale on the west side" along with the arrival of the Black Panther Party and the election of Harold Washington.⁵² The disparity in Prexy Nesbitt and Nwaji Nefajito's family experiences is striking and signals that community members could respond in vastly different ways to the appearance of anti-racist social movements in the community. In all likelihood, it was more often the case that after initial skepticism and unfamiliarity with movement people, many community members became more receptive to the activities of social justice organizations. As a result, a tremendous weight fell upon organizers to build legitimacy with community residents and to communicate their causes. In the case of the organizations that formed the Rainbow Coalition, it was a tremendous struggle to educate communities about revolutionary class politics given entrenched ideas of racial difference.

A closer evaluation of the activities of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, and the Young Patriots over the course of 1969 indicates a series of evolving efforts aimed at building the legitimacy of anti-racist class struggle in Chicago. One of the first events that promoted revolutionary solidarity was a

⁵⁰ Nwaji Nefajito, Interview by author, Chicago, Illinois, 6.

⁵¹ Nesbitt, interview, 5.

⁵² Ibid.

Third World Unity Rally held at Circle Campus on February 15 - 16, 1969. Sponsored by the Young Lords, the Organization of Latin American Students, and Black Active and Determined, a short-lived organization from Lincoln Park, the rally featured speeches by Chairman Fred Hampton and Russ Meek of the West Side Organization. According to the Young Lords newspaper, the organizations and students that came together discussed, “common problems, and the possibility for unified strategies in order to change the educational institutions in the city.”⁵³ Such events were part of a wider effort to undermine racial divisions on campus and build solidarity among students recalled Slim Coleman. He explained,

That was the time of the black student associations. At Wright community college, there were only 35 black students but they were there, and Crane, which later became Malcolm X. So Fred would go in there and speak and there would be a group of 150 white students and like 40 black students... He would say “Alright we had our speech and done this, I want all the black students to sit here, I want all the white students to go with Slim over there.” And then we would sit down and organize them, “this is how we’re going to build this coalition right here on campus, this is how the relationship is going to be.” We would walk out at the end of the day with shit already setup. We did that at every city college.⁵⁴

Akua Njeri (formerly Deborah Johnson) also recalled the event at Wright College in an interview with José Cha Cha Jiménez. She remembered,

I was at Wright. I had heard that about the Black Panther Party that they were kicking butt over at Wilson Junior College. They said they were beating up teachers and taking over classrooms. So I said, wow! Those are some bad brothers! I was impressed... So there I was one day at Wright and one day they came. The Panthers came to the school and Fred came to speak. I tried to get my friends to go and they said, “Oh, we don’t want to hear that, let’s just hang out over here and play cards”... they just wanted to party. So I went and the meeting had started already. The room was filled...

...[I was] totally impressed because what impressed me about Fred Hampton, not just how he could talk, but he was a man that was totally committed to his belief and to fight for the liberation of poor and oppressed people all over this world... He talked about the only way black people are going to be free is to fight for their freedom... How the only way you are going to free yourself is through a revolution. It was just really beautiful. When he got through speaking, he asked all the white people to leave cause he wanted to talk to his brothers and sisters. That’s when the shit hit the fan. The white people started talking about why can’t we all just work together, that’s reverse racism. He said. “Tell you what, we are going to have a class section for

⁵³ *Y.L.O.* vol. 1, no. 1, March 19, 1969, p. 11. De Paul Special Collections; Available online, <http://libguides.depaul.edu/content.php?pid=266901&sid=2206995>

⁵⁴ Coleman, interview, 8.

all you white folks after we have this meeting, but you all gonna have to get out of here.” So they put them out.

And he sat down and he talked to us about some of the silliness we were involved in. He said, “You got a black student union... it’s not a black and white student union, why would you even consider that white people are supposed to be in your union? Black folks have to get together and decide their own agenda. And we were like, yeah, that’s right.”⁵⁵

As suggested by Njeri and Coleman, under the leadership of Chairman Fred Hampton, the Black Panther Party led a new wave of campus organizing that strived to introduce students to a new perspective of solidarity that respected the need for self-determination.

With the assistance of black and Latino student organizations, Rainbow Coalition activists were consistently speaking on campuses throughout the city and state, including elite universities like Northwestern, and the University of Chicago. During a sit-in at De Paul University in early May staged by a black student association, Hampton responded to white student hecklers by stating “All you poor honkies are in the same bag as black people.”⁵⁶ A contingent of Young Lords even traveled 22 hours by bus to Denver at the end March of 1969 to meet with youth and students at the Chicano Youth Conference hosted by Cork Gonzalez and the Crusade for Justice.⁵⁷ After returning, they reported,

The Conference was an education for all of us. We learned what Chicanos are doing to rid themselves of the brainwashing that the power structure calls education. We learned how they are organizing themselves and how they are trying to fight in the system everywhere: in the streets, in the farms, in the schools, in the factories, everywhere. We also told them about our experiences.

We learned a great deal. Most important, we realized how much we have in common, and how our enemy is always the same: the pig power structure, capitalism. We also disagreed with them on some points. We felt that they were too nationalistic and saw everything from a racial or cultural pint of view. We tried to explain that culture isn’t the whole answer and that the reason we are treated the way we are is usually because we are poor, not because of our race. The most important thing there though, was knowing we have allies!⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Akua Njeri, “An Oral History of the Young Lords Organization: Interview with Akua Njeri,” Interview by José Cha Cha Jiménez, no. 2, DePaul Special Collections, Chicago, Illinois.

⁵⁶ Betty Washington, “Students End Sit-In at DePaul,” *Chicago Daily News*, May 9, 1969, 6.

⁵⁷ *Y.L.O.* vol. 1, no. 2, May 1969, p. 20, DePaul Special Collections; Available online, <http://libguides.depaul.edu/content.php?pid=266901&sid=2206995>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

As suggested by the experiences of the Young Lords, the Rainbow Coalition meant that activists were united in urging youth and students to overcome racial consciousness, relinquish dreams of entering the “middle-class,” and join the people’s liberation struggle.

Campus events like the Third World Unity Rally certainly helped to create a bridge with the student movement in Chicago and in the case of the Black Panther Party assisted in recruiting politicized students to organizations.⁵⁹ For example, a number of Panthers were recruited from Crane Community College in Lawndale including Willie Calvin and Rufus “Chaka” Walls. Calvin, who attended Crane after his release from the army remembered,

So the Panthers would come over and talk about the need to have decentralization of the police, the need to make sure that the students at the elementary schools had food prior to going to school. To make sure that we had the decentralization of the police force, you know. Those types of programs would be talked about and the need to get an education to then give back to the community after you had been successful and got your degrees.⁶⁰

Calvin also noted that Crane students would attend political education classes held by the Panthers. In fact, a major source of female members of the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party came from the university. Lynn French, for example, was a student at Roosevelt University which was also a center of student activism.⁶¹ In a recent interview she recalled,

...we started one of the first Black student associations when the movement started. That’s actually how I met Fred Hampton because we decided to start a Black student association... The big deal was to have an event to announce that we were an organization and have a speaker. And Bill Hampton was a student at Roosevelt, he said “oh you all need to meet my brother Fred, he’s a great speaker.” Fred was a leader in the NAACP Young Turks movement at that point. So we invited Fred to speak and that’s how I met Fred and Bobby Rush that day. They were just starting to organize the Black Panther Party.⁶²

⁵⁹ For an in depth discussion of the campus recruitment efforts of the BPP see, Jakobi E. Williams “Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago: A Case Study of Fred Hampton, the Illinois Black Panther Party, and the Origin of the Rainbow Coalition” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Los Angeles, 2008).

⁶⁰ Willie Calvin, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, February 2, 2010, 9. At the time Crane Community College was located next to Crane High School. This gave the Black Panthers an important avenue to organize high school students. Later, Crane Community College was renamed Malcolm X Community College.

⁶¹ At the time, the distinguished scholars Charles Hamilton and St. Claire Drake were teaching at Roosevelt University.

⁶² French, interview, 5.

Like so many other students and young people throughout the country, the energy and politics of the Black Panther Party in Chicago drew them in and changed their lives. Slim Coleman recalled that “very dynamic people like Chuckles from the Illinois who became the secretary, and Ivonne King, people like that – he [Fred Hampton] really did bring in some well-trained students very quickly.”⁶³ Despite objections from family members, and gender dynamics that castigated females who became revolutionary activists, many left school, took important positions in the organization, and dedicated their lives to the movement.⁶⁴

As with other Black Panther chapters throughout the country, the Chicago Panther’s recruited military veterans, students, and members of street organizations. By all accounts, however, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party was distinguished by the numbers and activism of its female members, dynamic political leadership, disciplined rank and file, and community roots. Jon F. Rice, a participant observer and historian who has written extensively on the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party has explained that BPP members in Chicago were organic activists that clearly understood the southern culture that predominated on the west side. According to Rice, the Panthers were respected in the community for their courage and willingness to confront oppression. Writing about one occasion in which the Chicago Panthers traveled to the south side to confront the Blackstone Rangers, Rice recalled,

The Panthers who went south with [Fred] Hampton to talk with the Stones were the warriors, young men like Jewel Cook, formerly of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, Drew Ferguson, a re-deemed gangbanger from the Conservative Vice Lords, and Vietnam War veterans Willie Calvin and Henry English. They had their principles of what was right and wrong and they had an ethical code: Serve the People, straight from the South, by way of the West Side of Chicago, paying respects to Mao Tse Tung, in the Black Panther Party. When they looked the Stones in the eye and said “Stop killing black other black folks” their sincerity and their toughness was obvious.

⁶³ Coleman, interview, 9.

⁶⁴ On gender dynamics in the Black Panther Party see, Tracye A. Matthews, “No One Ever Asks What a Man’s Role in the Revolution Is”: Gender and the Politics of the Black Panther Party” in Charles E. Jones ed., *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998).

There was more to the Illinois Panthers than the warriors. There were some very well read intellectuals like Fred Hampton, Bob Brown, Bobby Lee, Joan and Michael McCarty, Joan Gray, Yvonne King, Kassandra Watson, Gregory Garrett and Lynch French. In 1969 you seldom saw these young 19 to 22 year olds without a book in their pocket. They had a popular book at the time on how to win people over, and other books on liberation struggles around the globe.⁶⁵

Building upon Rice's research, historian Jakobi Williams has used several oral histories with members to explain that the Illinois Chapter featured a fearless cohort of rank and file members. He notes,

Deservingly so, the martyrs and icons of this popular and controversial group have consistently overshadowed the efforts these organic intellectuals. Nevertheless, their comrades – the rank and file – were the movers and shakers of the Party. These young men and women carried out the necessary but daunting day to day task of the organization with dedication, a profound work ethic, and without complaint.⁶⁶

To be sure, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party was not exempt from political mistakes, internal struggles, and power dynamics. However, as Rice and Williams convey, the Chicago Panthers were a highly disciplined organization led by trained and courageous leaders. Indeed, the leadership and political activities of the Black Panther Party in Chicago, including the formation of the Rainbow Coalition contrasts sharply with most representations of the BPP. The history of the Illinois Chapter certainly challenges Robin D.G. Kelley's and Betsy Esch's blanket assertions that the Black Panthers were "probably the least serious about reading Marxist, Leninist, or Maoist writings and developing a revolutionary ideology," and that "Much of the rank and file engaged in sloganeering more than anything else."⁶⁷

Unlike Kelley and Esch's easy dismissal of the BPP, the organizing activities of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party did not go unnoticed by law enforcement in Chicago. In a lengthy article published on February 3, 1969 for the *Chicago Tribune*, journalist Chesly Mannly consulted "leading urbanologists," law enforcement officials, and prominent civil rights activists to explain the nature of the urban crisis. In this piece, Manly explained that leading urban experts such as Daniel P.

⁶⁵ Rice, "Black Revolutionaries on Chicago's West Side," 105.

⁶⁶ Williams, "Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago," 177.

⁶⁷ Robin D.G. Kelley and Betsy Esch, "Black Like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution" in *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections Between African Americans and Asian Americans*, Fred Ho and Bill Mullen eds., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 124.

Moynihan and Jack Meltzer, the director of the Center of Urban Studies at the University of Chicago were in consensus that most blacks in urban areas like Chicago were interested in education, economic opportunity, and job training, rather than militancy. Their views were seconded by civil rights leaders such as Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the National Urban League, and Edwin Berry of the Chicago Urban League. Manly explained that virtually all civil rights leaders strongly condemned the demands of black extremists and expected fewer incidents of riots. Berry was quoted as stating that in Chicago the Urban League “maintained a steadfast belief in the ability of Chicago to conquer racism and to achieve an open and just society, nonviolently, and without catastrophe.”⁶⁸

Significantly, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party was singled out in the article as the sole source of urban violence and mayhem in black communities. Cook County sheriff Joseph I. Woods explained to Manly that law enforcement was on top of the Panther’s activities. He stated,

My deputies tell me there is only one group that is actually trying to stir up anything and that is the Black Panthers. The Black Panthers, who have caused so much trouble in the San Francisco-Oakland area, are getting stronger here. They are trying to take over some of the campuses of the Chicago City College and are even recruiting high school students. Their local leader, Fred Hampton, who incited the disturbances in Maywood last summer, recently made a speech at Roosevelt University, advocating the overthrow of everything.⁶⁹

On the one hand, Chesly Manly’s article indicates that the organizing efforts of the Black Panthers during the first months of 1969 were causing anxieties amongst local law enforcement officials. On the other hand, it demonstrates that by consenting to the notion that the Panthers were “black extremists” and “revolutionary terrorists” several prominent civil rights leaders adhered to the same logic of urban race relations posited by urban “experts” like Meltzer, policy makers like Moynihan, and law enforcement agents like sheriff Woods. More importantly, in agreeing to the gradual improvement of black urban life this hegemonic coalition conflated the Black Panthers in Chicago with other black

⁶⁸ Chesly Manly, “‘Jim Crow Must Go’ Slogan Becomes ‘Jobs and Incomes,’” *Chicago Tribune*, February 3, 1969; Available online, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1986).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

organizations that championed cultural nationalism and racial separatism, when in fact, the Panthers and Fred Hampton were in constant struggle against the racial politics practiced by those same groups.

Though many students at the university were immediately galvanized by the political stances of the Black Panther chapter in Chicago, campus events could only do so much to reach residents in the community. For this reason, community rallies, survival programs and consistent opposition to police brutality were crucial to communicating the politics of a class struggle to communities. On April 10, 1969, for example, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party invited the community to listen to Bobby Seale speak at the Church of the Epiphany located on the west side. Seale, one of the founders of the Oakland Chapter of the Black Panther Party explained the history and politics of the Black Panther Party to the audience. According to an article in the Young Lords newspaper,

A crowd of 500 blacks and whites filled the Church of the Epiphany last night to hear Black Panther national chairman Bobby Seale and Cha Cha Jiménez, chairman of the Young Lords Organization.

...He [Seale] described the shallowness of black nationalism and the deep understanding of Huey Newton that the problem was one of capitalism and that the proper tool with which to fight was the gun. Calling for a class struggle against racism and capitalism, he stressed the need of the people to organize and fight in a disciplined manner. Illinois Panther Chairman Fred Hampton described attempts of the power structure to put him away on such absurd charges as stealing ice cream... In addition to two more Panther speakers, Illinois Defense Minister Bobby Rush and Bob Lee, there were also brief remarks by representatives of the Young Lords Organization, the Young Patriots, the Black Disciples, and SDS.⁷⁰

Prexy Nesbitt, in audience that evening, also recalled a stirring speech by one Asian American female activist. He recalled,

I remember the talk that he gave on Ashland avenue, it's always celebrated. The key event was the woman who spoke before Fred who was a Japanese American woman named Sasha Hohri. And she happens to be the daughter of a man named Bill Hohri who did most of the work for the reparations case that ultimately gets paid to Japanese Americans. That's her father.

⁷⁰ *Y.L. O.* vol. 1, no. 2, May 1969, 13, DePaul Special Collections; Available online, <http://libguides.depaul.edu/content.php?pid=266901&sid=2206995>

But she was totally sympathetic to the Panther Party and talked before Fred that night. So that when Fred went to the stage, the people were revved by the talk this sister [gave]. The image of the demure Asian sister – she got up there and stole the night.⁷¹

Community rallies and powerful speeches by speakers from different organizations and ethnic backgrounds worked effectively to communicate the politics of class struggle and announced that in contrast to other organizations the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords were defenders of their people and all oppressed people.

Throughout 1969 the organizations involved in the Original Rainbow Coalition worked tirelessly to address the everyday problems of poor people in the neighborhoods, and to educate their communities about the inter-related nature of oppression in Chicago. In Uptown, Lawndale, and Lincoln Park, and other areas of the city, the groups that coalesced in the Rainbow Coalition sold newspapers, opened health clinics, served children through breakfast programs, occupied institutions hostile to community needs, and staged protests and rallies that promoted solidarity. The problem of police brutality was of particular importance to the unity of the Rainbow Coalition and to efforts to educate communities about revolutionary politics as escalations in police murders and beatings angered many in the community and contradicted benevolent discourses of state protection. In fighting together for the community control of police departments and usurping the role of the state as the protector over life and social welfare, the organizations that formed the Rainbow Coalition adapted their tactics and moved dangerously close to generating the community support they needed to overthrow the system.

⁷¹ Nesbitt, interview, 11.

Chapter 7: The Rainbow Summer of 1969 and the Political Repression of the Rainbow Coalition

The city talks about projects to help the poor, but do you think they would ever let us help ourselves?

José Veléz

We do not support people who are anarchistic, opportunistic, adventuristic, and Custeristic. We do not believe in premature so-called acts of revolution... We've got to spend our time now on revolutionary education.

Chairman Fred Hampton

During the summer of 1969 it seemed that everyday someone was murdered by one of Chicago's finest. The violent actions of Chicago police officers towards people of color, poor people, and activists in Chicago allowed the leadership of the Rainbow Coalition to politicize communities in ways other forms of oppression could not do. Whereas housing, job, and educational inequalities were often contained by War on Poverty programs, legal cases that dragged on for years, and narratives of racial progress, acts of police terror clearly indicated whose lives were considered expendable by the neo-liberal state. It was no coincidence that the Young Patriots and the Young Lords joined the Black Panthers in emphasizing that the police were the shock troops of capital and were an invasive force that worked against the interests of working-class communities rather than on their behalf.

The organizations that united in the Rainbow Coalition also organized free community service programs that met the immediate needs of their communities. Building on the previous essay, this chapter demonstrates that the organization of independent community run institutions proved to be most effective at exposing the racial nature of neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago. As a result, a governmental reaction took place in the form of a War on Gangs initiative that criminalized the counter-conduct of Rainbow Coalition organizations. The commitment to serve the people through community service programs also sharply departed from the objectives of leftist organizations such as the Weatherman who sought to incite armed struggle in Chicago in the fall of 1969. Indeed, the War on

Gangs and the violent rhetoric of leftist activists operated to reinforce local agents of governmentality as the protectors of the people. More importantly, they justified police terror, political repression, and a COINTELPRO operation that resulted in the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton.

In a 1970 article response to NAACP leader Roy Wilkins, Huey Newton explained why the Black Panther Party spent considerable energy struggling against police brutality. He wrote,

We have used the police as a catalyst because the people on the bottom are most affected by that government agency. We call it a government agency because the police act like a government in our community. We realize that the police departments are arms of the decision makers who tell their unleashed dogs whom and when to kill.¹

Considering Newton's remarks, it becomes clear that the issue of police brutality and impunity was the most direct way for activists to communicate to outcast communities in Chicago that they suffered under oppressive class domination, were not protected by the state, and shared experiences of racialized poverty. Confronting the issue of police brutality, however, was not simply a matter of political expedience. Rather, the Young Lords, Black Panthers, and Young Patriots were united in their opposition to police brutality due to shared experiences of police terror, intense surveillance, political repression, and personal loss.

Shortly after midnight on May 4, 1969, off duty police officer James Lamb shot and killed Manuel Ramos. At the time of his murder, Ramos, a member of the Young Lords, was attending a birthday party for Orlando Davila, a founding member of the Young Lords in Lincoln Park. According to several witnesses, Lamb confronted a group of Young Lords standing outside with gun in hand. According to the Young Lords newspaper,

One of the people from the party told the stranger with the gun to take it easy. At that point, without warning, the man fired two shots at the group standing in the doorway. The first shot hit Manuel Ramos, a member of the Young Lords Organization, in the head near his right eye. The second shot struck another member of the Young Lords, Raphael Rivera, in the neck... Having shot the two men, the stranger – later identified as off-duty pig James Lamb (Star 12509), assigned to the Seventh District – neither examined the two wounded nor attempted any arrests. He entered a building across the street from Davila's home.

¹ Tony Morrison and Elaine Brown eds. *Huey Newton: To Die for the People* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2009), 176.

Almost immediately, uniformed pigs from the Ninth District (35th and Lowe) arrived at the scene. It is not known who called them. Lamb appeared and identified himself to the pigs as one of their own. He then pointed out four YLO members, and they were arrested by the newly-arrived pigs. The pigs made no attempt to aid Manuel. With one Lord holding his head, the pigs picked Manuel up by one arm and one leg and threw him into the back of their paddy wagon. They took Manuel and the second wounded Lord to the hospital. Manuel died in the hospital's emergency room, minutes after his arrival, leaving a wife and two children aged one and three.²

The murder of Manuel Ramos, the handling of his body by officers at the scene, and the police department's determination that Lamb committed a "justifiable homicide" triggered a rapid series of events including three large marches in Lincoln Park.

In an unprecedented show of support for the Young Lords and the family of Manuel Ramos well over 1000 community members and activists from around the city gathered on May 5th in Lincoln Park. The Young Lords newspaper reported that,

On Monday a rally was scheduled under the joint sponsorship of the Young Lords Organization, the Black Panther Party, and the Young Patriots. The rally was called for 7 p.m. in an empty lot at the corner of Armitage and Halsted. After a number of speakers, the crowd (estimates range from nearly 1,000 to over 2,000) took to the street on foot and in cars. The people marched down the middle of the street ignoring lights, traffic, and police permits. The police made no attempt to interfere. The march wound its way through Latin and white poor and working-class neighborhoods all the way out to the funeral home at Oakley and Hirsch where Manuel's body had been taken.³

After listening to speeches by the family of Manuel Ramos a caravan of cars drove to a police station in Bridgeport, the home of Mayor Richard J. Daley, to speak with police officials and demand justice. At the station they were greeted by paddy wagons and a "heavily prepared force," but the Young Lords and the Ramos family were able to hold a press conference that evening. On Wednesday May 7th, the funeral for Manuel Ramos was also heavily attended and witnessed a large procession through Lincoln Park. In attendance were several Black Panthers from the Illinois Chapter. According to the Young

² *Y.L.O.* vol. 1, no. 2, May 1969. p. 3, DePaul Special Collections; Available online, <http://libguides.depaul.edu/content.php?pid=266901&sid=2206995>

³ *Ibid.*

Lords newspaper, “As the funeral motorcade moved to the cemetery, fists were raised by people in the motorcade and answering salutes came from blacks, Latins, and some whites all along the route.”⁴

According to José Cha Cha Jiménez, the murder of Manuel Ramos was a watershed moment for the Young Lords Organization. Though the Young Lords had staged several political actions prior to the death of Ramos, many members were still in a “street mentality,” and had not committed fully to becoming revolutionaries. Following the police murder of their comrade, however, the Young Lords Organization was consolidated as a revolutionary political force in Lincoln Park and Chicago. In a 1970 article in *Ramparts* magazine, Jiménez stated that “it was at that point that I became a real revolutionary. Instead of going out and killing a pig, I saw the need to sit down and analyze the ways of getting even. Not with a gun. It wasn’t the right time. It still isn’t. We have to educate the people before we think about guns.”⁵ A flier for a militant labor forum featuring José Cha Cha Jiménez held on May 9, 1969 in anticipation of the third march for Manuel Ramos is indicative of the educational efforts of the Young Lords. The flier read,

[The Young Lords Organization] has evolved and been re-organized into a militant, political Latin American organization which is seeking to serve, defend and unite the Latin American Community to fight for basic social change. It has organized and fought the plans of crooked realtors who were seeking to drive all the Puerto Ricans out of their community. An all-white Community Conservation Council was fought when it proposed to make “urban renewal” decisions on the fate of the Latin community. The YLO has helped victims of the Chicago police force which is a continuous source of brutality in the Latin community.

Since its political turn, the Young Lords have been the targets of continual harassment, victimizations and frameups by the city administration and its police force... This latest attack on the Young Lords is another attempt to silence the growing revolutionary opposition to the racist and exploitative capitalist system which values property above human rights.⁶

As this flier indicates, the Young Lords Organization and the Rainbow Coalition used the death of Manuel Ramos and other activists to connect experiences of police brutality to housing exploitation, urban renewal plans, and political repression. In contrast to the 1966 Division Street Riots which

⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁵ José Cha Cha Jiménez, quoted in, Frank Browning, “From Rumble to Revolution: The Young Lords” *Ramparts* 9, no. 4 (October 1970): 20.

⁶ “Defend The Young Lords Organization,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

centered on the exclusion of Puerto Ricans, calls for the community control of police by the Young Lords highlighted that police violence and impunity epitomized that state agents worked on behalf of certain economic interests while regarding poor communities as comprised of undesirables.⁷ Acts of police terror like the death of Manuel Ramos, then, were a profound way to explain to communities that racial divisions elided a common experience of state racism and class domination. It was no coincidence that the Young Lords newspaper made sure to quote Manuel Ramos as stating, “Man! I believe everyone should be able to walk free, whether you’re black, white, or brown.”

The significance of acts of police brutality such as the murder of Manuel Ramos to the building of solidarity and revolutionary class consciousness in Chicago is captured in a recent memoir by Jeff Haas, a young lawyer at the time. Haas recalled that the third march for Manuel Ramos, held on Tuesday May 13th 1969, was a pivotal moment in his legal and political career. He remembered,

I was growing weary of working at the Legal Assistance Foundation and was drawn more and more to helping organizations such as the Young Lords and the Panthers. And so I was present on that bright and windy spring day in 1969 at People’s park, marching with the Manuel Ramos family. We intended to present a letter to the police demanding a thorough investigation of Ramos’ death. In addition to the [Rainbow] coalition the marchers included SDS members and other white leftists. Our march was scheduled to go from Lincoln Park south to the Eighteenth Police Station on Chicago Avenue

... We left the Park with the Young Lords, in the brown berets with red stars on the front, leading the procession. The march took us through the all-black Cabrini Green housing project, controlled by the Cobra Stones, part of the Black P. Stone Nation... I was standing near the Ramos family when I heard, “Join arms together! Protect our march! I felt paralyzed. My legal training had not taught me how to handle this situation. I considered fleeing but there were no safe havens for legal observers that day. As I deliberated I saw my friend Ted Stein, another lawyer unhesitatingly join arms with both sides of him. I got a sense of what solidarity means.”⁸

Haas also recalled that the Eighteenth District police had informed the Cobra Stones, a local street organization in the projects, that the march was an effort to displace them from their territory.

⁷ On the 1966 Division Street Riots that were also set off by acts of police brutality see, Felix Padilla, *Puerto Rican Chicago*, and Kerwin Secrist, “Space and Displacement in Puerto Rican Chicago”.

⁸ Jeffrey Haas, *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther* (Lawrence Hill Books: Chicago, 2010), 46.

Consequently, the Young Lords had to negotiate with them in order for the march to proceed. Haas remembered,

As we stood our ground waiting for the confrontation, Hilda Ignatin, a community organizer working with the Young Lords, left our line and approached the Cobra Stones. They stopped within a few feet of us. “We’re marching to protest a police killing,” she said. “Why don’t you join us?” They looked surprised and hesitated. Their leaders conferred. “The police told us the Young Lords were helping that Panthers take out projects,” one of them said. “That’s not true,” Hilda replied. “Our issue is a police killing right here in the Eighteenth District. The same police who brutalize you.” The Cobra Stones conferred again. I watched intently. It looked like they were arguing. Then one of them stepped out front. “O.K, we’ll join you,” he said. I relaxed a bit. They stood with us, even joined our chants for justice for the Ramos family... Dennis [Cunningham] and the Ramos family presented their letter demanding a new investigation to the district commander who came out to take it, then quickly vanished inside. It was a rare moment when left and black street gangs connected.⁹

Media reports also picked up on the solidarity of the Rainbow Coalition and the support generated in the community. *Chicago Today*, for example, reported that

An angry throng of nearly 2000 staged a boisterous protest in front of the Chicago avenue police station and was promised an investigation of the May 4th killing of a young Puerto Rican by off duty policeman. The crowd, led by the Young Lords, a radical Puerto Rican organization, had marched on the station where State’s Atty. Edward V. Hanrahan was scheduled last night to address a police community workshop.

...The march, which also included members of the Young Patriots, a radical group of Appalachian whites, the Black Panthers, and the Students for a Democratic Society started from Halsted and Armitage streets with about 400 persons. As the group went through the Cabrini homes on the way to the police station it picked up hundreds of participants.¹⁰

Notably, the conservative *Chicago Tribune* ignored that the march resulted in a new investigation and reported that “A group of about 3000 mostly Spanish speaking and Negroes marched last night to the East Chicago avenue police station to protest what they called the “murder of Manuel Ramos on May 4th.”¹¹ Newspaper reports and Haas’s recollections confirm that the march for Manuel Ramos – organized by the Rainbow Coalition-- motivated disparate groups to come together, and proved that common experiences of police brutality and murder could broker unity and overcome concerted state

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Jeff Lyon, “Marchers get Pledge of Death Probe” *Chicago Today*, May 14, 1969, p. 5.

¹¹ “Group Stages Protest Over Police Action,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 14, 1969, p. 5.

sanctioned efforts to divide grassroots and street organizations.¹² It also revealed that activists like Hilda Ignatín were willing and gifted at communicating revolutionary politics and messages of solidarity even in the most contentious of situations.

It is not an overstatement to say that the response to the murder of Manuel Ramos and other acts of police violence and political repression initiated a series of local actions by the Young Lords, Black Panthers, and Young Patriots that comprise what I term to be the Rainbow Summer of 1969 in Chicago. In other words, it was no coincidence that in the aftermath of Ramos' death and the incarceration of Fred Hampton, the Original Rainbow Coalition held a large press conference on June 7, 1969 at the Panthers' headquarters on Madison Avenue to publicly announce that the alliance was "united by common battles against the police and the City's power structure."¹³ Whereas the previous summer was characterized by the reactions of law enforcement and the state to the community uprising on the west side in the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King's murder and protests during the Democratic Convention, the summer months of 1969 witnessed the groups that initially formed the Rainbow Coalition and new organizations like RYM II and Rising Up Angry, wage a series of efforts that exposed racialized poverty and seriously undermined the legitimacy of the neo-liberal state in the eyes of poor communities.

One day after the final march for Manuel Ramos, the Young Lords occupied the McCormick Theological Seminary in Lincoln Park on May 15, 1969. Renaming the site the Manuel Ramos Memorial Building, the Young Lords led several other groups that comprised a Poor Peoples Coalition

¹² *The Chicago Sun Times* also covered the march and reported that earlier in the day the Black Panthers and SDS held press conferences denouncing police brutality. Significantly, the Panthers and Fred Hampton also denounced the murder of two black men by police including the death of Charles Cox who was killed while in police custody at the Fillmore station. The *Sun Times* quoted Hampton as calling for the end of the "murder of oppressed peoples." See, Thomas S. Dolan, "600 march to Protest Youth's Death" *Chicago Sun Times*, May 14, 1969, p.11. Notably, the *Chicago Defender* misrepresented the Panthers as the Cobra Stones and centered their coverage on the dispute between the Panthers and the Young Lords. See, "Confrontation on North Side Fails; Looting Follows," *Chicago Daily Defender*, May 14, 1969.

¹³ *The Black Panther* 3, no. 7, June 7, 1969, p. 15.

in Lincoln Park in demanding that the seminary seize to support urban renewal projects in the neighborhood.¹⁴ An article in the *Chicago Daily News* reported:

The estimated 200 persons moved into the seminary's administration building... early Thursday morning. The dissidents explained that renewal projects in west Lincoln Park so improve housing that present residents – including poor whites, blacks, and Puerto Ricans – cannot afford to live there. The seminary has been a prime force in renovation of the Lincoln Park area.¹⁵

After a four day occupation and rounds of negotiations, activists succeeded in convincing seminary officials to provide funds for low income housing, day care, and a legal aid program, and prevented the seminary president Reverend Arthur McKay from seeking a legal injunction against the Poor Peoples Coalition.

The Rainbow Coalition's solidarity in using political tactics that revealed how entrenched institutions harmed poor people is hinted at in a piece sent into the *Black Panther* newspaper by Carletta Fields of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party. In this letter, Fields explained,

The news media and the pigs would have us believe that the Young Lords are a menacing gang, but we know otherwise. Their continuous efforts have proven this. But the massive intimidations and negative propaganda have not made the Young Lords cease their struggle for the liberation of their people – quite the contrary. *More determined the ever, they are now intensifying their efforts to see that the needs of their people are met.*

... Regarding you, the Young Lords, as our revolutionary brothers, as our comrades, and as our allies, the Black Panther Party is working with you to see that aggression is thwarted and suppression is ended.¹⁶ (emphasis added)

In this letter exists a crucial insight into the unity of the Original Rainbow Coalition. Fields message of solidarity reveals that it was the display or practice of a powerful determination to meet the needs of oppressed people that united organizations. And as a result of bringing together groups that demonstrated this unflinching responsibility to poor communities the Rainbow Coalition was able to unveil the existence of a hegemonic coalition of institutions and demonstrate that what was at stake in politics was whether the state actually represented the interests of working-class people.

¹⁴ On the McCormick Theological seminary takeover see, "Performing Revolution: The Militant Drama of the Young Lords Organization" in Kerwin Secrist "Space and Displacement in Puerto Rican Chicago."

¹⁵ Dave Canfield, "Pledge Ends Sit-in: Seminary to Aid Dissident Groups," *Chicago Daily News*, May 19, 1969, p. 4.

¹⁶ Carletta Fields, "Persecution of the Young Lords," *The Black Panther* 3, no.2, May 19, 1969, p. 14.

More importantly, in the case of McCormick Theological seminary the take-over politicized the community at large by presenting a moral dilemma to seminarians, congregation members, and religious leaders about their complicity in the displacement of poor people. Not even a month later the Young Lords would repeat the same tactic by occupying the Armitage Avenue Methodist Church. The *Chicago Daily News* reported,

They charged the churches governing body refused to support local demands for low cost housing in the Lincoln Park area and that the church refused to rent office space to the Young Lords and to set aside space for a day care center and the proposed center. Jimenez said volunteers were bringing in blankets and food for members inside the church. Others were canvassing the neighborhood for the names of welfare mothers who would use a day care center in the church.¹⁷

The takeover caused a major split in the congregation, but the Young Lords won the support of the pastor Reverend Bruce Johnson and gained access to church space to setup much needed community programs. The community networks of female Young Lords and the formation of the collective Mothers and Others (MAO) under the leadership of Angela Rizzo was also pivotal in building solidarity with community residents. Cha Cha Jiménez also recalls that the Young Lords gained tremendous legitimacy when the Bishop of Puerto Rico Antonio Padilla publicly acknowledged the activism of the Young Lords in Lincoln Park during a sermon at the Armitage Peoples Church.¹⁸

The Young Lords were also active at Waller high school organizing students and meeting with sympathetic teachers who invited them to speak to their classes. In fact, at Waller the Young Lords and the Rainbow Coalition achieved considerable attention for disrupting a meeting held by the Lincoln Park Conservation Community Council. On July 30th, 1969 over 500 community residents and activists packed the auditorium of Waller high school to listen to committee plans for a private tennis club and hospital parking lot. According to a *Chicago Today* article the audience included “members of such radical and left-wing organizations as the Young Lords, the Young Patriots, the Black Panthers, the

¹⁷ “Young Lords Occupy Church,” *Chicago Daily News*, June 12, 1969, p. 30.

¹⁸ Jiménez, interview.

Young Comancheros, the Students for a Democratic Society, and the Concerned Citizens Survival Front.”¹⁹ At the beginning of the meeting, Richard Brown, a housing advocate for the Neighborhood Commons Association, voiced the demands of the Young Lords and the Poor Peoples Coalition by proposing more input from poor people in the community. After his proposal was voted down by an eight to four margin, Brown called for a financial investigation into the Lincoln Park Conservation Community Council and reportedly stated publicly that “some of the members are making profits in real estate off the city’s urban renewal program.”²⁰ When Lyle R. Mayer, the chair of the LPCCC reacted to Brown’s comments by shutting off the microphone and adjourning the meeting, several Young Lords and other community members flipped over tables and chairs, and attacked the committee, and left at least one council member bloodied.

The *Chicago Today* article reported that “a crowd of young men jumped onstage, wielding chairs and flailing several council with their fists until Brown and several radical leaders restored order.”²¹ But female activists and community members were also prominent in the Waller take-over. In a letter written to the Mid-North Association shortly after the fracas, Peter Bauer warned that during future urban renewal meetings women with children should be viewed as suspicious. He wrote,

In retrospect, I think the police should have been there in full force and in uniform long before the meeting opened, and I, for one, will insist this be that case at future meetings... Mothers, using their babies as pawns in an obviously prearranged plan, surged onto the stage from the side emergency exit door adjacent to it, just before the meeting began. The presence of the children made it inadvisable to forcefully compel these women to leave the stage.²²

After the takeover at Waller high school future urban renewal meetings witnessed dozens of Chicago police officers guarding committee members.²³

¹⁹ “Fight at Lincoln Park”, *Chicago Today*, July 30, 1969, p. 5.

²⁰ Glenda Sampson, “Lincoln Park: A Community in Crisis” *Chicago Today Magazine*, August 3, 1969, p. 10.

²¹ Ibid.

²² “Lincoln Park Council Urges Action on Takeover of Meeting,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 10, 1969, p. 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Tribune* (1849-1988).

²³ Jiménez, interview.

Though the implosion of violence at Waller certainly alienated some people in the community, the willingness of the Young Lords to directly confront hegemonic institutions politicized the community. A follow-up magazine article on the “crisis” in Lincoln Park, for example, carried a subheading that proclaimed that “The old and beautiful Lincoln Park may seem like a model urban community, but newer, poorer residents are agitating for change –Now.”²⁴ It quoted a Waller student named José Veléz and Maurice Forkert, the president of the Old Town Triangle Association as representing the bifurcation of the neighborhood. For his part Veléz explained, “The city talks about projects to help the poor, but do you think they would ever let us help ourselves?” On the other side, Forkert argued that the Young Lords weren’t “well bred” and “could care less” about where they lived. “If they really want to stay, why don’t they get a job and save their money to buy a house like the rest of us had to,” she declared. In this sense, neighborhood development was fractured by the concept of human capital. The article represented Lincoln Park as politically divided surmising,

So the residents of a community long extolled as an example of how urban living can work are now working at cross purposes. On one side are the older active residents who brought urban renewal in years ago and stayed to fight it when it got out of hand, who now accuse the newer activists of lack of gratitude. On the other side are people like the Young Lords and the Latin Kings, basically Puerto Rican; the Concerned Citizen Survival Front, an organization of poor and lower middle class whites headed by Rev. James Reed of the Church of the Holy Covenant; the Lincoln Park Young Patriots, a white Appalachian youth group; the Latin American Defense Organization; and the Welfare Mothers of Wicker Park.

There are also the institutions – McCormick Theological seminary, Children’s Memorial, Augustana, and Columbus hospitals, and De Paul university, to name a few – who are having to learn to live with both kinds of groups.²⁵

Certainly, many people in Lincoln Park were not organized and politically active but the article did convey that the Young Lords, the Rainbow Coalition, and the Poor Peoples Coalition succeeded in exposing the politics of urban renewal and the racialization of poverty in Lincoln Park. In other words, the interventions of the Young Lords and their Rainbow Coalition supporters consciously worked to

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

unveil the ways certain community institutions were linked to state sanctioned economic efforts that racialized and ultimately displaced thousands who were considered to lack human capital.

Yet, the efforts of the Young Lords were not only directed at describing and exposing the exclusion of poor people from planning processes. Indeed, the Young Lords created an oppositional vision of the community by protecting public spaces and developing sophisticated plans for low income housing in the neighborhood. The cultural and spatial critic Kerwin Secrist notes that “geographical and social space of the city became more than the site of production; it became the very material for the Young Lords’ protest.”²⁶ For instance, immediately following the disruption of the Lincoln Park Conservation Community Council meeting in July the Young Lords led the creation of a People’s Park at the site where a private tennis court was planned in order to retain urban space for youth and children to congregate. In a direct challenge to access to public space, the Young Lords also organized a street festival in August for the community despite efforts of local politicians and the police to prevent the event from happening due to a lack of permits. In addition to these public spectacles over space, the Young Lords often aided residents facing eviction and confronted slum lords, arsons, and neighborhood realtors that profited handsomely from dilapidated housing.

The most brazen affront to poor people in Lincoln Park occurred when the Young Lords and the Poor Peoples Coalition had a sophisticated low income housing development plan rejected by the Department of Urban Renewal. Using funds provided by the McCormick Theological seminary the Young Lords and other Poor People Coalition activists like Pat Devine hired the architectural firm Howard Alan and Associates. Over the course of twelve community meetings in Lincoln Park, Howard Alan along with poor residents and activists designed a remarkable plan for a seventy unit housing development to be built on two and a half blocks of urban renewal land. Replete with community spaces and handicap ramps, the plan was lauded by many housing experts including Chicago Housing

²⁶ Secrist, “Space and Displacement,” 40.

Authority chairman Charles Swibel who described the plan as “an imaginative and sorely needed program.” Moreover, the internationally recognized architect Buckminster Fuller, who was raised in Lincoln Park decades earlier, met with community residents, lent his celebrity, and voiced his support for the project.²⁷ Despite widespread community support, and favorable interactions with the head of the Department of Urban Renewal, Ira Bach, the Young Lord’s housing plan was rapidly rejected in favor of a corporate developer preferred by political insiders and Mayor Daley.²⁸ Even alderman W.S. Singer was flabbergasted by the dismissal of the plan in December. He noted,

Here were people who were told to stop disrupting and try to be constructive. Work through the system. So they chose that path. They went to McCormick Seminary and got financed. They got good legal aid. They had a former city development and planning commissioner helping them to draw plans. They hired an architect, got the Chicago Housing Authority to insure their lease and then submitted their bids. They were supported 11 to two by the Lincoln Park Conservation Committee Council. Altogether it spells working within the system, and then it 10 seconds it was all written off by the DUR.²⁹

That the LPCCC even supported the housing plan developed by the community was a striking recognition that the Young Lords truly represented the interests of the community while urban renewal groups and city officials did not. Recalling the efforts of the Young Lords and the painful experiences of displacement in Lincoln Park Cha Cha Jiménez explained that the Young Lords did not compartmentalize urban renewal as a separate issue. “So displacement for some people is an issue” he explained, and added “this was our lives, for us, this was our community, and you’re taking away our community, you are destroying our whole livelihood”³⁰ By defending the poor people of the community against displacement and the destruction of their community roots the Young Lords unveiled that the state neither cared for the lives or the welfare of the community.

²⁷ On Buckminster Fuller’s interaction with the Young Lords see, “Studs Terkel with the Young Lords and Buckminster Fuller,” Audio Recording T2150, Chicago History Museum, Chicago, Illinois.

²⁸ Secrist argues that the housing plan was rejected because it would have set a precedent for other groups in the city to follow.

²⁹ “Poor People Hire an Architect and Get Directly into the Housing Picture” *Professional Builder* (May 1970), 16.

³⁰ Jiménez, interview.

With their office at 1421 Wilson Avenue, in the heart of the southern white community in Uptown, the Young Patriots were also in a central position to implicate hegemonic institutions in the racialization of poverty in their neighborhood. At the time that the Young Patriots emerged a major source of community struggle surrounded police brutality, housing, and Model Cities programs funded by the War on Poverty. As one of four Model Cities neighborhoods in Chicago, Uptown was a scene of intense community planning and social service work that aimed to improve community participation in order to uplift the area. The Uptown Poor People's Coalition, for example, were staunch critics of the Model Cities agenda for Uptown in the area. On December 13, 1968 the alliance which included the Patriots held an inaugural convention to directly challenge the benevolence of Model Cities programs that allegedly aimed to help the poor. In part, the platform statement produced from the meeting read,

We the poor and unrepresented peoples of Uptown, have come here tonight in convention.

In the years we have lived in Uptown, we have heard the city government say: we represent you.

We have heard the state government say: we represent you.

We have heard the federal government say: we represent you.

But – we are still unrepresented.

We have heard the city say: we will help you.

We have heard it from the federal government and the Poverty Programs.

Now we hear it from Model Cities.

But – we are still poor.

Before we came here we lived on the farm or in another city. We lived in Appalachia. Or on the reservation. Or on the South and West sides of Chicago. Or in Puerto Rico, Mexico, or Cuba. We left our homes there because life was hard, and we came looking for something better... for something of our own.

Instead we find poor housing and high rents, poor schools, low pay and the welfare system. And finally we find Urban Renewal, which will send thousands of us out on the road once more looking for a home, a place where men can live with dignity.

Only this time we're not going... Uptown is our home. Uptown is the place where we fight for and win what belongs to us.³¹

As indicated by this document, the Young Patriots evolved into a political organization at a time when several groups rejected Model Cities initiatives and coalesced to struggle against poverty in Uptown.

In a 2010 interview, Young Patriot Hy Thurman recalled that the organization was initially linked to several groups in Uptown but that the Young Patriots eventually focused upon anti-racist education and overturning a sense of despair in the southern white community. According to Thurman,

Well a lot of it was based on people's helplessness. They were helpless and they felt they were hapless when it came to housing or jobs. A lot of what happened with the Young Patriots and the reason the Young Patriots came together was because they had a political base. They had developed a political base with the Goodfellows and JOIN and United Presbyterian Church of the USA that setup a palm office with Reverend George Morey at the time. Voice of the People was another organization... Yeah, Chuck [Geary] was involved later on in what was called the Uptown Area Peoples Planning Coalition. That grew out of Voice of the People.³²

In joining the Rainbow Coalition, however, Thurman explained that the Young Patriots departed from a tradition of anti-racist organizing in Uptown that was often led by students and strived to organize everyone in the community. He remembered,

So, what we decided was we would put together a purpose of our own and through that we had had contact with all nationalities of people. We had the respect of everybody but the belief was that since -- even coming from the Black Panthers -- they were stating "You folks got to do your own thing. We know that you're from the south, we know that you're not a racist group. So you got to go do your own thing and you need to educate people in your own community. Now we'll work together, we'll form a coalition, do whatever we've got do. But that's what you folks have to do."

For some time we were on the shirrtails of some of the other organizations. So we finally agreed that we had to have some kind of independence and we had to start our own organization. And that organization specifically had to be southern white in nature because the purpose of that was to show that not all southern whites are racist and that we were willing to work with anybody to make a change. And that's what we started doing. Now, from that we did take ideas from other organizations, the Young Lords, Black Panthers.³³

³¹ "Platform Statement: First Convention of the Poor People's Coalition," Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

³² Hy Thurman, interview, 7.

³³ Ibid., 10.

Thurman, however, emphasized that the perspective of the Patriots was that “we *did* have to work with our own, we had to work with white people. We were not qualified to work with anybody else except white people” (emphasis in original).³⁴ In Thurman’s testimony is an indication that the Young Patriots viewed themselves as allotted a specific task in Uptown to raise the revolutionary class consciousness of southern whites. Much of this work consisted of diffusing racial tensions, addressing community grievances, and channeling the southern white community’s anger towards hegemonic institutions.

The Young Patriots represented themselves as an organic community organization that sought to serve the needs of poor people in Uptown. In one of their first written circulations, entitled “To the People of Our Neighborhood” the Young Patriots explained,

All of you know that Uptown needs some change. All of you know that you would like to see changes made to help your lives and the lives of others. We think that it is possible to make these changes happen.

... We are trying to help people in several ways.

We want fair treatment by the police and justice in court.

We want decent and adequate housing for all and we want it at a decent price.

We want places for kids to get together without fear of Cops messing with them on street corners.

We want schools to meet the needs of the people and to give our kids a good education.

We plan to open a storefront office soon. We want people to come in and talk with us – tell us how to help. This is our neighborhood. This is our home. We must control our own lives.³⁵

As suggested in this open letter to the community, the Young Patriots linked police brutality, inadequate housing, and educational inequalities as symptoms of the lack of community control and self-determination. They also worked tirelessly to explain to the southern white community of Uptown that social change would not occur if people continued to see blacks and Latinos as their enemies.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ “To the People of Our Neighborhood,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

Similar to the Young Lords and the Black Panther Party, the Young Patriots actively worked to convince their community that racial consciousness was a “trick bag” that paralyzed social change. In April 1969, for example, the Young Patriots began to screen Howard Alk and Mike Gray’s new film *American Revolution 2* that featured footage of the Young Patriots and the Chicago Black Panthers organizing in Uptown. Though the documentary was often used as a fundraising tool, the images of Bob Lee, Chuck Geary and the Young Patriots working together and gradually winning over community members in Uptown was also an effective way to introduce the novel perspective of anti-racist solidarity that was advocated by the Rainbow Coalition.³⁶ The film was also controversial. Amy Sonnie and James Tracy note that the acclaimed film was banned from all major theaters in Chicago and that it created major debates and changes within the Young Lords and Black Panther Party. They explain,

For all its brutal honesty, *American Revolution II* got mixed reviews among its own subjects. Bob Lee thought it was an accurate snapshot of the complexity of the times, but also feared that it would attract the attention of law enforcement eager to shut down any viable alliance. Panthers co-founder Bobby Seale was more disturbed by what he saw. In between images of poor whites and Blacks finding common cause, a few Panther rank-and-filers went on the record advocating violence against white people – any white people. According to Seale, “Those were the expressions of nonmembers or new members who hadn’t learned of the party’s guiding philosophy.” Seale felt the main value of the film for the Panthers was to learn “how to combat this kind of thinking.”

...For both Panthers and Lords this proved divisive. Bob Lee knew a fallout was inevitable and, as *American Revolution II* foreshadowed, the decision [to form the Rainbow Coalition] had consequences. Both the Panthers and the Patriots lost members after the Rainbow Coalition was announced. For Cha Cha Jimenez these exits were sobering. “There’s nothing wrong with the process of building pride in yourself, your community, your culture and people,” he says. “However, some people got stuck in that phase and never moved beyond it.” Bob Lee was more blunt about it. “Some didn’t like the Patriots; some just didn’t like white people in general,” he says. “To tell the truth, it was a necessary purging. The Rainbow Coalition was just a code word for class struggle.”³⁷

The reflections of Lee and Jiménez reveal that the Rainbow Coalition was a new organizing tactic rather than the culmination of a dramatic cultural transformation in each group. And as Sonnie and Tracy suggest, *American Revolution II* placed grassroots activists who believed in building unity across racial

³⁶ On the impact of *American Revolution 2* see, Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists*, 77-79.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 79-80.

borders in Chicago at odds with other activists that expressed anxieties about working with whites. On the other hand, the willingness of leaders like Bob Lee, Bobby Seale, and José Cha Cha Jiménez to defend the Rainbow Coalition confirmed to the Young Patriots that their work in Uptown was vital.

The screenings of *American Revolution 2* certainly worked to announce the politics of the Rainbow Coalition, yet the film could not substitute for the everyday, grassroots work that the Young Patriots performed in Uptown. After an implosion of racial violence occurred in Uptown on April 3, 1969, one day prior to the anniversary of Martin Luther King's assassination, the Young Patriots were active in diffusing the violence. During a television interview, for example, Patriot leader June Bug Boykin called on the community to stop the violence and to understand that racial conflict was a plot that only divided the community. Similarly, the Young Patriots intervened in growing conflicts between Puerto Rican and southern white youth that intensified as Latinos were displaced from Lincoln Park and moved into Uptown. In one incident the Young Patriots were able to prevent a large fight on Sheridan road, near the lakefront. An article written into the *Wildcat* newspaper by "a member of the YPO" explained,

We spend all our time fighting and hating each other when it's the cops and the whole way the country is run that we should be fighting. We kill each other off and they only laugh – cause we're too busy to notice what they're up to.

...We figured we'd better do something. A couple of Patriots went down to the bowling alley where a lot of the PR guys hang out to try and talk some sense into them. Other guys tried to deal with the hillbillies. We told them about the Patriots – that we we're hillbillies, PR's and Blacks in the organization and that we could get along. We also told them about the alliance with the Black Panthers and the Young Lords (a Puerto Rican youth group).

We wrote a leaflet saying what we thought – trying to get guys to see that there's no future in prejudice. We said that poverty and prejudice have made us all class brothers. Our enemy is not each other – we have to fight together.³⁸

Notably, the hand-out referred to in the letter read,

We do not like to see war between the peoples of Uptown!

³⁸ "Young Patriots Organization" *Wildcat*, vol. 1 no. 4, October 1969.

The trouble at Montrose and Sheridan does not help any of the people of Uptown, Puerto Rican or Hillbilly.

We all share the same bad conditions in our neighborhood and we know that our enemy is not each other. Dig!

The Young Patriots (Hillbillies) and the Young Patriots (Puerto Ricans) stand arm in arm to defeat the bad conditions (hunger, poor housing, few jobs, cop harassment) in our neighborhoods.

People of the neighborhood, UNITE AND DEFEAT THE REAL ENEMY³⁹

By communicating the politics of the Rainbow Coalition to other youth in Uptown, writing articles and community bulletins, passing out fliers that denounced racial conflict, and joining the Young Lords in actions like the takeover of the McCormick Theological Seminary, the Young Patriots were visible opponents of racial consciousness in Uptown throughout the summer of 1969.

Just as the Young Lords were effective at exposing the class interests in Lincoln Park, the Young Patriots staged actions that educated the people of Uptown about the ways certain institutions and the state worked against the interests of poor people in the community. Beginning in April 1969, the Young Patriots along with members of the Uptown Poor Peoples Coalition, organized a series of community meetings and actions to oppose the displacement of families due to the proposed construction of a community college in Uptown. On May 7, 1969, the same day as the funeral of Manuel Ramos, the Young Patriots led a march to the Department of Urban Renewal located at 1025 W. Sunnyside Avenue. At the office activists dropped off a coffin to symbolize the death of the southern white community produced by urban renewal projects in the area. The Uptown Conservation Council was also the target of community protest.

Together with Reverend George Morey of the United People of Uptown, Voices of the People, and Chuck Geary, the outspoken president of the Poor Peoples Coalition, the Patriots identified the community groups and religious institutions responsible for rubber stamping urban renewal projects. The Reverend John H. Kuhlemey, pastor of St. Mary of the Lake at 4200 N. Sheridan, for example, was

³⁹ "We Do Not Like to See War Between the Peoples of Uptown," Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

accused of running of a “bourgeoisie parish” by Geary. Amazingly, in one article Kuhlmeier reconciled his support for urban renewal plans by stating, “My idea is to push’em up and push’em out. Let’s improve their status.”⁴⁰ Kuhlmeier also explained that his parish was intent on Americanizing the Spanish speaking population in Uptown.

Like the Young Lords and the Poor Peoples Coalition in Lincoln Park, the Uptown Poor Peoples Coalition put together a comprehensive proposal for the creation of a low income housing development that would be named after legendary musician Hank Williams. Just as in Lincoln Park, their proposal was denied by urban renewal officials and Truman College was built. The project resulted in the removal of an estimated twenty thousand residents. Though the Hank Williams Village was rejected, a tremendous unity was built between activists and community residents that faced displacement in the neighborhood. Hy Thurman recalled.

And that’s how people started coming together. Urban renewal was another huge organizational tool because people homes were being demolished and nothing else was being built. So they wanted to put a college into a community where they should have been putting housing. They were going to tear it down to put a city college in. So that raised a lot of issues.⁴¹

Yet, Thurman recalled that the construction of Truman College was a traumatic defeat for the community and for the Young Patriots. He explained,

What happened, that was the beginning of the displacement of the southern whites in Uptown... We found ourselves without the people to organize. The city had been successful at what they wanted to do. They came in with urban renewal and tore down the buildings. They put in Truman College and completely wiped out almost a whole community there.⁴²

Likewise, Mike James, a former member of JOIN and one of the founders of Rising Up Angry, remembered that an important location where activists could engage the southern white community was lost.⁴³ He explained,

⁴⁰ James H. Bowman, “Pastors Aid Uptown Fight,” *Chicago Daily News*, August 9, 1969, p. 27.

⁴¹ Thurman, interview, 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 7, 20.

⁴³ Formed in the summer of 1969, Rising Up Angry joined the Rainbow Coalition and forged a strong unity with the Black Panthers and Young Lords. See, Sonnie and Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists*.

I remember, before Truman they had taken out the north side of the street and put the firehouse in there. Cause we had spent the summer, your brother, [Bob] Lawson and I, and a few people – I wrote a piece after the Detroit rebellions in the Movement called “Poor White Response to Black Rebellion” – and we basically asked what would white people do when the blacks go off in Chicago. We spent a lot of time listening to country music on the jukebox and drinking beer over at the bar across the street right next to where the firehouse. There were some hotels up there and the Yankee Grill across the street. And we were just hanging out so that we would be ready to encourage street guys to not fight the blacks but to fight the pigs.⁴⁴

James and Thurman suggest that efforts to challenge white racial consciousness in Uptown were curtailed by the initiation of large scale projects that eliminated public spaces and displaced countless families. Just as in Lincoln Park where the construction of the Carl Sandburg Village wiped out entire blocks of the community, in Uptown the Young Patriots were faced with the difficult task of organizing in a rapidly transforming community that continued to endure state racism and police hostilities.

Despite the effects of displacement, over the course of the Rainbow summer of 1969 the Young Lords and Young Patriots made significant strides in building their own political legitimacy in the community. Often viewed as gangs by neighborhood residents, the efforts of these organizations to combat police brutality and urban renewal allowed them to build alliances with several organizations and won admirers throughout the city and beyond. News of the Young Patriots and the Young Lords, for example, inspired the creation of chapters in New York city. Yet, I argue that it was the decision to commit greater labor and resources into community service programs – at the time called survival programs – that was pivotal to uniting with poor people in Chicago and introducing them to revolutionary politics. To understand this history one must once again turn to the political evolution of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party.

In April of 1969 the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party opened its first breakfast for children’s program in Chicago at the Better Boys Foundation on 1512 south Pulaski. With the assistance of director’s Warner Saunders and Useni Eugene Perkins, the Chicago Panthers fed hundreds of children on a daily basis. Needless to say it was a tremendous task for a grassroots organization with

⁴⁴ Ibid., 20.

little funding to undertake. Black Panthers such as Wanda Ross were responsible for identifying donors, soliciting donations, and securing quality food. In 2010 panel presentation, Ross recalled that black business owners responded positively to the Panthers food programs and aided the Panthers in developing a wide network of donors. New members were often required to work in the Breakfast for Children's programs in order to literally learn to serve the people. Nwaji Nefajito, for example, remembered that new rank and file members had to get used to the discipline of getting up early. She explained,

I would get up like anywhere from 5:30 to 6:00 in the morning, and you go over to the breakfast program and you cook. You cook the food and you setup, you know, make sure all the eating utensils are in place and setup so when the children come in you make sure you have enough supplies and everything. Well, you do that before you close the previous day. So you cook, you serve and then you clean up because we were in churches so we'd make sure we left everything like spick and span and in order. And that's what we did.⁴⁵

Female Panthers like Ross and Nefajito were certainly central to the success of the food programs but male Panthers were also assigned to the Breakfast for Children initiatives. For some who thought they would join the Panthers and immediately receive a gun and become a militant, it was a profound lesson to serve children breakfast, memorize the ten point platform, and study Mao's little red book.

The community food programs organized in Chicago by the Panthers were highly successful in meeting an urgent community need and building the legitimacy of the organization. In a matter of months the Chicago Panthers opened several Breakfast for Children's programs across the city that fed over three thousand children every day. According to Slim Coleman, the food programs were effective because the Illinois Chapter was highly organized and was also the largest chapter in the country at the time. It is important to consider then that the food program met an urgent need in the community but was also pivotal to educating the residents about politics. Each day, parents and grandparents observed the Panthers literally caring for the lives of their children. Coleman explains,

⁴⁵ Nefajito, interview, 15.

Sometimes today you see people doing community programs and that's good. They're trying to serve the community and stuff. But, the breakfast for children started because there were no breakfast or lunch programs, no free breakfast programs in the city, in the schools. So, it was not only meeting a particular need. People said kids shouldn't go to school hungry they're gonna learn, they would run all that rap like they do today. But, it also emphasized that the system wasn't doing this.⁴⁶

As Coleman argues, the food programs organized by the Panthers had the powerful political intent of educating poor people that the state failed to care for their children. Moreover, the survival programs initiated by the Panthers showed the community that poor people were not dependent upon the state and had the power to care for their own lives once they were organized. I argue that it was this epistemological intervention -- once transmitted across racial and spatial borders through the Rainbow Coalition -- that threatened to undermine hegemony and racialized governmentality in Chicago.

The efforts to sincerely meet the needs of poor people and to provide a model of self-determination was the political logic behind the founding of food, legal, day care, and health care programs in Chicago. For their part, the Young Lords, and the Young Patriots followed the direction of the Panthers and opened equally successful programs in their neighborhoods during 1969. Young Lord Omar López explained how the YLO understood the politics behind their community survival programs. He stated,

We were saying that the institutions were not responding to the needs of the community. Hospitals were not taking care of people. That gives us the analysis to say okay, then we have to build our own institutions. It has to be community institutions that take care of their own members.⁴⁷

Health care was a particularly political issue at the time of the Rainbow Coalition as poor people were often forced to wait for several hours for care at the Cook County hospital, and were many times denied care altogether. Often, they had to endure a humiliating process to prove they were eligible for medical services. In contrast, the free health care centers of the Young Lords, Young Patriots and the Black Panthers denied no one in the community and provided quality services that poor folks were often

⁴⁶ Coleman, interview, 14.

⁴⁷ López, interview, 21.

excluded from attaining. Without many resources, they recruited highly regarded doctors such as Jorge Prieto and Quentin Young, and medical students from Northwestern who agreed to provide their labor and time without charge. Through their efforts to provide free health care the Young Lords, the Patriots and the Panthers developed positive relationships with many in the medical community.⁴⁸

According to several oral histories, the community service programs brought the groups that formed the Rainbow Coalition tremendous credibility in Chicago's outcast communities. Lynn French, for example, recalled,

We were embraced by the community. I mean, I never felt any, you know. I mean we were feeding the children. I think people treated us with respect and admiration. I never saw anything different. In fact, you know I was arrested just before Fred was murdered. And while I was in jail, there was a period when the matron was trying to focus on me. And there were a couple of woman who went to the hole for defending me cause I had been beaten [by the police] and was having mobility issues. I just felt that we got nothing but respect and admiration. I never saw any negative anything.⁴⁹

French's experiences of an outpour of respect by the community are echoed in the memories of Nwaji Nefajito. She remembered forging strong relationships with residents and community business owners through her work selling newspapers and feeding children. She explained,

I was received very well. I was received very well. People would frequently say "anything you need let me know." I would get all kinds of offers. Like I could go into a restaurant they might feed me, you know, like give me something to eat. I didn't even ask. No I didn't ask anybody for anything. But they would see you out there. Like they would see you out there every week, you know regularly, regularly.

Nefajito also remembered that after a police raid on the Panther's headquarters that many people from the community quickly responded and helped put out the flames. She explained,

One time they raided the office and there was a lot of food up there because we would collect donations, you know. It was really something how people were so effective at what they did and be so young... at that time they were donations of food that we were going to use in the breakfast program and the police they destroyed it. They destroyed the food. But what I was talking about is they set the office on fire and after the police left the people went to go up there, and it was like more community people than party members, it was like a snap. Then the office it was on fire, and the people said "the officers set the office on fire!" And the people ran up there, and I

⁴⁸ The same process occurred with the free legal-aid programs that were founded in Chicago.

⁴⁹ French, interview, 7.

saw this man, he took off his purple leather jacket. Back then that's like a big deal, your purple leather jacket. He took off his jacket and didn't even think about it and started beating the fire out. I said wow. That was just like wow! That's like what you call support. Yeah.⁵⁰

Similarly, Omar López recalled that community residents and family members often volunteered in their programs in Lincoln Park,

Through the programs, like the free health clinics, the breakfast program, the clothing program, a lot of other people and families would get involved. Maybe they wouldn't say I'm a Young Lord, but they were part of the program the Young Lords had. A lot of people participating in the breakfast for children, people used to come in early in the morning to cook and serve a hot breakfast for children, and then they go home. In the clinic they used to come in and setup, help with the reception, doctors would come take care of people, then clean up and they would go.⁵¹

These testimonies speak to the effectiveness of the community service programs in building the legitimacy of revolutionary organizations in Chicago. Furthermore, the programs were successful at undermining the hegemonic representation that the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots were gangs and radical nationalists bent on violence.

It is not an overstatement to say that the community service programs directly challenged the state sanctioned representation of the Panthers, Lords and Patriots as gangs. In fact, the political contradiction at the time in Chicago was that as the organizations that formed the Rainbow Coalition consolidated their presence in the community they were increasingly casted as gangs and made vulnerable to intense police repression. According to historian Andrew Diamond this was the case with street organizations that also began to act politically in Chicago. He explains,

It was not by chance that the GIU [Gang Intelligence Unit] threw its blanket of surveillance over the Rangers and the Disciples after they had partnered with TWO and the Office of Economic Opportunity, and it was hardly happenstance that Mayor Daley and his state's attorney, Edward Hanrahan, launched their "War on Gangs" as the Rainbow Coalition and LSD were gaining momentum in 1969.⁵²

As Diamond suggests, alliances between street organizations that embraced Black Power created anxieties in Chicago. Yet, politicized street organizations, like the Blackstone Rangers had for some

⁵⁰ Nefajito, interview, 16.

⁵¹ López, interview, 21.

⁵² Andrew Diamond, *Mean Streets*, 307.

time demonstrated a political commitment to intra-racial solidarity and black capitalism despite serious efforts by the Panther Party to influence their political agenda. It was no coincidence that it was on May 7, 1969 that Mayor Daley and States Attorney Edward J. Hanrahan announced that a War on Gangs would be initiated in Chicago. After all, this announcement came only two days after the Young Lords, Black Panthers, and Young Patriots attempted to march on Bridgeport, the community where Daley lived, following the police murder of Manuel Ramos by James Lamb. As such, the timing of the War on Gangs initiative in Chicago indicates that while the intra-racial politics of street organizations with thousands of members was undoubtedly disturbing to law enforcement, it was the political actions of a revolutionary “multi-racial coalition” that prompted a rapid governmental reaction.

It must be acknowledged that the War on Gangs in Chicago was a governmental tactic enacted by the neo-liberal state that worked to conflate revolutionary organizations like the Panther Party with other street organizations that practiced an entirely different politics of race. In one of his many diatribes against gangs, for example, Daley argued,

The concern of the city of Chicago is to make every neighborhood a safe place in which to live, a community where children may go to schools, playgrounds and parks without danger of attack, where adults may shop, attend church and meetings and visit friends without fear, and where businesses may be conducted without intimidation. Residents of our communities at times are not permitted to enjoy the freedom of movement without fear of attack because of the conduct of individuals banded together for criminal purposes who prey upon the residents of neighborhoods.

These criminal gangs extort money from businessmen and also from school children. They burglarize, assault, rob, rape, and murder. By their action they seek to terrorize the community for the sole purpose of personal enrichment. Their actions indicate that they have no regard for their community or its residents, but are interested only in their personal gain. . . They seek to cloak this criminal activity under the guise of social involvement and what they advertise as constructive endeavors. Unfortunately, some groups which have no real knowledge of the community disregard the record and are misled into supporting criminally led gangs.⁵³

As such, the War on Gangs served to criminalize the Panthers, Patriots, and Lords and render them indistinguishable from street organizations that in some cases were hostile to engaging in class struggle in their communities. It was this governmental strategy, however, that the community service programs

⁵³ Quoted in John Fry, *Locked Out Americans: A Memoir* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), chapter 4.

and the political actions of the Rainbow Coalition directly undermined. Slim Coleman remembered that due to the services the Young Lords and Patriots provided poor people developed a strong affiliation with the organizations. He explained,

You couldn't tell them they [Young Lords] were gangsters or gang bangers, they didn't really care, they loved them... (Laughs) Yeah telling them that they were in a gang ain't nothing new. (Laughs) "We knew they were in a gang. But look at what they're doing now, we like this stuff, they're helping us. And the programs actually worked, the community came out to support them. The community was welcomed, especially in Chicago versus other places, the community could walk into their offices and they were there and it was open to them. Obviously it was true on the west side, the community felt at home there. And in Uptown... these large hillbilly families would say, "I go to the clinic and they help me. You're the police, they help us." (Laughs)⁵⁴

In caring for the lives of poor people across Chicago and defending communities against police brutality and urban displacement, the Black Panthers, Young Lords and Young Patriots were gradually embraced by many poor people and in the process demonstrated the oppressive nature of the capitalist state.

It is telling that as the organizations that formed the Rainbow Coalition evolved and became more committed to their community service initiatives that the state became more repressive and violent. Following the War on Gangs announcement the Red Squad and the Gang Intelligence Unit intensified their surveillance and harassment of the Young Patriots, Young Lords, and particularly the Panthers. On May 26, 1969 Fred Hampton was sentenced to two to five years and refused bond by Judge Sidney A. Jones on a trumped up charge of robbing an ice cream truck in Maywood the previous summer. Of the case Dennis Cunningham and Flip Taylor, two of Hampton's many lawyers, have written,

The politically aggressive States Attorney, Edward V. Hanrahan, who had recently been elected on a racist "war on gangs" platform, put Fred on trial for robbery, and he was convicted. After promising Fred probation, the trial judge, under extreme public pressure from Hanrahan, reneged, and instead gave Fred a 2 to 5 year sentence. He denied Fred appeal bond because Fred stated in open court that he was a revolutionary. Thus, in May 1969, he was sent to the state prison in far downstate Menard.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Coleman, interview, 21.

⁵⁵ Flint Taylor and Dennis Cunningham, "The Assassination of Fred Hampton: 40 Years Later" *Police Misconduct and Civil Rights Law Report* 9, no. 12 (November/December 2009), 3.

At a press conference the following day at the Panthers headquarters Panther Minister of Defense Bobby Rush explained “Chairman Fred was convicted not for the robbery of an ice cream truck but for believing that all oppressed people, be they black, brown, red or white, should have the power to determine their own destiny.”⁵⁶ Nine days later on June 4, 1969 the FBI raided the Black Panther Party headquarters at 2350 W. Madison and arrested 8 members without a search warrant.⁵⁷ Immediately, activists circulated petitions and fliers calling for the community to defend the Party and for the release of political prisoners. One written by member of SDS read,

WHAT DO THESE FASCISTS TACTICS MEAN? The arrests this morning are part of a nationally-coordinated campaign to create fear and hysteria and make people think the Black Panther Party is a hate-group, a terror-group, when actually the Panthers are engaging in programs to meet the needs of poor people... Because the Black Panther Party is fighting to meet the needs of the people, the police are trying to smash them.⁵⁸

Though activists and the Panther’s lawyers collected over 15,000 signatures for the release of Fred Hampton, the Chicago police and federal law enforcement agents persisted in arresting and terrorizing the chapter. Considering this heightened state of repression, it was not a coincidence that it was on June 7, 1969 that the Rainbow Coalition held its first major press conference at the Panther’s headquarters. In part, it was a strategic use of the media to portray the Panthers as the leadership of all oppressed peoples.

On June 10, 1969 sixteen members of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party were indicted by a grand jury. Serious charges of kidnapping, aggravated battery, and weapons charges were alleged against most of the leadership of the chapter. In the following days the FBI executed a series of raids on Panther apartments arresting several members and forcing others underground. According to several oral histories the intensity of political repression was palpable. Nwaji Nafajito remembered several incidents of police harassment and intimidation. She explained,

⁵⁶ Francis War, “Claim Repression in Panther Case,” *Chicago Sun Times*, May 28, 1969, p. 22.

⁵⁷ Jack Gallagher, “Panthers hit FBI Raid Here,” *Chicago Daily News*, June 5, 1969, p. 8.

⁵⁸ “Defend the Panthers,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

After a while we were told not to be in the office past a certain time, because if we were there, sometimes we would get raided. I remember one time I was standing outside the office, and I saw the police cars. They just started driving around, just circling the block, and circling the block, and circling the block. It's like it was a kind of warrior ritual or something. It was weird. And just circling around, they would just keep going and going around, and around and then they would go fast and faster. It would build momentum, you know. It was like you could feel the momentum building. And then at some point they would get out and start shooting!... Sometimes they would do it, and they wouldn't go away.⁵⁹

Similarly Mike Klonsky, a leader in SDS who had their national headquarters located near the Panther office on the west side, recalled,

It was really the violence against the Panther Party that really shook us up. I mean we faced some harassment but nothing like what they were doing. What Elrod, what Hanrahan, constant harassment, beatings, shootings. Of course people in the community had felt that too. Just like today, if you were young and black on the west side you were an open target... If you went down to the precinct, I would go down to the precinct – they would bring me down for questioning – they would have our pictures up on the wall over the Sergeant's desk... this was the regular precinct on the west side. They would have pictures of me, Bernadine, Fred, Bobby, Cha Cha, and underneath each name there was a number, 500, 1000, 1500, 5000 and if you killed that person then you'd get that money out of the pool. That was the game they were playing. Of course, it was operation COINTELPRO. It was a harassment thing... they were trying to terrorize us... So they enjoyed it. They were whipped up and they had a lot of infiltrators so they knew where we were going and what we were doing.⁶⁰

Referring to the federal government's counter-revolutionary program, Klonsky points to the rabid incitement of police violence by police commanders, and coordination between law enforcement agencies and informants. Likewise, Slim Coleman recalled that Mayor Daley and local agents of government were implicated and that there was "a lot of infiltration." He added,

But in general the attack was to criminalize. So the media response was "these are criminals." And the leading element may have been the Red Squad a few of these guys that reported directly to the Mayor and they were responsible for the infiltration. But it was really Gang Crimes that came after us. It was the GI, Gangs Intelligence Unit, that really was their task force, who came after us... On the one hand to infiltrate and destabilize, on the other hand to come after directly using publicity campaigns and to call us criminals.⁶¹

The testimonies of activists indicates that Mayor Daley's War on Gangs tactic in Chicago was linked to the grander strategy of obliterating revolutionary organizations like the Black Panther Party. Ultimately,

⁵⁹ Nefajito, interview, 19.

⁶⁰ Mike Klonsky, Interview by author, Chicago Illinois, May 3, 2010, 5-7.

⁶¹ Coleman, interview, 15.

the tactic produced the political conditions necessary for the criminalization and terrorizing of the Panthers, Lords, Patriots, among others. In this sense, as the Rainbow summer of 1969 evolved the political struggle in Chicago increasingly hinged upon whether the capitalist state or revolutionary activists protected or harmed the lives of the people in Chicago.

It is difficult to adequately capture the level of political repression faced by activists in Chicago. Each day rank and file members of Young Lords, Young Patriots, and Black Panthers, were stopped and frisked, pulled over by police while driving, threatened with violence, and often brutalized. Leaders like Chairman Fred Hampton and José Cha Cha Jiménez were constantly being arrested and faced multiple cases. Women also endured severe harassment and sexist behavior. In some cases the families of female members were told by police that their daughters were being prostituted and exploited. The constant presence of the Red Squad and police informants also created an environment of suspicion and nervousness that undoubtedly made it difficult to organize.⁶² In the case of the Young Patriots, for example, suspicions over informants created serious tensions that contributed to serious rifts and internal struggles by the fall of 1969.⁶³

It is even harder to calculate the impact of police murders on revolutionary activists in Chicago. On July 16, 1969, for example, Black Panther member Larry Roberson was shot dead by Chicago police following an altercation in which Roberson witnessed police brutality on Madison Avenue and attempted to intervene. On the one hand, the death of comrades like Roberson at the hands of the police surely united organizations as was the case with Manuel Ramos and the Young Lords. On the other hand, it was highly likely that police murders and raids on offices were traumatic incidents that deeply impacted members. The Black Panther office at 2350 W. Madison was raided and ransacked for a

⁶² The efforts to destabilize and eliminate the Black Panther Party in Chicago are well documented. See, Jon Rice, "Law Enforcement and the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party" in "Black Revolutionaries on Chicago's West Side," Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret War Against the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2002), Jeffrey Haas, *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther*, (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2010).

⁶³ The impact of informants within the Young Patriots is documented in Sonnie and Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists*.

second time on July 31, 1969 and again on October 3, 1969. As one Panther put it, “The pigs are determined to wipe out the people’s party. The more the party does for the people, the more the pigs try to do to the party.”⁶⁴ In other words, the Panthers and their supporters worked to explain that acts of political repression and police violence made it painfully obvious that capitalist modernity in Chicago required the preservation of spaces of despair and poverty in the city.

As Mayor Daley and local and federal law enforcement agencies intensified their efforts to criminalize and obliterate the Black Panther Party in Chicago, another significant political contradiction was evolving. During the summer of 1969 serious internal debates erupted within Students for a Democratic Society as to the course of revolutionary struggle in the United States. At its annual convention in Chicago held on June 18-22, 1969 SDS essentially fragmented over its relationship with the Black Panther Party and other groups that advocated the right of people of color in the US to self-determination. Against the backdrop of escalating student and youth opposition to the Vietnam War, SDS split at its summer convention in Chicago into the Progressive Labor Party, Weatherman, and Revolutionary Youth Movement factions based upon ideological differences involving national liberation movements. According to Slim Coleman,

The Progressive Labor Party had moved on SDS chapters in different places and had formed their own piece and moved in a very factional way to establish their hegemony in SDS. They formed something called the Worker Student Alliance, you know, all nationalism was racism. That kind of line. They attacked the Black Panther Party as a nationalist organization and so forth. It was a pretty reactionary line. So we formed this concept of a Revolutionary Youth Movement which took off during the Convention.⁶⁵

Mike Klonsky also recalled that the Progressive Labor Party broke severely with the Black Panther Party. He remembered,

We were all critical of Progressive Labor Party for their interpretation of class politics where they argued that all nationalism was reactionary. They didn’t make any distinction between progressive and reactionary nationalism.

⁶⁴ “Free Fred Hampton, Free All Political Prisoners, Hands off the Illinois 16,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

⁶⁵ Coleman, interview, 11.

...They argued all nationalism was reactionary and they attacked all nationalism including the Panther Party which is kind of ironic as I said before. They attacked the Vietnamese, the National Liberation Front, they called them sell-outs and all this kind of stuff. So naturally we couldn't see eye to eye with them. We had been fighting them all year. This was 68' to 69'.⁶⁶

For opposing the Black Panther Party and national liberation struggles PL was ousted from SDS. Shortly after, the Weatherman split from RYM and embarked on carrying out armed struggle in the United States, and the reo-organized Revolutionary Youth Movement II forged an alliance with the Panther Party and the Young Lords. In a remarkable turn of events, the Black Panther Party was accused of fomenting racial divisions in the working-class by PL, and considered to be deviating from its commitment to wage armed struggle in the U.S. by the Weatherman.

It can be said then that the political tactic of a Rainbow Coalition led by the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party was opposed by several forces in Chicago. On one level were local politicians, agents of government and law enforcement officials who worked to criminalize and obliterate revolutionary activists. On another level were cultural nationalist and racial separatist groups that opposed the creation of inter-racial alliances altogether. And with the fragmentation of SDS emerged two student organizations in PL and the Weatherman that either opposed the right to self-determination or no longer cared to follow the political guidance of the Black Panther Party.

Considering these escalating political tensions, the tactic of a Rainbow Coalition stands out during this time period. If we understand the alliance as a local effort to confront the reality of racial borders in the city and to educate and organize revolutionary consciousness in Chicago, then the repressive actions of the state and the various reactions of other organizations to the leadership of the Black Panthers appear to coexist as hegemonic efforts that undermined anti-racist class struggle in Chicago. This dynamic became even more visible once Chicago became the center of national attention during the Chicago 8 trial in August and the Days of Rage actions organized by the Weatherman in October.

⁶⁶ Klonsky, interview, 10-11.

In August Chairman Fred Hampton was released from Menard prison and returned to Chicago re-energized. According to his lawyers Flip Taylor and Dennis Cunningham, Hampton “immediately resumed his speaking and organizing at a breakneck pace during the fall.”⁶⁷ Yet, during the three months of his incarceration the political climate in Chicago had dramatically intensified. Despite the successes of the community service programs organized by the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots, and the incitement of political repression in Chicago, many students and activists were increasingly turning their attention to the war in Vietnam. Rallies that marked the one year anniversary of the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, events surrounding the start of the Chicago 8 trial in late September, and the arrival of the Weatherman in early October appeared to overlook the struggles of people of color in Chicago. Against this groundswell of political energy that sought to resist U.S. imperialism abroad, Chairman Fred Hampton and other Rainbow Coalition leaders argued that students and activists should also resist imperialism in the city.

The late summer of 1969 witnessed the organizations that initially formed the Rainbow Coalition push forward with their food, clothing, health and legal programs, and at the same time begin to engage in a heated struggle to maintain the direction of revolutionary politics in the city. In light of the level of police violence, political repression, and infiltration of organization both tasks were formidable. For example, the free day care center opened by the Young Lords in the basement of the Armitage Methodist Church was closed down by city inspectors in early September, and the opening of the Panthers health center on the west side was consistently delayed by the city. At the same time, the emergence of the Weatherman and the announcement that they would militarily re-take Chicago during the Days of Rage directly challenged the political tactic of a Rainbow Coalition that aimed to educate, organize and unite Chicago’s outcast communities. On September 24, 1969, the day the Chicago 8 trial began, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party took-over a rally at the Federal building organized

⁶⁷ Taylor and Cunningham, “The Assassination of Fred Hampton,” 3.

by certain SDS members, hippies, and antiwar activists. One news report entitled, “Panthers, Rebels in Power Fight” explained,

At about 9 am there were about 250 youths taking part in the demonstration. Then a large contingent of the Black Panther Party arrived, displaced the white youths on a makeshift platform in the plaza facing Jackson street and began to harangue the white youths as “non-revolutionary clowns.” Before the noon march to Grant Park, the crowd at the Federal building had swelled to about 2500. About 2,000 were blacks under the direction of about 50 well trained Black Panthers.⁶⁸

At the head of a large contingent that aimed to protest the incarceration of Bobby Seale, the Chicago Panthers literally fought certain SDS activists that tried to confront the police. Another journalist Sam Washington reported,

While there were violent confrontations between the police and demonstrators Wednesday, spokesman for the Panthers and the Police Department agree that the Black Panther organization neither started nor participated in them.

On the contrary, the highly disciplined Panthers took vocal exception to the confrontation politics of the hippie-types and Students for a Democratic Society, who also took to the streets. In some cases the Panthers “cooled” situations that had a potential for violence.⁶⁹

Washington noted that during a meeting that evening at the People’s Church on the west side, David Hilliard, the national chief of staff of the Black Panther Party, explained to an audience of five hundred that in light of severe political repression the Party was adapting its stance towards confronting the police. The Black Panthers would still practice self-defense and organize with other groups for the community control of police, Hilliard explained, but they now denounced “spontaneous insurrections that cost lives needlessly.” He reiterated that “The Panthers are engaged in a class struggle. And as the vanguard in that struggle, the Panthers first concern is for the general good of the people we represent.”⁷⁰ Hilliard’s announcement signaled that a strategic shift was underway in the Black Panther Party nationally and that Chicago was a central location in which that policy would be practiced.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Jack Vandermyn, “Panthers, Rebels in Power Fight,” *Chicago Today*, September 25, 1969, p. 5.

⁶⁹ Sam Washington, “Panther Nonviolence Policy Emerges,” *Chicago Sun Times*, September 26, 1969, p. 46.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ The mandate of the national leadership of the BPP in Oakland to focus on political education and community service was resisted by other Panther leaders and chapters who wished to intensify armed resistance in the US.

In fact, as the Rainbow Summer of 1969 came to an end the Black Panthers and the coalition of organizations that supported them found themselves waging an intense struggle against leftist activists that threatened violent revolution. They argued that the police and politicians like Mayor Daley thrived upon violent rhetoric and used the threats of confrontations with police to attack the Panthers, Young Lords, and their supporters, and wipe-out their community programs. These ideas were not unwarranted or exaggerated. On September 29, 1969 Reverend Bruce Johnson, the pastor of the Armitage Methodist Church, and his wife Eugenia were found murdered in their home. For the Young Lords, the closing of the day care by the city and the murder of two of their strongest supporters in Lincoln Park were politically connected and signaled that the legitimacy of the Young Lords in the community was to be obliterated. Similarly, the Panthers witnessed an escalation of police violence in Lawndale. On October 5, 1969, for example, seventeen year old John Soto was shot and killed by police for organizing a protest to get a traffic light installed in the Henry Horner projects where children were frequently struck by cars.⁷² Not even a week later, his brother Michael Soto, a sergeant in the U.S. military, was shot and killed by the police following a demonstration on behalf of his brother's death. Despite several witness accounts that both brothers were unarmed, the Soto murders were considered justifiable or accidental homicides by police inquests. For the Young Lords and Black Panthers, it was evident that the rhetoric and actions of primarily white activists with little connection to communities in Chicago reinforced the state sanctioned efforts to criminalize the organizations through the war on gangs. Significantly, it was during the Days of Rage that the Black Panthers, Young Lords and their supporters waged a profound series of counter-protests aimed at differentiating their political perspective.

Beginning on Wednesday October 11, 1969, one day after Michael Soto was murdered, Chicago was once again the focus of the country. Media attention centered upon the Weatherman who called for a series of militant actions in the city under the slogan "Bring the War Home." Political literature

⁷² On the murder of the Soto brothers, see Haas, *The Assassination of Fred Hampton*, 64-65.

disseminated prior to the event, explained that these efforts in Chicago marked the beginning of a new era in New Left politics. According to one poster,

But it will be a different action. An action not only against a single war or “foreign policy,” but against the whole imperialist system that made that war a necessity. An action not only for immediate withdrawal of all U.S. occupation troops, but in support of the heroic fight of the Vietnamese people and the National Liberation Front for freedom and independence. An action not only to bring “peace to Vietnam,” but beginning to establish another front against imperialism right here in America – to “bring the war home.”

... The fall offensive is only the beginning. Then will commence the winter, spring, and summer offensive, followed by another next fall – for however long it takes to win. On October 11, tens of thousands of people will come to Chicago to bring the war home. Join Us.⁷³

Perhaps expectedly, the turnout for what is now commonly referred to as the Days of Rage was low. Nevertheless, over three days Weatherman from around the country descended upon Lincoln Park where a year before the Chicago police, under Daley’s orders, brutalized anti-war protestors during the Chicago Democratic convention. Clad with helmets and a variety of weapons, the Weatherman, including a women’s militia and medical unit, attempted to march on Chicago in order defeat the pigs and shock the masses into revolution. Each of these actions quickly turned into a running street battle with Chicago police.

Witnessing the last day of clashes on Friday October 13, 1969 was Bruce Berman, an aspiring photojournalist at the time. According to Berman, the Weatherman action that day was doomed from the beginning. In a September 2009 interview he recalled,

I got there early, and it was a cold day in October, and the next thing I do is I look east... I look east and there is like ten abreast these cats coming down the street. Everybody had on war surplus clothes in those days, but underneath you could see they were carrying shit, like metal shit, weapons.⁷⁴

Berman quickly realized however, that those “activists” entering his camera lens were not Weatherman but police officers in disguise. He explained,

⁷³ “Look At it America: 1969,” Students for a Democratic Society Records, Box 47, Folder 4, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

⁷⁴ Berman, interview, 7.

I look back at Haymarket Square... and there is a battle going on, I mean whaling, battle, fists, bricks, just a beat down. And I'm going "who's that, what's going on back there." And what it was, and this is a typical tactic, the Red Squad, the tactic of the Red Squad was to show up at every demonstration before it began, beat the crap out of everybody, and set the mood.

They wanted riots, if they could have riots they could have suppression... So there was all this bad crap happening before the demonstration ever began. Maybe 45 minutes before it was scheduled to begin.

Berman added,

... The mood was set, so okay the demonstration gets all organized... It was going to go down Lassalle street I think and head up toward the Stock exchange... Bottom line is all hell breaks loose, big plate glass windows from all the major stores got rocks going through them... I suppose now in retrospect, it was the Red Squad breaking those windows to break up this thing. That's a supposition but I'm sure it was.

All hell breaks loose, and it became an absolute war. There is no more talking. I think it was the first time in all of the demonstrations of those years where this demonstration wasn't going to march down it's parade route, this was going to end in the streets in blood. And it did. That was it, it was over. It was an absolute fight! Between the cops and the demonstrators and everybody else, and that was it.

Berman's compelling account of the Red Squads infiltration of the Weatherman action complicates the common representation of the Days of Rage as an exercise in wonton radicalism.⁷⁵ At the same time, however, he confirms that local law enforcement in Chicago were prepared for and thrived upon conditions of street warfare.

Unbeknownst to Berman, and most other media members, was that a separate series of protest actions were taking form in Chicago. Organized by the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, and Revolutionary Youth Movement II, this set of actions had a different political aim. A pamphlet written by Tom Thomas is one of the few sources that compared both efforts. In an article tellingly entitled, "The Second Battle for Chicago," Thomas explained,

As a result of the disenchantment with the Weatherman group, Revolutionary Youth Movement II, led by several former SDS officers, including Mike Klonsky, immediate past National Secretary, decided to formulate an alternative plan. A quick coalition was formed with the Black Panthers, and the Young Lords, a militant Puerto Rican group with national headquarters in Chicago. The coalition called for "four days of programs and militant actions designed to serve

⁷⁵ See for example, Todd Gitlin, *Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1987).

the needs of the people of the U.S., and to connect those needs with the fight against U.S. aggression in Vietnam.⁷⁶

As Thomas' report indicates, the organization of counter-protests during the Days of Rage was consistent with the political tactic of the Rainbow Coalition which focused upon serving the needs of poor people in Chicago in order to politically educate. On the other hand, the Weatherman had little interest in building class consciousness and abandoned community service.

One day before the Weatherman arrived in Chicago a bomb exploded in Haymarket Square. Regardless of who was responsible for the blast, when the dust settled a monument to Chicago police officers lay in ruins and the Chicago police were up in arms. Describing the dynamite blast as "an obvious declaration of war between the police and SDS and other anarchist groups" the president of the Chicago Police Sergeants Association Richard M. Barrett explained that the police were ready for combat. "We now feel that it is kill or be killed," he retorted. Another officer Lt. James A. O'Neill, the president of the Police Lieutenants Association chose to speak to the public. "It is time for the people of Chicago and the nation to wake up to what we are opposing" he explained, "These are not harmless kids with firecrackers." Both officers were supported by Mayor Daley who chimed in by stating that the destruction of the police monument was "an attack on all the citizens of Chicago."

Despite the threats of the Mayor and the police, the Weatherman pushed forward with their agenda. According to Thomas,

Youths arrived prepared for street action. Nearly everyone carried some kind of a helmet, many were holding wooden clubs and other weapons, and a Baltimore group brought more than a score of gas masks. Men and women alike were dressed in combat boots, jeans, and heavy, protective clothing (4).

Speaking to reporters outside of one of three movement centers organized in churches around the city, a Weatherman spokesperson declared that the time was ripe for armed struggle. They explained,

We start to build a red army by fighting in the streets now. We're going to knock the pig on his ass in those streets. Sure there's going to be pigs hitting people like before, but this time there's

⁷⁶ Tom Thomas, "The Second Battle of Chicago 1969: SDS, October 8-11," Historical Society Library Pamphlet Collection, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI., 3.

going to be people hitting pigs. The focal point is here in Chicago. We've got to show people that white kids are willing to fight on the side of black people and on the side of revolution around the world. If you're not going to fight then you're not part of us. It's as simple as that.

As these remarks suggest, the Weatherman considered the National Day of Action in Chicago to be a pivotal moment for whites to display their revolutionary vigor. Those who wanted to join them were even cautioned that injuries would not derail the movement. "If you have anything short of a mortal wound, you are expected to fight on. We're going to off the pig," one activist explained.

At a separate location in Chicago, local Black Panthers, Young Lords and RYM II activists also readied themselves for actions to begin on Thursday October 12. Thomas reported that they also expected severe police repression. Yet, according to Thomas's report, local activists cautioned against engaging the police in armed struggle. Rather, the anti-Weatherman coalition planned for three events and a march through the communities of Chicago. Thomas wrote,

The RYM II program called for a series of "disciplined, militant actions" around the city. A rally at the Federal Building, site of the Conspiracy Trial, was planned for Thursday, to be followed by a demonstration at the International Harvester plant that afternoon. Also scheduled were a rally at Cook County Hospital on Friday afternoon and a mass march Saturday through black, Latin, and working-class neighborhoods.

At the first rally at the Federal Building the police were out in force. Nevertheless, Thomas estimated that about five hundred people attended the rally. He wrote,

Although the crowd was extremely nervous, there was a marked difference between this gathering and the [sic] Weatherman. Few helmets were in evidence and people passed through the area selling undergrounds newspapers and distributing leaflets. Many of those present discussed the Weatherman action and most condemned it. The midday rally attracted large numbers of older people in addition to the expected young radicals (8).

After Mike Klonsky welcomed the crowd and explained that RYM II worked to "unite the struggle of the people of Vietnam with the struggles here in America," he introduced Chairman Fred Hampton of the Illinois Black Panther Party to address the crowd. Drawing loud cheers, according to Thompson, Hampton declared,

We do not support people who are anarchistic, opportunistic, adventuristic, and Custeristic. We do not believe in premature so-called acts of revolution. We support the actions of RYM II and no other faction of SDS. We've got to spend our time now on revolutionary education.

After speeches by Yoruba of the New York Young Lords and Carl Davidson, and repeated calls for the release of Black Panther Bobby Seale and the end to the War in Vietnam, Klonsky invited the audience to the next rally. But he cautioned,

The pigs are going to try to provoke a riot. Don't let them. There are not enough of us here to start the revolution now. We are going to go in an orderly and disciplined way to a demonstration at International Harvester. We will go in small groups. This is not a march.

As expected, the police harassed those who made the trek to International Harvester. "We're going to get you commie bastards. Police Power!" they yelled as they drove past. Interestingly, Thomas was surprised to see that over four hundred people made it to the demonstration without incident. So did the police. Two hundred officers protected the factory, sixty stood in front of the Cook County jail across the street and dozens lined the rooftops of International Harvester with rifles steady.

Despite the police presence, several workers from International Harvester joined the rally. Slim Coleman, who was working in the factory at the time, explained to the crowd gathered that workers had forced a work stoppage in solidarity with the rally and in protest of plans to close the plant.⁷⁷ Coleman noted, "There's some people left in there, but there ain't no production going on now. Without firing a single shot, we cost International Harvester over a quarter of million dollars."⁷⁸ According to Thomas, a black worker named Jake told the crowd, "80,000 people need work in Chicago and they're tearing down this plant to build a jail." He added that "The union ain't doing a thing about it." Coleman explained that the union had also done little to breakdown racial divisions among workers. "When this plant opened" Coleman noted, "it was established that white guys got skilled jobs and black workers got unskilled job the union didn't do nothing against it then, and it hasn't done nothing yet." In a profound transnational critique of shop-floor racial domination Jake declared, "You can die with the white man in

⁷⁷ According to Slim Coleman, Fred Hampton had also worked at International Harvester.

⁷⁸ Thomas, "The Second Battler for Chicago," 8.

Vietnam, but you can't work with him in this plant" (9). Staring at the police guarding the construction site of the Cook County jail, the audience listened to Jake and Coleman explain that workers at the Chicago plant would lose their seniority and that black workers would be unable to find housing close to the new factory once it was opened in the suburbs. The rally ended with the crowd singing "Solidarity Forever" and exiting without any confrontations with the police.

Though the police presence at the International Harvester rally was palpable, the rally was altogether ignored by local governors and the city's police leadership, who chose to focus instead upon the Weatherman during a press conference held that day. Announcing that the national guardsmen were mobilized to reinforce the police, Governor Richard B. Ogilvie, explained that the deployment of over 2600 soldiers to Chicago was a "precautionary move." Notably, the governor explained that Mayor Daley had already suggested such a move as early as Tuesday, a day before the first Weatherman foray. The police superintendant, James Conlisk also told the media that the Weatherman created "the potential for problems in the schools." The city faced a "state of emergency" created by outside agitators clarified Mayor Daley, who also explained that the Weatherman actions on Wednesday night and Thursday morning exhibited "senseless and vicious behavior." Lauding the police the Mayor explained to the public that law enforcement "manifested the highest dedication to duty and professional conduct when, in the face of great personal danger, they preserved and protected the rights of our citizens."

The same dynamic unfolded on Friday, when Bruce Berman witnessed the last Weatherman march on Chicago. On that same day, the Black Panthers, RYM II and the Young Lords organized a demonstration in front of Cook County Hospital. Joined by fifty medical staff and doctors, and approximately four hundred community members, speakers from the coalition explained that the rally was formed to protest the discrimination of women and poor people, and the existence of "inhumane practices at Cook County hospital." Thomas reported that seventeen police officers protected the hospital from the crowd, which was quickly pushed into a nearby park by another group of one hundred

officers. At the park, banners were displayed that read “Community and Worker Control of Hospitals,” “Support Black Panther Medical Clinic and Young Lords Day Care Center.” Black Panther Lynn French talked to the crowd and explained that Cook County was “run by the same people – the corporations who run the war in Vietnam. And just as they profit from the war in Vietnam they profit from these hospitals – they profit off the people. The Black Panther Party here in Chicago is organizing a people’s health center, free to those people who need care.” As is made obvious by the statement given by Lynn French, speakers worked to re-direct anti-war sentiments by highlighting the relational nature and local manifestations of U.S. imperialism.

Ronald “Doc Satchel, Deputy Minister Health of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panthers, told the crowd that the Panthers’ “People’s Health Clinic” was formed because the Panthers “strongly believe that the health institutions – that all institutions – should be controlled by the people of the community in which they are located” (10). He explained, however, that the Panthers “went to the people first and asked them what kind of services they wanted most. When they told us, those were the services we worked hardest to develop first.” After Satchel spoke, Ron Berman, a medical student and member of the Student Health Organization, explained the medical personnel faced a political dilemma. He explained, “The health care system in this country is going to be changed by the people, and the doctors can work with us or against us. The doctors have to decide. Doctors have a role here – a definite role – but they are going to have to decide whether they are part of the problem or part of the solution” (11).

As the Weatherman events ended in downtown on Friday, and most of their supporters were left beaten, arrested and charged with various counts of criminal behavior, the Black Panthers, Young Lords and Young Patriots staged their last action on Saturday, a massive march through Lincoln Park and the Cabrini Green projects. The turnout was more than could ever be expected as thousands of people

poured into the streets to join the march.⁷⁹ Mike Klonsky remembered being overwhelmed by the response of the community. He recalled,

I remember as the march grew bigger and bigger as people joined us from the community, as we were winding our way, maybe a thousand people, winding our way down Division through the projects we were stopped. People would come out the balconies of these high rises and they would be yelling and cheering. I'm talking about a lot of people. And we would have to negotiate building to building with each gang. So Fred and some of the other Panther leaders they would work something – this was the Vice Lords, this was the Rangers, this was the Cobras. Okay we're cool, now we can go. And we'd move through and all the young people would come out and join us. By the time we got through the projects we were pretty huge. It was powerful, you hear all these people cheering for you on the balconies of these projects and you're like Wow!

... and you could imagine, it was the answer to a lot of questions. What was the role of white radicals. Here we were going through Cabrini, we would never do that on our own but in this Rainbow Coalition, we could go anywhere. We ruled the streets. Even the police would come near, they were afraid of us. As soon as they made that connection with the people in the projects and the community, the police cleared out and became invisible. They backed away, five blocks.⁸⁰

In this account, Klonsky's flexible deployment of the pronoun "we" is compelling. More importantly, he reveals that the response of the community to the march was a vindication of their political perspectives and the tactic of a Rainbow Coalition. Unfortunately, the strategic decision to avoid confrontations with the police and the successes of the non-violent counter-protests during the Days of Rage did little to impact the efforts of Mayor Daley, Edward Hanrahan, and the FBI to inoculate the population and obliterate revolutionary activists in the city.

Despite serious efforts on the part of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party to exhibit the organization's community service orientation, including the purging of members who resisted Party policy and discipline, the police, Red Squad, Gang Intelligence Unit, and FBI remained committed to eliminating the organization. Frank Sullivan, a spokesman for the police department, for example, admitted that though the Black Panther had changed he believed it was "only a temporary thing being used to further their end." He declared, "The Black Panthers are heavily influenced by the Communist

⁷⁹ The Young Lords organized many people in the community by naming the march in honor of Pedro Albizu Campo.

⁸⁰ Klonsky, interview, 14.

Party line in the United States and I agree with J. Edgar Hoover that the Panther organization is one of the most dangerous in the nation.”⁸¹ In fact, in the weeks following the counter-protests of the Days of Rage, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party endured unprecedented police harassment and violence. Panther apartments were frequently raided by police, and once arrested members were often beaten and threatened with death. On November 13, 1969 the Black Panthers received the news that another comrade, Spurgeon “Jake” Winters, was killed by the Chicago police in a shootout that also left two police officers dead. Significantly, when the Panthers eventually opened their health care center it was named the Spurgeon Jake Winters Free Health Care Center.

For his part, Chairman Fred Hampton was forced to move around from apartment to apartment and had to develop ever sophisticated ways to communicate with the chapter. In Lincoln Park, the Young Lords were also under intense police pressure and Cha Cha Jiménez was evading police surveillance in a similar manner. Yet, the police and FBI were keyed upon eliminating the dynamic leader of the Black Panther Party and the outspoken voice of the Rainbow Coalition in Chicago. Indeed, many supporters, including his lawyers talked openly with Chairman Fred Hampton about going underground and into exile. Undeterred, Hampton sewed his pockets shut so that police would not have an excuse if they shot him during an arrest, and continued to lead the chapter’s affairs.⁸² Though his life was in danger, Chairman Fred Hampton continued to speak publicly and to urge his audiences to develop a revolutionary perspective that was grounded in local realities. For example, at a Vietnam Moratorium event at Chicago State University on October 20, 1969, Fred Hampton, having heard of plans for thousands of activists to flock to Washington D.C. for an anti-war protest angrily denounced the ways many activists were abandoning the anti-colonial struggle in Chicago. He declared,

If you can’t get 200,000 people to come see about Bobby [Seale], then we say you’re counter-revolutionary. That what you’re doing is you’re taking some kind of route from DeKalb where you’re going to get to Vietnam without even passing the Henry Horner projects on the west side

⁸¹ Sam Washington, “Panther Nonviolence Policy Emerges,” *Chicago Sun Times*, September 26, 1969, p. 46.

⁸² At the time of his death Hampton was close to securing the purchase of the Panther building on Madison.

of Chicago. That's impossible. You think Vietnam is bad? Check the laws. In Vietnam if you lose one son they allow you to keep the other one. They say "Here, mother dear, hold him – hold him tight." He can stay at home you understand... What about Mrs. Soto, who lost two sons in one week. That proves to us through historical fact that Babylon is worse than Vietnam; we need to have some moratoriums on Babylon. We need to have some moratoriums on the Black community in Babylon and all oppressed communities in Babylon.

And Charles Jackson from Altgeld Gardens. Last week a 14 year old boy throwing rocks. The pigs told him to halt, and the motherfuckers shot and murdered him. Murdered him in cold blood. And then you mutherfuckers got the nerve to go tramping off to Washington, marching between two dead motherfuckers.⁸³

In this powerful critique of the anti-war movement, Chairman Fred Hampton questioned the leftist and liberal ideas of solidarity that undergirded the participation of large scale anti-war protests. For Hampton it was unfathomable that so many people would oppose the war in Vietnam without also opposing the war against oppressed communities that took place each day in Chicago. His anger was undoubtedly shaped by the intensity of the political repression the Panthers and the black community were enduring at the time, however, his frustration with anti-war protestors was entirely consistent with the internationalist understanding that revolutionary solidarity involved working to defeat oppression in one's own country, city, and community. In the final analysis, it was this sense of revolutionary solidarity that brought together and sustained the organizations that formed the Original Rainbow Coalition in spite of tremendous resources and every governmental effort to destroy them.

7.1 Conclusion

In late November of 1969 Chairman Fred Hampton and a small contingent of the Illinois Chapter traveled to Canada on a university speaking tour. Their every movement was closely monitored by the FBI, Canadian immigration agents, and Canadian police. While in Canada raising money for the chapter, the twenty one year old Panther leader who J. Edgar Hoover racialized as the next "Black messiah" was already the target of a COINTELPRO assassination plot. Lawyers Dennis Cunningham and Flip Taylor explain,

⁸³ *Fred Hampton*, 38-39.

Realizing that this was a perfect time to implement a deadly COINTELPRO action, FBI “Racial Matters” agent Roy Mitchell met with [FBI Informant] William O’Neal and instructed him to get a detailed floorplan of the apartment located at 2337 West Monroe where Fred and other Panther leaders stayed. On November 19, 1969, O’Neal reported back with the requested floorplan, which showed them complete layout of the apartment, including the exact location of Fred’s bed. At that time, O’Neal also reported that the guns in the apartment were legally purchased. With the approval of his superiors, Mitchell then turned to the local police to do its COINTELPRO dirty work. He contacted the police Gang Intelligence Unit and [Edward] Hanrahan’s assistant Richard Jalovec, chief of a Special Prosecutions Unit which included a semi-secret group of police officers and prosecutors assigned to Hanrahan’s “War on Gangs,” and told them about the floorplans and the guns.⁸⁴

With the assistance of the Black Panther informant William O’Neal, the FBI, Edward Hanrahan, and the Chicago police prepared for the right moment to assassinate Chairman Fred Hampton.

At four in the morning on December 4, 1969 fourteen law enforcement agents “armed with a submachine gun, semi-automatic rifles, shoguns, and handguns,” kicked open the front and back doors and in a matter of minutes fired almost one hundred shots into the small apartment on Monroe. Without any hesitancy the police shot and maimed several Panthers, and murdered Mark Clark, a Defense Captain from Peoria, Illinois. Moving strategically through the apartment the police fired dozens of rounds into the bedroom where Fred Hampton and his eight and half month pregnant partner Deborah Johnson were sleeping. In a horrific scene, one of the police agents, Edward Carmody, executed an unconscious Fred Hampton in his bed. Taylor and Cunningham explain,

In the kitchen, Deborah [Johnson] and Harold Bell heard two shots ring out from Fred’s bedroom, and a raider said “He’s good and dead now.” The physical evidence and Carmody’s later statements establish a strong case that Carmody twice shot Fred with a .45 caliber pistol at close range in the head while he lay unconscious in his bed. The physical evidence also strongly suggests that O’Neal had put secobarbital in Fred’s Kool-Aid so that he could not wake up.

Fred’s body was dragged from the bloodstained bed to the hallway floor, to be displayed as the raider’s trophy, while the seven survivors were physically abused, subjected to threats and racial epithets, and then jailed on charges of attempted murder. The raiders then rushed from the apartment to the State’s Attorney’s office where they appeared with Hanrahan at a press conference at which Hanrahan described a fierce gun battle, initiated by the “vicious” and “criminal” Black Panthers, and during which his raiders acted “reasonably” and with “restraint”⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Taylor and Cunningham, “The Assassination of Fred Hampton: 40 Years Later,” 3.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 4.

Nwaji Nefajito (formerly Brenda Harris), who was also shot by police in the apartment that morning recalled in a recent interview,

...we had raids before but nothing like that where we had casualties, so many casualties and the way it was done... But this was different. This was like a whole other level where they went there specifically to kill Fred Hampton. That was the whole purpose of the raid and everybody else, to me, was collateral damage.⁸⁶

As Nefajito's painful testimony and the descriptions of the People's Law Office lawyers indicates, the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton was a calculated effort carried out with deadly precision. It was without a doubt one of the most heinous political assassinations ever carried out by the U.S. government, and certainly the most blatant incident of political repression in Chicago history.

There is no way to adequately capture the personal and familial pain caused by the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton. By all accounts, Fred Hampton was an exceptional human being that transformed all who came into contact with him through his sincerity and enthusiasm for life and liberation. The horrific manner in which he was killed devastated his loved ones, fellow comrades, lawyers, and supporters and confirmed that local and federal agents of government would go to great lengths to prevent social change and maintain power. To cut short the life of a young leader who had yet to reach his full potential proved the fragile nature of state power and capitalist hegemony and the ways brutal violence ultimately buttressed the entire system.

Yet, the coercive elimination of Fred Hampton itself did not encompass the totality of the political impact of the assassination. The state sanctioned murder of the dynamic Black Panther leader was also a devastating blow to revolutionary politics in the city. At twenty-one years old, Hampton was already a community leader, a seasoned organizer, and a fiery orator whose galvanizing political messages of revolutionary solidarity reached beyond the black community. Indeed, at the time of his death, he was poised to assume a leadership position in the Black Panther Party at the national level. In short, the murder of Chairman Fred Hampton eliminated a leading voice of anti-racist class struggle in

⁸⁶ Nefajito, interview, 23.

Chicago. What is often overlooked, unfortunately, is that the assassination of Fred Hampton also clarifies that anti-black state sanctioned violence was the most efficient way to incite race consciousness and re-constitute essentialized racial politics in the city. The Illinois Black Panther Party, for example, survived the assassination of Hampton and continued to perform tremendous community service programs in Chicago until it dissolved in 1974. Yet, the dissemination of knowledge and widespread belief that Chairman Fred Hampton was killed because he was a black leader, rather than a revolutionary internationalist *and* a black leader, made it increasingly difficult to convince communities that race was a hegemonic strategy of power.

Conclusion

Strategy and tactics, as the laws for directing war, constitute the art of swimming in the ocean of war.

Mao Tse Tung

As soon as one endeavors to detach power with its techniques and procedures from the form of law within which it has been theoretically confined up until now, one is driven to ask this basic question: isn't power simply a form of warlike domination. Shouldn't one therefore conceive all problems of power in terms of relations of war?

Michel Foucault

Politics is war without bloodshed, and war is politics with bloodshed. If you don't understand that, you can be a Democrat, Republican, you can be independent, you can be anything you want to, you ain't nothing.

Chairman Fred Hampton

In contrast to scholars who have examined the Original Rainbow Coalition through separate ethnic histories of community formation, this dissertation has situated the coalition in the history of racialized governmentality in Chicago. It has argued that in order to fully comprehend the political significance of the alliance one must acknowledge a longer history of racial politics in Chicago, and grasp the racialized strategies and tactics that local agents of government used to manage conduct in the city. Beginning with an analysis of Indian removal and U.S. settler colonialism in the Great Lakes region, the first three chapters of this project traced the evolution of bio-political and disciplinary tactics and strategies that operated to consolidate and maintain the hegemony of capital. This was done to demonstrate that in reaction to profound acts of “inter-racial” unity at the point of production during the Great Depression, a coalition of local politicians, planners, and civic groups introduced a neo-liberal strategy of governmentality that re-conceptualized labor as human capital and embraced an environment of equal opportunity. The effect of this maneuver was the creation of a political milieu that necessitated the incitement of racial politics in order to obfuscate the racialization of the poor, or those considered to lack human capital.

This dissertation has been careful to explain that the development of a neo-liberal state in Chicago did not supplant previous racialized strategies that had identified indigenous nations, southern migrants of African descent, and labor militants as bio-political enemies. Nor did it do away with the racialized strategy that sought to discipline citizen-subjects. Efforts to maintain a heightened identification with city space, to cultivate whiteness, and to produce racial harmony among segregated blacks and whites certainly endured. Rather, the neo-liberal strategy of governmentality superimposed a market analysis onto these earlier conceptualizations of power and urban race relations. Within this neo-liberal political milieu, heightened racial tensions and the incitement of racial consciousness became crucial to hegemony during the decades that followed the Great Depression. In tandem with the Cold War suppression of communists, it was the violence and rhetoric of white supremacists, the intra-racial unity proposed by race leaders, the implosions of race riots, incidents of police brutality, and everyday acts of racial exclusion that served to effectively re-constitute the state and local agents of government as the benevolent protectors of the city's welfare. In other words, the legitimacy of the local neo-liberal government -- eventually refined during the mayoral tenure of Richard. J. Daley -- thrived upon the incitement of racial conduct and consciousness. To test this assertion, this dissertation examined the political effectiveness of the neo-liberal strategy of governmentality during the desegregation campaigns waged by the Chicago Freedom coalition, the CCCO, and Dr. Martin Luther King.

Considering the political containment of civil rights coalitions in Chicago, chapters four thru seven unveiled that the Rainbow Coalition was a local political tactic that undermined the racial borders that upheld neo-liberal governmentality in the city. Building upon earlier grassroots community control efforts in Lawndale, Lincoln Park, and Uptown, and led by the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the groups that formed the Original Rainbow Coalition aligned their efforts and developed independent community service programs that exposed the racialization of poverty throughout the city. By caring for the lives and welfare of poor people, challenging police terror, and resisting urban renewal

projects, the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots made considerable strides in raising anti-racist class consciousness in Chicago. Furthermore, through the tactic of the Rainbow Coalition, the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots disrupted the universality of the state, and reconciled the contradiction of self-determination and solidarity, thus joining the ranks of anti-colonial Third World revolutionaries who previously accomplished the same unity. For these reasons, these organizations and their allies faced constant legal harassment, political repression, and police terror that intensified over the duration of 1969.

The murder of Mark Clark and the calculated assassination of Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton on December 4, 1969 epitomized the political response of agents of government to revolutionary activism in Chicago. It is not hyperbole to state that it was an act of war against the Black Panther Party, which throughout the country was under attack by local and federal police agencies. Documenting the coordinated impact of local police actions against the BPP and federal COINTELPRO operations Ward Churchill notes,

Party members were often successful in defending themselves against malicious prosecutions. Nonetheless, the fact that by the end of 1969 at least 30 Panthers were in custody and facing the death penalty, another 40 facing life imprisonment, 55 facing sentencing of thirty years or more, and still another 155 forced underground or into exile as a means of avoiding prosecution on bogus charges of comparable magnitude had a plainly devastating effect on morale, cohesion, and overall effectiveness of the BPP.¹

In recent years, historians have emphasized the ways ideological dogma, internal dynamics, leadership personalities and patriarchal models of leadership undermined radical organizations led by people of color during the late sixties. To be sure, the Black Panther Party was not immune from internal struggles and mistakes. But as Churchill's statistics reveal, various calculated tactics of political repression placed Black Panther Party chapters and the national unity of the organization under extreme duress. The forced expenditure of resources on legal cases, the obliteration of leaders and disciplined

¹ Ward Churchill, "To Disrupt, Discredit and Destroy": The FBI's Secret War against the Black Panther Party" in *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party: A New Look at the Panthers and their Legacy*, Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas eds. (New York: Routledge, 2001), 105. Also see, Huey P. Newton, "War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America (Ph.D. diss., University of California Santa Cruz, 1980)

rank and file members, and the political divisions incited by FBI informants were the devastating results of a strategic offensive against the BPP. Such efforts to divide and obliterate the Black Panthers not only confirmed the revolutionary potential of the organization but also the centrality of the Black freedom struggle to working-class liberation in the United States.

Yet, as the work of philosopher Michel Foucault demonstrates, repression is only one in a range of governmental strategies of power available to those who rule on behalf of capital in modern social formations. One must also acknowledge that modern governmentality is not content with simply eliminating undesirable conduct and those who threaten equilibrium. Rather, it seeks to safeguard the future of hegemony by refining older traditions of power such as law, and developing new tactics that inoculate the population from embracing revolutionary political consciousness and culture. In other words, a history of the containment of revolutionary organizations such as the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords should not end with COINTELPRO and an analysis of coercive acts of political repression. It is imperative that one also consider the psycho-affective dimension of power and understand that after the political effects of violence and repression are calculated, those who govern work to produce another milieu conducive to the future needs of capital accumulation. It is in this psycho-affective dimension of warfare where one can witness that linked to tactics of repression are concerted efforts to incite the production of knowledge and allow acceptable forms of consciousness that have a limited capacity to disrupt hegemony to flourish and circulate. The immediate aftermath of the political assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton is a prime example of the ways governmentality is implicated in the comprehensive reconstitution of hegemony once a political threat is identified and eliminated.

Immediately following the police raid that resulted in the murders of Chairman Fred Hampton and Defense Captain Mark Clark, and that left several other members wounded, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party invited the public to enter the apartment and see the carnage for themselves. As

word spread that the police killed Fred Hampton, people from around the city made their way to the west side. In the bitter winter cold, hundreds of community members lined up and silently waited to be given a tour by members of the BPP. Lynn French who was incarcerated at the time of the raid recalled,

When Fred was murdered for some reason – and again I don’t know if it’s because this is a modern day phenomenon or a mistake – but they didn’t seal off the place where they killed him. Nowadays they throw up one of those yellow police tapes in a minute and you can’t go in. But they didn’t seal it off, so we opened it up to the public and gave guided tours for weeks. And people went through that place, they were lined up for weeks... they were still doing those tours when I got out of jail.

When you looked at people in those lines, it was not just black people, it was people of all communities across Chicago. I saw white people in those lines who I imagined had no desire to be associated with, you know. But people were so stunned how Fred was murdered in cold blood, drugged and killed in his sleep, and the way they just openly lied. I mean it was just so outrageous. People came from all over to see that and you could just walk through there.²

As French’s memories confirm, it was not only folks in the black community who were moved to travel to the apartment on west Monroe and see the horrific evidence of a plot to assassinate the leader of the Black Panther Party. Several groups that supported the Panthers including those that comprised the Rainbow Coalition, French explained, were also pivotal in a grassroots campaign that prevented the re-election of States Attorney Edward Hanrahan. Yet, in the weeks and months that followed, the state sponsored assassination of a prominent black internationalist evolved into an act of racial injustice committed against a race leader.

On December 6, 1969, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party held a rally to honor Fred Hampton at the Church of the Epiphany on the west side. A flier distributed to the community read,

These murders show clearly the fascist tactics that the gestapo Daleys, racist Hoffmans, war mongering Nixons and money hungry Rockefeller use against the Black Panther Party, progressive people and the poor, oppressed masses who are demanding their basic needs: land, bread, housing, clothing, education, justice and peace.

*... We call upon all people to unite in stopping these monstrosities – the murders of Chairman Fred, Mark Clark, Jake Winters, and all our Vietnamese brothers and sisters.*³ (emphasis added)

² Lynn French, Interview by author, Washington D.C, March 22, 2010, 16-17.

³ “Chairman Fred Lives,” Michael James Archive, Heartland Café, Chicago, Illinois.

At the rally members of several local organizations that supported the Panthers were in attendance. Speakers including alderman A.A. “Sammy” Rayner, Obed López of LADO, Claude Lightfoot, and José Cha Cha Jiménez of the YLO, among others, expressed their solidarity with the Chicago Panthers and agreed to work together to respond to the police attacks and the continual incarceration of activists. The next day over three thousand people attended a mass at the Church of the Epiphany. At the entrance of the church, they found a sign that quoted Chairman Fred Hampton as stating, “If you want peace, you’ve got to fight for it.”⁴ It also read, “Fred Hampton is Dead, Killed by Daley’s Pig Force 5:00 a.m., 12-4-1969, SEIZE THE TIME.”

The following two weeks, Chicago was afire. Students from at least five high schools in the city walked out of their classes to attend the funeral of Fred Hampton at the Rayner funeral home on west Roosevelt. On the campus of Chicago Vocational H.S. one student took down the school’s American flag and at Proviso East, where Hampton graduated, students clashed with over a hundred riot police.⁵ At Malcolm X College on the west side, then headed by Charles Hurst Jr., students, teachers, and community members participated in a memorial in which over a thousand people attended. Afterwards they held a rally in front of the West Side Organization and staged a “survival walk” through the west side to Hampton’s funeral.⁶ Indeed, all across Chicago, artists, educators, and activists organized events at universities and churches to honor the slain Panther leader, collect donations, and particularly to challenge Edward Hanrahan’s version that Hampton and Mark Clark were killed in a shootout with the police. It is not an overstatement to say that in the aftermath of the shocking police raid, community members, local politicians, and street organizations that may have been previously weary of the Black Panthers were galvanized into action.

⁴ *Chicago Defender* December 9, photo inset; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

⁵ “Blacks Walk out at 5 Schools” *Chicago Today* December 8, 1969, John D. Vasilopolous, “Cancel Classes at Proviso,” *Chicago Defender*, December 16, 1969, p. 4; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

⁶ *Chicago Defender*, photo inset, December 9, 1969; Available online, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

The widespread response to the murder of Fred Hampton was palpable. It particularly united Chicago's black community who collectively demanded justice from Mayor Richard J. Daley. Black leaders from all sides of the political spectrum including local and national politicians, church leaders, and heads of street organizations denounced the police murder of Chairman Fred Hampton. Jesse Jackson of Operation Breadbasket, Rev. Arthur Brazier of The Woodlawn Organization, state senator Harold Washington, Russ Meek of the WSO, prominent businessman Dempsey Travis, Charles Hurst Jr. president of Malcolm X College, Whitney Young, Edwin Berry of the Urban League, and an older generation of black radicals including Claude Lightfoot and Ishmael Flory came out with powerful statements of support. Even the loyal machine politician Ralph Metcalf broke with his party superiors and voiced his desire to see a thorough investigation take place. In fact, in its coverage of Fred Hampton's funeral a *Chicago Defender* article highlighted that the political adversaries Russ Meek and Jesse Jackson set aside their difference and sat next to one another during the funeral service.

At an event at Northwestern University Law School in December 2009 to mark the fortieth anniversary of Fred Hampton's assassination, historian Adam Green was asked to comment on the significance of Hampton's death in Chicago history. He responded that it was truly remarkable the way Chicago's black community posthumously embraced Fred Hampton as one of their own and came to the defense of the Black Panther Party. Green is certainly accurate in his assessment. For example, if one views poetry as a window into the political and emotive state of a community during a particular time period, it's clear that Fred Hampton's death produced profound feelings of unity and collective struggle. On December 7, 1969, the first day of funeral services for Fred Hampton, poet Don L. Lee (now Haki Madhubuti) penned a powerful poem. Dedicated to the fallen Panther Chairman and Mark Clark, it started,

Only a few will really understand:

It wont be yr/mommas or yr/brothers & sisters of

even me,
we all think that we do but we don't.
it's not new and under all the rhetoric the seriousness is still not
serious.
the national rap deliberately continues, "wipe them
niggers out."
(no talk do it, not talk do it, no talk do it, notalk
Notalk, notalknotalk doit)
we.
Running circles around getting caught in
cobwebs,
in the same old clothes, same old words, just new
adjectives.
We will order new buttons & posters with: "remember fred" and rite-on mark."
& yr/pictures will be beautiful and manly with the deep look/the accusing look
to remind us
to remind us that suicide is not black.⁷

Don. L. Lee's feelings of frustration, pain and solidarity were echoed on December 28, 1969 at the South Side Community Arts Center during "an evening of Readings, Songs, Pictures, and Poems, dedicated to the living ideals of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark..." In a compilation of poetry and art entitled *When One of Us Falls*, the venerated Margaret Burroughs wrote,

Is it not time then since this did happen
For the people For the people in their wrath
To rise, the people to rise up

⁷ Quoted in Doris E. Saunders, "CONFETTI," *Chicago Defender*, December 17, 1969; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Chicago Defender (1910-1975).

The people to rise up and crush the mailed fist

Before indeed it moves on to crush them all

Is it not time?⁸

As Adam Green reminded the audience forty years later, for many black folks in Chicago it was the time as many old and young, pacifist and militant came together to pressure authorities for racial justice.

Yet, Green's observation of black solidarity ignored that the neo-liberal state that evolved in Chicago thrived upon intra-racial unity and calls for racial justice. A contrapuntal analysis of the actions of the police, States Attorney Hanrahan, and Mayor Daley indicate that in the immediate aftermath of Hampton's assassination these local agents of government worked to incite racial consciousness and embraced calls for a full investigation of the police raid. For instance, on December 27, 1969, in the midst of widespread student walk-outs, emotional memorials, and angry protests, the Gang Intelligence Unit raided the Olivet Presbyterian Church in Lincoln Park. According to parishioners and witnesses, fifteen officers busted into the church, jumped on pews and the pulpit and aimed shotguns at thirty youths who were having a meeting that evening. Before leaving, the police called the youths members of "vicious gangs" and made sure to rip up posters of Chairman Fred Hampton that were hanging on the walls.⁹ This raid, which occurred under the direction of Mayor Daley and States Attorney Edward Hanrahan was not an aberration. Rather, it was part of a strategic effort to escalate racial tensions in the city by unleashing police terror and antagonizing those in the black community who supported the Black Panther Party. Dr. Charles Hurst and Alderman A.A. "Sammy" Rayner, for example, faced public scrutiny and investigations by Hanrahan for their support of the Black Panther Party. Apartments suspected of harboring Panthers were continually broken into, and by March of 1970 the police were

⁸ Margaret Burroughs, *For Fred Hampton and Mark Clark*, in *When One of Us Falls*, (Chicago: Artist United, 1970).

⁹ John D. Vasilopoulos, "Presbyterians Blast GIU" *Chicago Defender*, December 31, 1969, p. 3, Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

even staging brazen mock raids of the Black Panther office. In one instance, the police shot up a poster of Fred Hampton.¹⁰

The use of police terror, legal harassments and investigations of Panther supporters, and symbolic attacks on the image Chairman Fred Hampton, comprised a deliberate effort to provoke masculinist militancy and racial conduct in black communities in Chicago. These repressive tactics were also accompanied by the production of knowledge about Black Power and racial consciousness in Chicago. On December 27, 1969, for example, several organizations including the Black Panther Party held a rally at the federal building in downtown Chicago. The *Chicago Defender* reported,

A rally in commemoration of slain Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark will be held today in the Civic Center Plaza at noon. A combine of black student groups and other black community leaders are sponsoring the rally which is expected to draw several thousand persons.

...Addressing the rally will be Rev. C.T. Vivian; Bobby Rush, Panther Minister of defense in Illinois; The mother of John and Michael Soto who were killed in one week by Chicago police about two months ago; William Hampton, brother of the slain party chairman; Russ Meek, chairman of the Black Impeachment Committee; Joan Gray, Panther lieutenant minister of health; Rev. Charles Koen, head of the Cairo United Front; representatives of the Afro-American Patrolman's League, Black P Stone Nation, and Black Disciples, and James Satterfield and Thomas Waits from Loop Jr. College. Satterfield is president of the Black Students Union, Waits is communications chairman.¹¹

Though a wide range of political perspectives were undoubtedly voiced at the rally, the *Chicago Defender* chose to publish a segment of a statement distributed prior to the rally that read;

The extermination program of black people being instituted by Daley and Hanrahan and the Chicago police department is fast turning Chicago's black community into a police state. *We appeal to all black people to attend the rally instead of going to work or school. United we can make 1970 the year of black liberation.*¹² (emphasis added)

In other words, at a public rally to honor a dynamic leader that championed the coordination of black liberation and class struggle, self-determination and solidarity with other oppressed peoples, the newspaper highlighted the desire for black unity. Though political messages of solidarity with other

¹⁰ Bonne J. Nesbitt, "Cop Bullets Rip Panther Headquarters: Rush" *Chicago Defender*, March 19, 1970, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

¹¹ "Civic Center Rally for Hampton and Support for Rayner Stump" *Chicago Defender*, December 31, 1969, p. 5; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

¹² Ibid.

groups and with Third World national liberation movements were likely stated at the event, the newspaper gave no mention. Absent was also any semblance of the flexible hybridity that was so often visible in the discourses of Chairman Fred Hampton and other Rainbow Coalition leaders.

Significantly, it was not the first time that the *Chicago Defender* highlighted that Black intra-racial unity was gaining momentum in Chicago as a result of the murder of Fred Hampton. The newspaper was particularly active in emphasizing that a desire for racial separatism was building in the city during a tenuous period when the Reverend C.T. Vivian announced that a Black Power coalition would begin to enforce a white curfew in black communities. Vivian, speaking on behalf of a new coalition called the United Front of Black Community Organizations announced that,

Effective immediately a 6 pm to 6 am curfew is established for all whites in the black community. No whites will be permitted to enter the black community for any reason during those hours and all whites inside the black community must leave by the 6 pm deadline.¹³

Though the new coalition did not represent everyone in the black community, it was reported that Vivian spoke on behalf of one hundred organizations that collectively identified the curfew as one of seven points of struggle in a seven point platform. Other proposed struggles included,

Black Friday “tag days”; establishment of a citywide black women’s organizing committee; a Black Investigation of Hampton’s and Clark’s slayings; a Black Tribunal to hear cases against black jurists, politicians and police; a Black Watch to scrutinize police activities in black areas; a black foundation fund in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King and Fred Hampton, and plans to send Atty. Kermit Coleman and 6th Ward Ald. A.A. “Sammy” Rayner to the United Nations to present the case of Panther killings and other acts of genocide committed against blacks.¹⁴

Asked to clarify the “black curtain” curfew, Earl Doty another spokesperson for the new coalition explained, “We have now moved the battle to other levels, from dialogue, preaching and lot of rhetoric to something concrete, some action that that we can measure.” He added that “Every white person

¹³ “Black Fronters Modify Position” *Chicago Defender*, December 17, 1969, p. 2; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

¹⁴ Faith Christmas, “Group Firm on Curfew” *Chicago Defender*, December 16, 1969, 3; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

regardless of their professed love for blacks or association with black people” would have to respect the curfew. “And if they don’t get out, we are prepared to put them out,” he explained.¹⁵

Due to the attention that the “black curtain” proposal received some began to voice a concern that the “living ideals of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark,” as Margaret Burroughs put it, were being forgotten. Bobby Rush immediately came out publicly against the curfew arguing,

The curfew should be imposed on Hanrahan and his pigs, not unilaterally on white people. I take it as a personal affront to imply that there is a polarization of the races as a result of the curfew, because that is not what Fred lived or died for.¹⁶

Others such as Gus Savage and Jesse Jackson who objected to the militancy of the statement, denounced the curfew as divisive and ill-conceived. Jackson, for one, apologized for Vivian and represented his espousal of the white curfew as an irrational and angry moment in an otherwise illustrious civil rights career. Yet, Vivian and others who responded to the murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark through espousing black solidarity were anything but irrational. Their resolute calls for racial separatism in Chicago were based on violent assaults upon the black community, persistent poverty and exploitation, and myriad examples of state sanctioned white supremacy and white privilege. At the same time, however, there is no denying that the efforts of several organizations to consolidate intra-racial unity in the immediate aftermath of Fred Hampton’s assassination were continuously provoked, antagonized, and jeered at by the police and other agents of government. In other words, there was a hegemonic political tactic at play in Chicago that sought to stoke the fire of racial separatism in the black community.

The announcement of the “black curtain” proposal, which one journalist believed “hit Chicago with the impact of a psychological atom bomb” set off months of debate about Black Power and the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ John D. Vasilopoulos, *Chicago Defender*, December 17, 1969, p. 1; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

state of black politics in the city.¹⁷ Beginning with a city council resolution authored by four black alderman that declared the curfew a “vicious doctrine,” one can trace a series of struggles over self-determination and local Black political representation. With the privilege of historical hindsight it is clear that the incitement of discourses and the production of knowledge about Black Power in the weeks and months following the death of Fred Hampton resulted in two inter-related outcomes. In stark contrast to the interventions of the Black Panther Party, racial politics was re-packaged in terms of the black/white binary and black militancy was increasingly conceptualized as black capitalism, a cultural rejection of whiteness, or armed struggle. In direct relation to this incitement of cultural nationalism and black militancy in Chicago developed an equally powerful consensus among a hegemonic coalition of civil rights leaders, local politicians, liberals, and social democrats that racial justice was best fought for through the legal system and the ballot.

Unfortunately, these mutually reinforcing perspectives, which were continually antagonized by police terror and attacks on poor residents and students, worked efficiently to paralyze black political unity. In a scathing article in the *Chicago Defender* on February 7, 1970 entitled “Disunity Shakes Black Power Movement,” Ronald Trimm explained that black residents in the city were increasingly alienated by the disputes between those who supported the perspective of CT Vivian and those who followed Jesse Jackson. Trimm wrote,

The Black Power Movement is shook up because it has sold black people a pretty good line on unity while the black leaders themselves can’t get together. The chief architects of Black Power are pounding nails in their own caskets because they’re fighting each other instead of doing battle with the real enemy.

...Those in the know have long known that a fierce rivalry exists between Jackson and Vivian and the curfew strategy only served to bring it right out into the open. For Jackson and Vivian are probably the most articulate and most widely known black leaders in Chicago today and though they generally appear in public to be together, they are as far apart as the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ronald Trimm, “Disunity Shakes Black Power Movement” *Chicago Daily Defender*, February 7, 1970, p. 13; Available online from, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *Chicago Defender* (1910-1975).

¹⁸ Ibid.

Notably, Trimm explained that the split existed because C.T. Vivian was supported by “the biggest business executives” in the city who desired to manage racial conflict in the trades, and because Jackson was supported by Daley’s political machine. He noted,

Jackson, though most people don’t realize it, is not really a foe of Daley and has some pretty close ties with the local Democratic party. He’s high on the Southern Christian Leadership totem pole and SCLC derives much of its money from white liberals. What all this adds up to is that like every major city in the nation, the leading black power spokesman are reined in by the sources of their “bread.”¹⁹

Arguing that the split among Jackson and Vivian was really about “power, money, and the spotlight,” Trimm observed that these two contending perspectives relegated other forces of black militancy to the margins. He wrote,

Groups such as the Malcolm X Black Hand Society look with disdain on all of the Afro hair-dos, dashikis, the beads, and all the rest. They see SCLC’s Black Christmas and Black Fridays as gimmicks. And this has further split the leadership of the Black Power movement.

The hard core militants want to get on with the business of changing the American system. No group is seeking this end more painfully than the Black Panther Party. They tolerate the cultural nationalists but make it clear that they are waiting for them to end the gimmickry and get down to business.²⁰

Even if Trimm’s article was an oversimplification of black politics in Chicago, the fact that such a commentary on Black Power was written a mere two months after the assassination of Fred Hampton signaled the rapidity in which racial politics fractured and paralyzed local Black political resistance. Furthermore, what went unmentioned was the ways that both poles of racial politics in the city worked to recuperate the legitimacy of the neo-liberal state.

This dissertation has demonstrated that neo-liberal governmentality in Chicago thrived upon racial consciousness and the existence of racialized spaces of despair and poverty. It has unveiled that because neo-liberal governmentality also rested upon the notion of the modern state as the guardian of all citizens (the people) and the guarantor of equal opportunity among individual units of enterprise, local cultural nationalist and civil rights resistance strategies were allowed to flourish. For these

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

reasons, I have argued that the political tactic of the Rainbow Coalition was counter-hegemonic as the Young Lords, Black Panthers and Young Patriots recognized the need to collectively oppose racial borders and the universality of the social contract. With this in mind, it is possible to see that the debates involving racial separatism in Chicago after the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton operated to recuperate the state as an anti-racist institution that served the interests of all people. The same could be said of those like Jesse Jackson who called for a patient struggle for racial justice through the ballot and the legal system. Though machine politicians like Edward Hanrahan were ousted from office, and the Panthers who survived the apartment raid were eventually acquitted, the performance of assigning a blue ribbon panel of experts, producing studies, disseminating the facts of the police raid, and delivering “justice” through a trial, served to regenerate the modernity of the U.S. legal and political system. In the final analysis, what ultimately endured were powerful feelings of racial consciousness in Chicago, or the belief that a deviant States Attorney who overstepped his authority was correctly punished by an exceptional legal system that ensures the gradual attainment of racial progress.

Of course, this did not mean that in the early 1970s the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, and the Young Patriots reversed course and abandoned class struggle and the tactic of the Rainbow Coalition. For their part, the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party were as active in their community service programs as ever, and continued to develop their class analysis despite the upsurge in cultural nationalism and an onslaught of political repression. In January of 1970, for example, the Panthers opened the Spurgeon Jake Winters health care center in Lawndale and began to serve hundreds of community residents on a weekly basis. Before its dissolution in 1974 the chapter continued to struggle for the community control of policing, organized a prison visitation program, and maintained food, education, clothing and shelter programs, among other initiatives.

New scholarship and historical evidence suggests that the Young Patriots were severely hampered by the effects of urban renewal programs in Uptown and the deleterious impact of police

informants and political repression. Though a group of Young Patriots maintained a health care center in Uptown for the majority of 1970, it was eventually closed by the city in September of that year thus eliminating a crucial point of interaction for the organization. Nevertheless, the tradition of directly challenging racism and white-skin privilege and supporting the Panthers was carried on by groups such as Rising Up Angry, the Heart of Uptown Coalition and other Panther support organizations such as the Peoples Information Center.

The political strength of the Young Lords Organization also suffered from the displacement of the Latino community in Lincoln Park, and the rabid attack on leaders and members of the organization. Significantly, historical evidence and oral histories reveal that during the early 1970s the Young Lords were able to regroup as an organization centered in Uptown. For example, after a period of being underground and a stint in prison, José Cha Cha Jiménez returned to Chicago and in 1974 ran for alderman in the 46th ward. Though he narrowly lost the election, it was an effective “inter-racial” grassroots campaign that provided an important model for local organizers to build upon. The YLO also maintained a commitment to community service programs, anti-police brutality activism, and a strong relationship with the Black Panther Party. Yet, during the early 1970s it was increasingly apparent to the Young Lords that local anti-racist politics had shifted and a new set of hegemonic political tactics and challenges existed.

It is beyond the scope of this research project to fully trace the trajectory of anti-racist activism and strategic governmental reactions that shaped local politics during the 1970s in Chicago. Indeed, new social histories such as those that examine Mexicano/Chicano community formation confirm that Chicago remained a central location of anti-racist radicalism. A resurgence of labor militancy at the point of production, particularly among steel workers also meant that the city was a locus of class struggle. Yet, a few changes are noteworthy to consider. In contradistinction to the late 1960s, the beginning of the 1970s saw the co-optation of models of community service put forth by grassroots

community groups. City health care centers, for example, were opened to serve low income residents. Tellingly, they were often located in close proximity to where free health care centers once operated. Perhaps the best example of this process was the co-optation of the breakfast for children's programs by the state. Due to the political effectiveness of this Black Panther initiative, the Chicago Public Schools were eventually mandated to provide meals for public school students.

The early 1970s also witnessed the growth of the complex of state funded and philanthropically supported community organizations that scholars and activists have come to understand as the non-profit industrial complex. Community activism related to housing, health care, drug abuse, job training, and youth that would have previously fallen under the scope of grassroots organizations was now increasingly carried out by non-profit organizations that were dependent upon the state, capital, or religious institutions for its programs. In the early 1970s, for example, the West Side Organization evolved into a low-income housing developer and a social service organization funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Equally disturbing was the emergence of the prison industrial complex and attendant policing tactics like "stop and frisk" which thrived upon the criminalization of street organizations during the seventies. As scholars are only now beginning to unveil, the rapid rise of the carceral state and the mass incarceration of racialized poor communities was a condition that directly responded to the explosion of grassroots political activism in places like Chicago during the late sixties.

Above all, the 1970s witnessed the reconstitution of essentialized racial politics in Chicago. In addition to the mobilization of racial consciousness among many Black Chicagoans following Fred Hampton's assassination, other communities in the city also reinforced the notion that they belonged to fixed racial and ethnic groups that deserved their own institutions and political representation. Superimposed upon acts of white supremacy and anti-black violence over neighborhood change which continued in places like Marquette Park during the seventies, were new reactionary working-class white social movements that attacked affirmative action programs, public housing, and school desegregation

efforts through home-ownership, taxes, and quality of life discourses. In relation to these color-blind forms of white power and privilege evolved forces that promoted a form of multi-cultural idealism that envisioned fixed racial groups coexisting peacefully in the city. Racialized struggles between white ethnics who remained in the city and those who preserved the notion of the beloved community would eventually reach their peak during the election and tenure of Harold Washington, the city's first Black mayor.

The outpour of excitement in Chicago's outcast communities confirmed that Washington's election in 1984 was an extraordinary victory, and was a testament to the Rainbow Coalition of seasoned organizers who filled the ranks of his campaign. Indeed, his election inaugurated a wave of hope and optimism of racial progress that would only be superseded locally by the presidential election of Barak Obama in 2008. Unfortunately, the dissolution of the multi-cultural coalition following Washington's death, and the rapid dissent into essentialized racial politics that often pitted Blacks against Latinos, unveiled deep flaws in the idealism of the multi-cultural conceptualization of urban race relations. In an often overlooked essay entitled "Broken Rainbows" Mike Davis has written,

As the fiscal noose has tightened around city budgets, demographically ascendant Latino communities – hungry for more control over schools, transit and public employment – have found themselves locked in increasingly bitter zero-sum conflicts with Black leaderships unwilling to share hard won gains. Political friction over public-sector resources, as distinguished from job competition in the private marketplace, has eroded the dream of a rainbow coalition.

It has opened the door to a resurgence of white political elites in city halls of the nation's three largest cities. With the help of powerful Latino allies, Mayors Rudolf Giuliani (Herman Baldillo), Rich Riordan (Richard Alatorre) and Richard M. Daley (Louis Guttierrez) deftly exploited accumulated Latino grievances over the failure of power sharing during Black mayoral regimes in the 1980s and early 1990s... Such hard-edged competitions between established Black Democrats and insurgent Latinos have become depressingly common.²¹

²¹ Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City* (London and New York: Verso, 2001), 160-161.

But perhaps the best example that the multi-cultural notion of coalition building was undermined by a vulgar essentialism and blind faith in progress came during the 1984 presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson.

Hoping to build upon the momentum of Harold Washington's victory, and with his headquarters in Chicago, Jackson launched a national campaign that appropriated the metaphor of the Rainbow Coalition in order to win the Democratic nomination. Though he wasn't nominated, at the Democratic convention in San Francisco Rev. Jackson explained that his Rainbow Coalition succeeded in pushing the Democratic Party to be more inclusive. He eloquently called on the convention to continue this work and make room for Arab Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, young Americans, disabled veterans, small farmers, and gays and lesbians. Appealing to his fellow Democrats he exhorted, "Don't leave anybody out" and added "*We are often reminded that we live in a great nation -- and we do.* But it can be greater still. The Rainbow is mandating a new definition of greatness (emphasis added)." Significantly, Jackson's deployment of the pronoun "we" in this discourse of inclusion indicated that his Rainbow Coalition comprised a complete alliance of oppressed communities and identities. Unfortunately, this new essentialist Rainbow Coalition also acquiesced to myths of gradual progress and national greatness, and in doing so, reconciled identity politics and American exceptionalism. In this light, one must question whether Jackson's vision of the Rainbow Coalition built upon the counterhegemonic politics of the Original Rainbow Coalition or was a vastly different political intervention altogether.

Scholars and observers have strained to bridge the Original Rainbow Coalition led by the Black Panther Party and the Rainbow Coalitions that served the election campaigns of Washington, Jackson and even Barak Obama. In the final analysis, however, it is hard to overlook that the political consciousness that shaped the unity of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Organization, and the Young Patriots differed radically from more recent "inter-racial" coalitions. In an

article entitled “To My People, The Poor, The Youth, The Oppressed,” for example, José Cha Cha Jiménez, reflected on the need for solidarity between poor communities in Chicago. Jiménez wrote,

I just wonder how long it will take us to wake up. How long will it take us to see. Will we forget our martyrs and let them die and suffer in vain... We are going to have to learn to be like the elephant who never forgets, because they do not owe us money. They owe us something more precious, our human rights, our human freedom. They are going to have to stop calling us niggers, spics, hillbillies and chinks. But that is not all. No that's not all. They are going to have to start sharing the wealth that they have collected off the sweat of our backs. And giving a few of us homes, educations, employment etc. is not going to stop us from our struggle. They have to give the pie to all of us to share equally, because poor people have had enough.²²

Surely, politics had evolved since the late sixties, but it must be acknowledged that in Jiménez's discourse is an entirely distinct deployment of the political signifiers “we,” “us,” and “they.” In contradistinction to Jackson's Rainbow speech, here we find a Rainbow Coalition of those despised as “niggers, spics, hillbillies and chinks” who will not stop at ending racism but will base their collective struggle on the pillars of historical memory, anti-capitalism, and a rejection of an American exceptionalism that dismisses class struggle in favor of a middle-class citizenship. Given Jiménez's statement and the myriad discourses of flexible hybridity, community service and self-determination emphasized in this dissertation, it is difficult for this author to draw many counterhegemonic political linkages between the Original Rainbow Coalition and those that followed. If anything, one could trace the strategic containment of identity politics and “inter-racial” coalitions through the gradual erosion of the Rainbow Coalition as a political metaphor of class struggle.

That said, it is undeniable that the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton was a pivotal moment in this process of containment. The calculated and state sponsored elimination of Hampton was devastating to the unity of the Original Rainbow Coalition of Chicago as the loss of a dynamic organic intellectual and organizer who was committed to an anti-racist class struggle left a void that was difficult to fill. Slim Coleman recalled,

²²José Cha Cha Jiménez, “To My People, The Poor, The Youth, The Oppressed,” *Y.L.O.* vol. 1 no. 2, March 25, 1969, p. 8.

After his death, that force is not around. That's really true... All those debates were killed, that level of debate didn't happen anymore. There wasn't nobody pushing that. On the other hand, the repression really tore the Young Lords apart. Cha Cha goes underground very shortly after that. The Patriots fell apart a lot because of infiltration... So you know, it became very difficult.²³

Similarly, Omar López of the Young Lords remembered that Hampton's assassination impacted "the whole movement. It was like shock waves, you know." He added,

The idea was to have combined initiatives. I mean that was the idea of the coalition, to really attack problems as a coalition. You know, move together that way. And once that happens, there was no way. We were unable to convene people again. I mean the Panthers had to also retreat a lot. They had to do that, they had to redesign their whole existence from there on, in Illinois anyway. So convening the Rainbow Coalition was difficult.²⁴

As Coleman and López confirm, scholars and community members who are concerned with understanding persistent conditions of poverty, violence, and despair in Chicago's outcast communities must understand the political repression that stymied revolutionary organizations like the Black Panthers, Young Lords, and Young Patriots. Scholars have clearly revealed that one should also certainly consider the racialized histories of deindustrialization, the impact of the drug economy, and the rapid rise of the prison industrial complex. This dissertation, however, has tried to convey that our search for the roots of entrenched forms of oppression should not overlook the historically specific development of racialized governmentality in Chicago. In the spirit of liberation, it has strived to push those who wonder what happened to the movement to not abstain from studying the agents of governmentality and the strategies and tactics that have operated coercively and productively to maintain racial borders and political paralysis in Chicago's working-class outcast communities.

²³ Slim Coleman, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, July 9, 2010, 17.

²⁴ Omar López, Interview by the author, Chicago, Illinois, January 10, 2010, 33.

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Appendix A

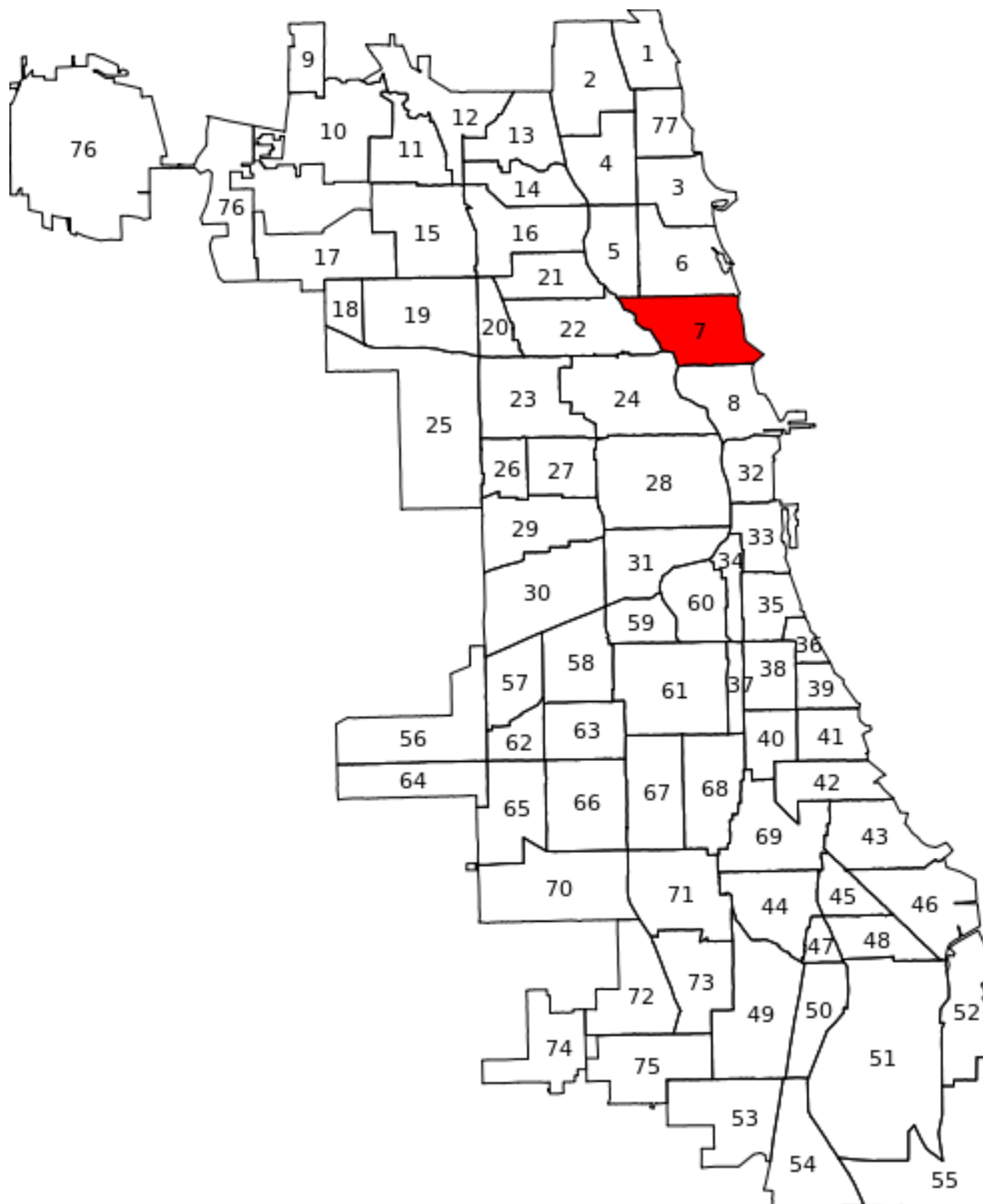


Illustration A1: Lincoln Park, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011

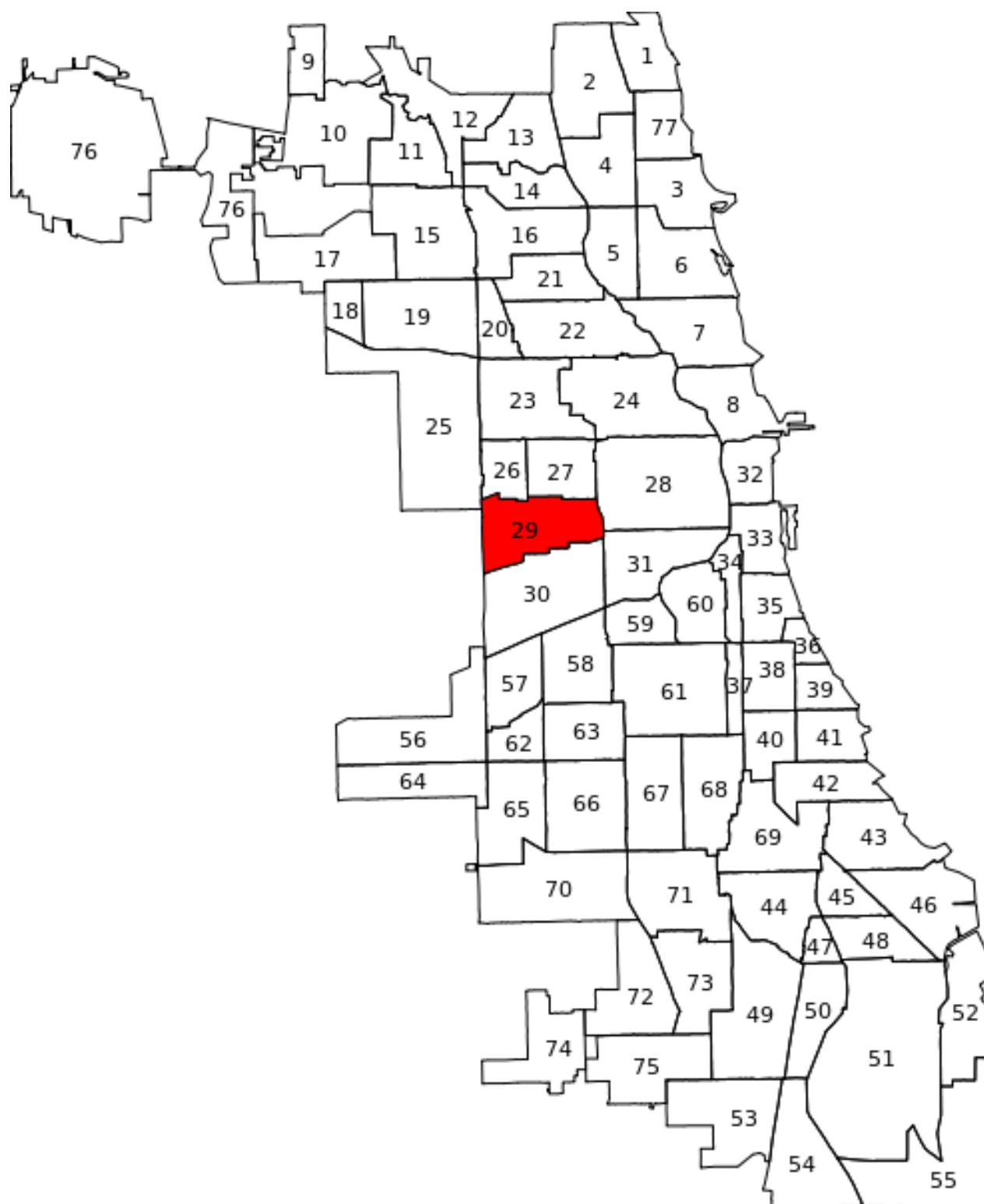


Illustration A2: North Lawndale, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011

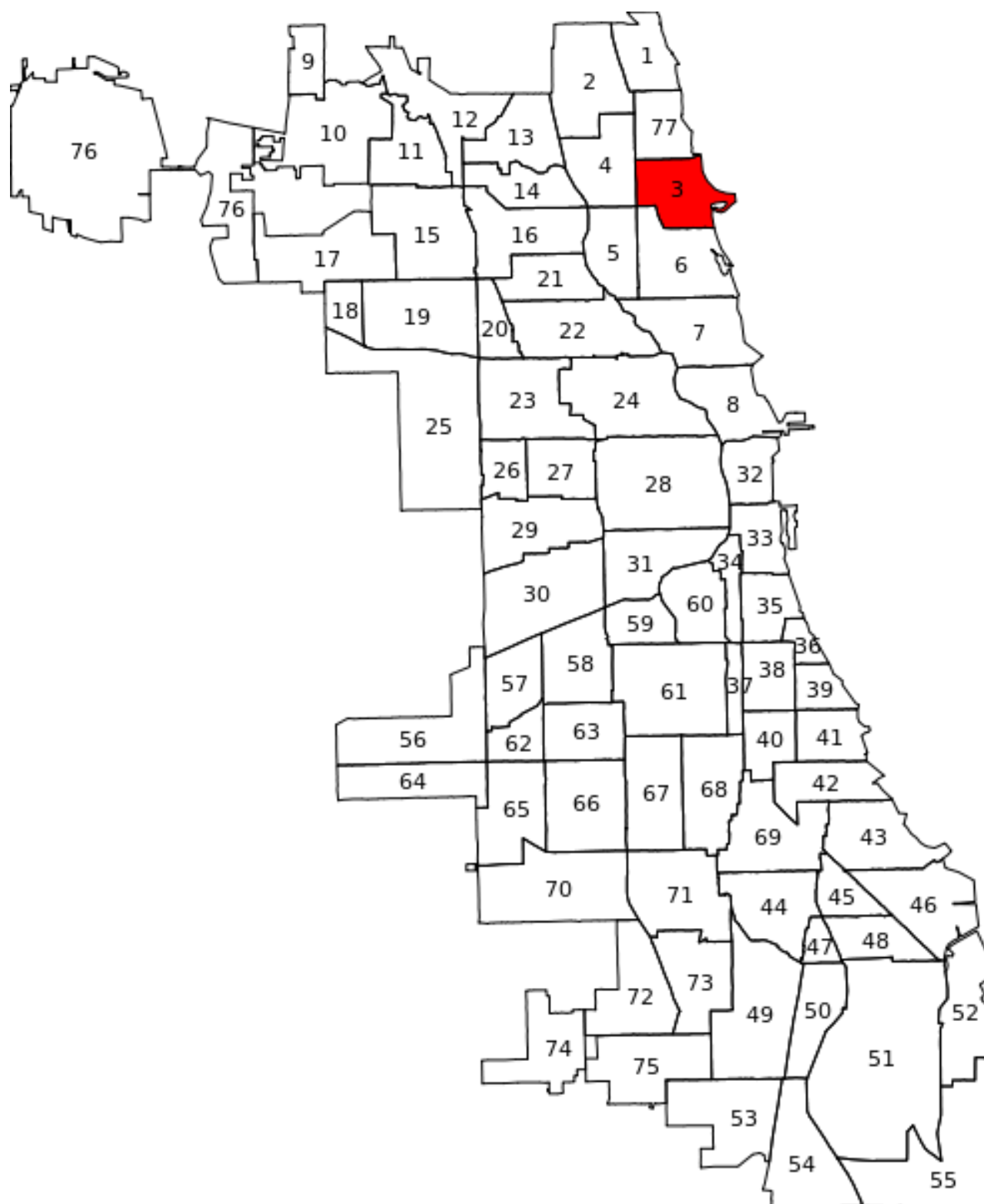


Illustration A3: Uptown, Community Areas in Chicago. Christopher Siciliano, and Jeremy Atherton, The Map Collection, University of Chicago Library, 2011

Vita

Antonio R. López was born in Gary, Indiana and raised in Chicago, Illinois. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in University Studies from the University of New Mexico in 2002 and a Masters of Arts degree in History from the University of Texas at El Paso in 2005. As a doctoral student López has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards including a University of Texas at El Paso Excellence Award, the John Renee Rodriguez Scholarship from United Latinos, and the 2010 Spring Fellowship from the History Department at the University of Texas at El Paso.

While pursuing his degree, Dr. López participated as a research associate in “Memory and Monuments: Commemorating and Confronting History on the U.S./Mexico Border Memories and Monuments” and “Memories of Braceros, Memorias de Bracero’s,” two important public history projects with the Oral History Institute and the Centennial Museum at the University of Texas at El Paso. In addition, he published the essay, “Walking Out of Colonialism One Classroom at a Time: Student Walkouts and Colonial/Modern Disciplinarity in El Paso Texas,” in *Breaching the Colonial Contract: Anti-Colonialism in the U.S. and Canada* (2009).

López has presented his research at international conference meetings and workshops including the Third International Conference on Education, Labor and Emancipation, the Law and Society Annual Conference, and the American Studies Association. He has taught courses at the El Paso Community College, University of Texas at El Paso, and Northwestern University.

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