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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

The *Yale Historical Review* rarely declares an issue to have a theme. We get excellent submissions from so many places that any coherence among them can seem like a matter of chance. But you're opening our Southern issue today because our board is excited about a grouping of papers that truly shed light on each other, whose collection has illuminated both networks of new inquiries and broader shared curiosities. The papers herein investigate the ways in which the South – and questions in dialogue with the history of the region – has evolved, almost never logically or at pace, almost never to a neat solution. These investigations get at enduring contradictions in our country, and inspire us to learn.

We open with Emily Xiao's examination of maps created after the Chicago race riot of 1919, a subtle exploration of an effort to both unearth and ameliorate racial tensions. While set outside our region of focus, Xiao's careful scholarship deals with an issue which haunts the pieces that follow.

Describing a century of intellectual efforts to marry Southern traditional values with an appeal to at least the majority of the country, Daniel Judt's investigation of under-represented currents in Southern thought provides nuanced insight into the psyche of the region.

Ethan Young's essay on the integration of football in Knoxville, TN goes right to the issue of the Southern psyche by focalizing a ritual we all hold dear. His excellent look at the progress at the University of Tennessee captures an entire city's passage through a fraught and violent era, and clearly and powerfully telescopes into our present day.

Angelo Pis-Dudot captures a different period of change, taking us to Puerto Rico as the island began governing itself. Another examination of a specific region's relationship to and dependence on the rest of the United States, this work convincingly highlights the challenges of modernization in such a case.

Finally, James Wyatt Woodall probes the tension between Southern businessmen and

Northern politicians through the critical period in which pellagra, a disease caused by malnutrition, emerged in the South. The public health issue becomes a battleground for defining the present and future of the South, and Woodall skillfully traces the several motives of the lawmakers involved.

We finish with an interview with Professor Glenda Gilmore, Yale's Southern historian. Professor Gilmore's expertise ranges far and wide, and her love of teaching only makes her work more exciting. The conversation, a fascinating tour through her education and career and hopes for the future, fittingly guides us in processing the complexity introduced above.

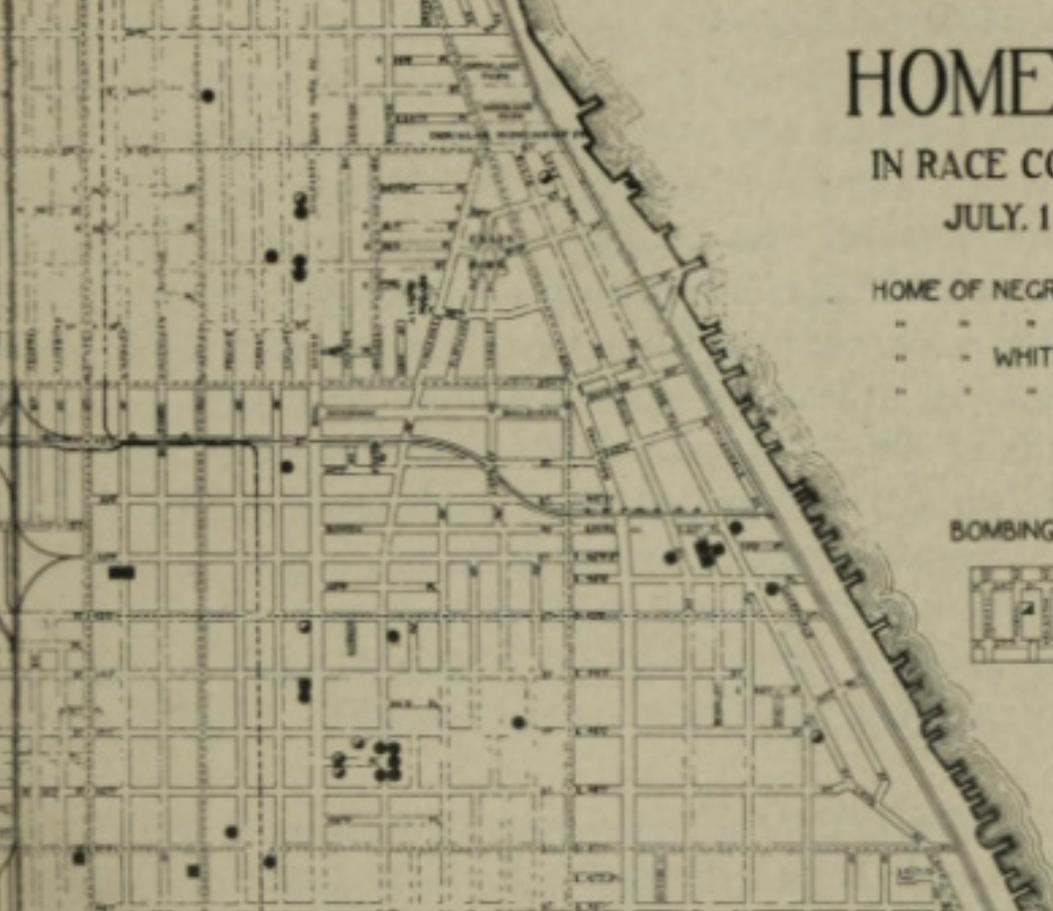
As we reflect on the past, we remain grateful for the work of our editors, and for the kindly given time of our contributors and professors. Thank you to those generous enough to share their papers with us and with others. We hope you enjoy these papers as we have enjoyed preparing them, and that you come away reflecting on our past but also looking to our future.

Sincerely,

Katie Shy, Editor in Chief
Ishaan Srivastava, Managing Editor

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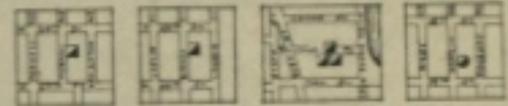
HOMES BOMBED

IN RACE CONFLICTS OVER HOUSING

JULY. 1, 1917 – MARCH. 1, 1921

HOME OF NEGRO —●—
" " " REAL ESTATE DEALER —■—
" " " WHITE —●—
" " " REAL ESTATE DEALER —■—

BOMBINGS IN AREAS NOT SHOWN ON MAP



A CITY WITHIN A CITY THE CHICAGO COMMISSION ON RACE RELATIONS AND ITS MAPS OF BLACK CHICAGO

During the interwar years of the twentieth century, Chicago, like many northern American cities, experienced profound social change and prolonged racial strife as a result of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North. After one particularly violent incident in this dramatic history, the Chicago race riot of 1919, a Chicagoan Commission on Race Relations was formed from black and white community members to examine the underlying causes of, and potential solutions to, this racial tension. In this paper, Emily Xiao, JE '18, reveals how the Commission's singularly impressive use of accurate maps in its culminating report served as a political instrument to advance a pro-integration argument. In demonstrating the importance of spatial representations of social and cultural issues, Xiao points out a larger phenomenon: subjective arguments can be found even in the seemingly objective.

By Emily Xiao, JE '18

Written for "Cartography, Territory, Identity"

Professor Bill Rankin

Faculty Advisor: Professor Cynthia Horan

Edited by Emma Hastings, Mark Gustafarro, and Matthew Sáenz

A CITY WITHIN A CITY

Chicago is the known city; perhaps more is known about it, how it is run, how it kills, how it loves, steals, helps, gives, cheats, and crushes than any other city in the world.¹

—RICHARD WRIGHT, 1945

On a scorching hot Sunday in late July, during what would become known as the Red Summer of 1919, a riot broke out at Chicago's 29th Street Beach. A black boy named Eugene Williams had drifted across an invisible line in the water dividing the "white" and "black" swimming areas. White youths spotted Williams from shore and hurled stones at him, causing the seventeen-year-old to drown. Within hours, a destructive riot—sparked by the police's refusal to arrest the white man who had instigated the stoning—was in full sway. It lasted from July 27 to August 8, with the majority of violence against people and property concentrated in Chicago's "Black Belt" on the South Side. By the time the violence subsided and the state militia withdrew, 537 people had been injured and 38 people had died, 28 of whom were black.

On August 1, the city's civic and business leaders gathered at Chicago's prestigious Union League Club and drafted a letter to Illinois Governor Frank Lowden, urging that he appoint an "emergency state committee to study the psychological, social, and economic causes underlying the conditions resulting in the present race riot."² In response, Governor Lowden formed the Commission on Race Relations, which was led by twelve prominent Chicagoans—six white men and six black men. Three years later, the Commission presented its report, *The Negro in Chicago*, to the public. Among the earliest reports dedicated to race relations in the city,³ it comprised nearly 700 pages and provided a multifaceted analysis of race relations in the city. Significantly, it contained 59 recommendations for city agencies, local businesses, the press, and the public.

One of the most striking features of *The Negro in Chicago*—and the subject of this study—is its eighteen maps, which depict sites of interracial encounter and exchange. The maps encompass a broad, nearly all-inclusive range of subjects: population, public transit, acts of violence (such as bombings), social agencies, and recreation, among others. It may come as no surprise that the Commission would use cartographic mapping to elucidate what had become such a spatial conflict. Since the start of the Great Migration, after all, interracial contests over finite resources for housing, labor, and leisure had grown far more tense and geographical in nature. For example, a policy of block-by-block segregation, es-

1 Richard Wright, introduction to *Black Metropolis*, by Horace R. Cayton and St. Clair Drake (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1945), xviii.

2 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago* (Chicago: UChicago Press, 1922), xv.

3 Horace R. Cayton and St. Clair Drake wrote that *The Negro in Chicago* was "the first formal codification of Negro-white relations in Chicago since the days of the Black Code," in *Black Metropolis* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1945), 69.

tablished by the Chicago Real Estate Board in 1917, served to maintain and reinforce racial and social distances. Yet the Commission's maps were not simply a matter of graphic convenience, nor were they secondary to the text of the report. Analysis of spatial conceptions necessitates map-making as a specific and deliberate way of conceiving space. Maps embed arguments about space in visual terms using scale, color, and other cartographic conventions. What makes the Commission distinctive for its time is not only that its members understood race relations in spatial terms, but also that they used maps to advance a framework for visualizing these explicitly racial categories. Through these maps, racial disparities in the urban environment were made visible.

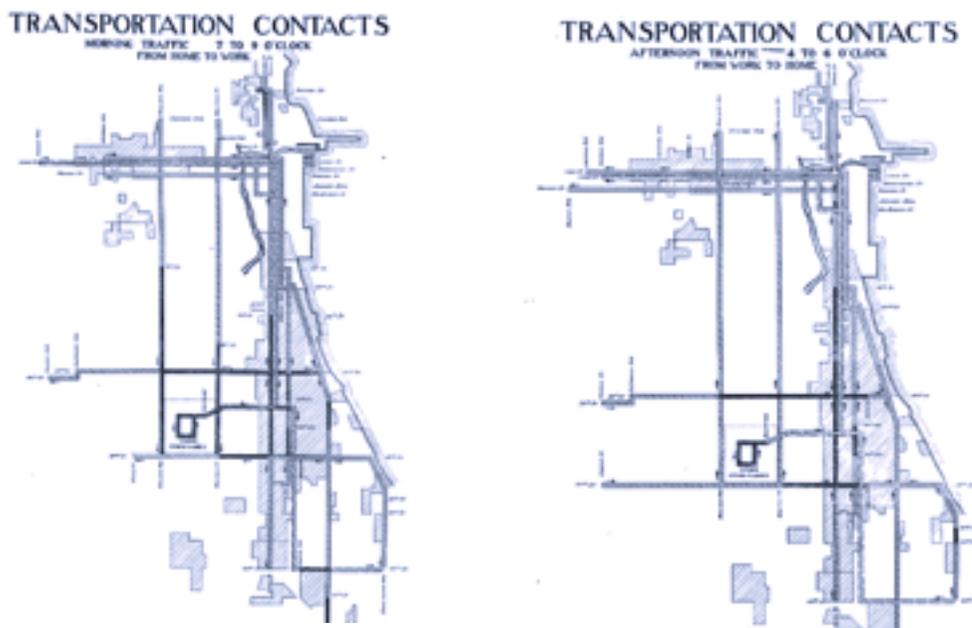


Figure 1. The Commission's map of transportation contacts in morning (right) and afternoon (left) traffic. The different levels of shading indicate the proportions of black passengers to total passengers. Spaces marked with diagonal lines indicate black residential areas. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 300.

The urban maps of *The Negro in Chicago* served as more than a simple description of space. Though the maps embed meticulous statistics within the visual language of cartography in order to achieve a sense of scientific objectivity, it should be understood that they were inherently political in nature. In order to elucidate the effects of municipal policies on black residents, the Commission on Race Relations used mapping to foreground the relationship of Black Chicago – the “city within a city” – to the city as a whole. Advancing the Commission's integrationist and politically accommodationist paradigm (which favored compromise with prevailing white social norms and politics), the maps did not consider Black Chicago in isolation. Rather, they made black-white racial politics – the points of contact, the shared sites, the fractures – visible on the scale

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of the entire city of Chicago.

Much has been written about the Chicago race riot of 1919 and the Commission on Race Relations (particularly its sociological methods), but few have evaluated the Commission's mapping impulse or approach to spatial representation. Naomi Farber touches briefly upon the significance of the maps in her analysis of Charles S. Johnson. Johnson was central to the Commission and was a student of Robert E. Park, a pioneering figure in the Chicago school of sociology.⁴ Farber identifies *The Negro in Chicago* as a characteristic monograph of the Chicago school.⁵ Likewise, Martin Bulmer notes that the Commission's use of maps, a research method in its own right, was consistent with the Chicago urban sociology of the period.⁶ Yet, based on B. Robert Owens's study of the historical and theoretical origins of maps produced by University of Chicago sociologists between 1920 and 1934,⁷ the maps of Johnson and the Commission appear to have been ahead of their time and quite distinctive for their context.

This essay will begin by locating the urban maps of *The Negro in Chicago* within their sociological milieu. After tracing the formation of the Commission and its institutional and academic grounding, the essay will then discuss the production of the maps and identify the cartographic influences that shaped them. Finally, individual maps from the report will be subject to close visual analysis in order to illustrate the Commission's view of tense race relations in Chicago, and its proposed remedies.

THE REFORM IMPULSE: THE COMMISSION AND ITS FORMATION

To understand the maps in *The Negro in Chicago*, it is necessary to examine the background of the Commission and to survey the mapping traditions upon which it drew. This section will situate the Commission within the broader reform elements of Chicago, as well as the academic discipline of sociology at the University of Chicago. The Commission's mapping venture was dependent upon the nature of its institutional and academic grounding. The resources, financial and otherwise, that the Commission had at its disposal had a direct bearing on the maps it was able to produce.

The formation of the Commission itself exhibited the influence of the city's municipal reform leaders and movements.⁸ Before the Great Migration, few reformers in Chicago

4 Naomi Farber, "Charles S. Johnson's 'The Negro in Chicago,'" *American Sociologist* 26 (1995): 84.

5 Ibid.

6 Martin Bulmer, "Charles S. Johnson, Robert E. Park and the Research Methods of the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 1919–22," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 4 (1981): 300.

7 B. Robert Owens, "'Mapping the City: Innovation and Continuity in the Chicago School of Sociology, 1920–1934.'" *The American Sociologist* 43 (2012), accessed November 23, 2016, doi: 10.1007/s12108-012-9160-7.

8 Bulmer, 292.

had been concerned primarily with racial issues.⁹ This is not to say that there were no black Chicagoans before World War I; on the contrary, their presence in the city dated back to the 1840s. The mass migration during and after the war, which brought in hundreds of thousands of black migrants from the South, strengthened principles like the systematic exclusion of black residents from white areas of the city, principles that had already been in place in the city since the 1890s.¹⁰ The riot was regarded gravely by reformers as a sign of racial strife when it broke out in the summer of 1919.¹¹ The problem of racial tension on this scale was relatively new to them, but the reform leaders' demand for a commission to study this tension was a characteristic element of the Progressive repertoire—it was a familiar solution. Yet the Commission's composition and eventual response was anything but familiar, and its argument should be distinguished from other attitudes toward the riot. Law enforcement, for instance, had brought twice as many blacks than whites to trial, and both the Grand Jury of Chicago and the press proposed increased segregation as the solution to the city's racial problems.¹² *The Negro in Chicago* would firmly repudiate such suggestions.

The Commission was not only racially integrated but also comprised members, black and white alike, who were prominent supporters of the welfare of African Americans. It was chaired by Edgar A. Bancroft, a prominent lawyer and a trustee of the Tuskegee Institute, established by Booker T. Washington. Other white members included Edward O. Brown, the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Victor F. Lawson, the owner and editor of the *Chicago Daily News*; and Julius Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck & Company and a trustee of the University of Chicago and the Tuskegee Institute. At the time, Rosenwald had funded the establishment of hundreds of schools in the South for black students and was a prominent advocate for black education.¹³ The black members of the Commission included Robert S. Abbott, the founder and editor of the *Chicago Defender*, a black newspaper; Lacey K. Williams, a minister of the Olivet Baptist Church of Chicago, described as the largest Protestant church in America; and George C. Hall, a physician and surgeon at Provident Hospital.¹⁴ Hall was also a friend of Booker T. Washington and the vice president of the Chicago Urban League, whose mission was to assist black migrants to Chicago.¹⁵

Though it was state-appointed, the Commission did not receive major funding

9 Allan Spear, *Black Chicago: Making of a Negro Ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), ix.

10 Ibid.

11 Bulmer, 290.

12 Ibid.

13 Carl Sandburg, *The Chicago Race Riots* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1919), 68.

14 Provident Hospital was an interracial medical institution for black patients. It is described in *The Negro in Chicago* as one of the social and civic agencies serving the black community.

15 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 652; Bulmer, 295.

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from the state government. Therefore, it had to be financially self-sufficient. Financial loans from Julius Rosenwald allowed the Commission to meet its payroll dues, and campaigns were relied on to raise funds from the public.¹⁶ The Commission's finances limited its ability to collect data and maintain a staff of investigators; this, in turn, determined the type and scale of maps that the Commission could prepare. For instance, the committee had hoped to secure block-by-block data showing the expansion of black residential areas and the relative density of black and white residents. It could not afford to do so, however, given its meager financial means. Instead, the Commission looked to population enumerations from the 1920 federal census.¹⁷ Workers for the Commission had some difficulty securing the cooperation of the Census Bureau, but they finally succeeded in March of 1920 after making some compromises. They had to agree, for example, to use data for census enumeration districts rather than more detailed data for individual blocks, which would not be available until the summer. The executive secretaries also consulted the Chicago Telephone Company, which had received data from the bureau showing the boundaries of the enumeration districts. The Telephone Company agreed to provide the Commission with its figures, along with a map depicting South Side black residential areas in 1916 and 1919.¹⁸ The Commission's two executive secretaries were essential to its work. The first, Graham Romeyn Taylor, was a white man and the son of a leading reformer in Chicago's settlement house movement. The other was Charles S. Johnson, a black graduate student in sociology at the University of Chicago. He was employed in records and research work at the Urban League.¹⁹ Johnson had "made a favorable impression upon the Commission" with his proposed outline for investigating the riot, a plan which was based on his experience in investigative work. He called attention to the available material that already existed in other agencies, including original source material at the Urban League.²⁰ Ernest W. Burgess, a colleague of Robert Park, the pioneering Chicago sociologist and professor at the University of Chicago, wrote years later:

[*The Negro in Chicago*] was, of course, a joint effort of the Commission, the executive director, the associate executive director, and of an able staff. But it bears the stamp of the characteristics which distinguish the work of Charles S. Johnson as a social scientist. It has scientific objectivity, it relies on both personal documents

16 Letter, Julius Rosenwald to Graham R. Taylor, December 31, 1919, box 6, folder 3, Julius Rosenwald Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Chicago, IL.

17 Letter, Graham R. Taylor to the Honorary James R. Mann, February 12, 1920, box 6, folder 3, Julius Rosenwald Papers

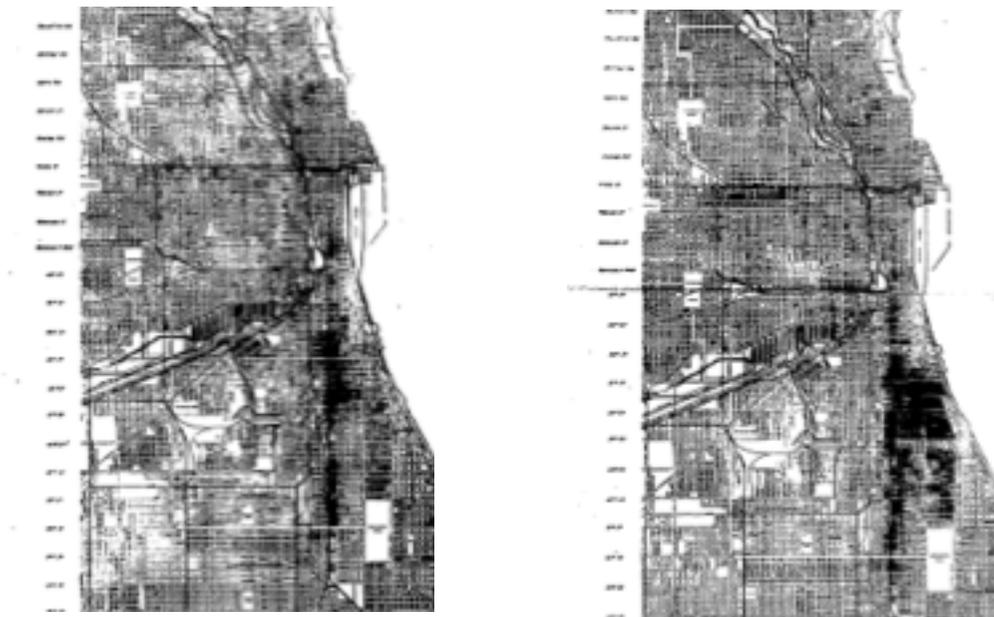
18 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, March 12, 1920, box 6, folder 4, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

19 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, October 9, 1919, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

20 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, November 20, 1919, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

and statistical data, its findings are marshalled for practical application in the solution of a problem, its main objective is to obtain understanding of the factors and processes in human behavior.²¹

As a student of Park, Johnson brought methods of academic sociology to the Commission's work. Park himself, a former secretary of Booker T. Washington, had been considered for the position of executive secretary.²² The Commission frequently consulted both Park and Burgess in its research plans,²³ and the research staff included several graduate students enrolled in Park's course on public opinion.²⁴ The significance of the maps, then, should be appreciated in the context of the Chicago school of sociology and its early aims.



*Figure 2. Distribution of Negro Population, 1910 (left) and 1920 (right). These maps are based on federal census data, with each dot representing 40 black residents. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 106 & 110.*

LOCATING THE MAPS: CARTOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

Before situating Johnson and the Commission within the Chicago school, it is important to note that sociologists at the University of Chicago did not in fact regard themselves as a single school. Rather, the term was applied retrospectively by scholars evaluating the

21 Ernest W. Burgess, "Charles Spurgeon Johnson: Social Scientist, Editor, and Educational Statesman," *Phylon* 17, no. 4 (1956): 318.

22 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, October 9, 1919, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

23 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, January 8, 1920, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

24 Letter, G. Taylor to Julius Rosenwald, February 18, 1920, box 6, folder 3, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

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Chicago sociologists' legacy as a whole.²⁵ Indeed, Owens argues that the various mapping schemes of the Chicago school cannot be treated as facets of a single theoretical outlook, nor even steps toward the linear progression of one.²⁶ This caveat also applies to the maps of *The Negro in Chicago*. As we shall see, Johnson's decision to include maps in the report was novel within the context of the school at the time. However, this innovative format did not necessarily mean the maps were more progressive or scientifically objective in nature than other available representations of urban data. Rather, they should be recognized as serving a specific goal: a distinct and deeply political interpretation for observing the reality of the city, commensurate to Johnson's own aims and civic outlook.

Bulmer identifies the first two major empirical studies of the Chicago school as *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, published between 1918 and 1920, and *The Negro in Chicago*.²⁷ *The Polish Peasant*, by Florian Znaniecki and William I. Thomas at the University of Chicago, featured personal documents such as letters and diary entries to piece together sociological life histories. However, it appears not to have included maps. Interestingly, the study argues that the Polish community was shaped less by broad policies than by internal social ties and organization.²⁸ In contrast, *The Negro in Chicago* and its maps were concerned with highlighting the tensions between black Chicagoans and their social environment. By no means did the study repudiate the effects of cultural background and ties, but it was primarily interested in highlighting the spatial and social effects of broad municipal policies on Chicago's black residents.

The Chicago school's cartographic mapping of the city did not begin until 1923, when Ernest Burgess published his scheme of concentric zones based on a theory of urban "ecology."²⁹ This idealized model took economic forces alone to be the primary social movers.³⁰ Later, between 1924 and 1930, the Local Community Research Committee delineated 75 "community areas" of Chicago constructed around ethnic group identities. This scheme was more empirically grounded and offered a less deterministic and biological view of social communities.³¹ Thereafter, as technical advances in data collection and analysis allowed for more precise empirical study, Chicago sociology gradually turned toward census

25 "Mapping the Young Metropolis," Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/webexhibits/mappingtheyoungmetropolis2/index.html>.

26 Owens, 266.

27 "Mapping the Young Metropolis."

28 Eli Zaretsky, introduction to *Polish Peasant in Europe and America: A Classic Work in Immigration History*, by Florian Znaniecki and William I. Thomas (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1996), xxii.

29 Owens, 270.

30 Ibid., 273.

31 Ibid., 266.

tract mapping.³² Published in 1922, *The Negro in Chicago* predated all of these mapping schemes. It thus seems inappropriate to describe its maps as altogether characteristic of the Chicago school's cartographic efforts and methods, as these had not yet been established.

Still, we can look to some of Park and Burgess's early writings to get a sense of the sociological attitudes Johnson brought to the Commission. In 1915, Robert E. Park wrote in his foundational essay, "The City," that "physical and sentimental distances reinforce each other,"³³ a view consistent with Johnson and the Commission's mapping of social relations between racial groups. Park and Burgess's classic 1921 *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* does not discuss maps, but provides some insight into the authors' racial attitudes. In one essay, Park describes the racial temperament of the Negro as "a disposition for expression rather than enterprise and action," though he argued that this disposition could change with environment.³⁴ Park would later be credited for showing that the social disorganization of urban immigrant culture had social and cultural, rather than biological, roots.³⁵ In 1918, however, he was still writing about his doubts as to "what extent so-called racial characteristics are actually racial, i.e., biological, and to what extent they are the effect of environmental conditions."³⁶ Importantly, Robert Park did recognize that there was "one profound difference between the Negro and the European nationalities, namely, that the Negro has had his separateness... thrust upon him because of his exclusion and forcible isolation from white society."³⁷ Whatever Park's eventual theoretical evolution on the matter, Johnson's own stance in the heredity-environment debate was already apparent through his maps, which emphasized the importance of social and cultural environment. Crucially, in other words, Johnson's maps took an inherently social, rather than biological, attitude toward race and racial discrimination.

What models, if any, did the Commission have at the time to guide its mapping venture? Though the Chicago school had not yet begun mapping in earnest, another source of cartographic influence existed outside the academy. Progressive municipal reformers, including those in the settlement house movement, which primarily served ethnic white immigrants, had long been mapping the city. Between 1890 and 1920, the urban studies

32 Ibid., 286.

33 Robert E. Park, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment," *American Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 5 (1915), 582.

34 Robert E. Park, "Education in Its Relation to the Conflict and Fusion of Cultures," in *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, ed., Burgess and Park (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 139.

35 Hamilton Cravens, *The Triumph of Evolution: The Heredity-Environment Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 150. The intellectual stance of Park and other sociologists was significant in an era when ethnocultural conflicts had become increasingly divisive, and at a time when academic sociology sought to liberate itself from the natural sciences.

36 Park, "Education in Its Relation to the Conflict and Fusion of Cultures," 140.

37 Park, "Racial Assimilation in Secondary Groups," in *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, 632.

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that emerged from the Social Survey Movement often utilized visual representations and large-scale, foldable maps, even though it was considerably expensive to include such maps in publications.³⁸ In 1895, Jane Addams' Hull House published the *Hull-House Maps and Papers*, a collection of maps and essays by residents about Chicago's Near West Side. Their ultimate goal was to mobilize the public toward social reforms. Taking Charles Booth's maps of London as a model, the Hull House residents hoped their reports would be "of value, not only to the people of Chicago...but to the constantly increasing body of sociological students more widely scattered."³⁹

It is likely that Johnson and the Commission were inspired by the Hull House investigation, which sought to marshal statistical data and first-hand observations toward practical ends. Some personal connections existed between the two groups: the Committee's chairman, Edgar Bancroft, set aside one of his personal copies of the first edition of *The Negro in Chicago* for Jane Addams.⁴⁰ They also shared certain methodological affinities. The Hull House residents' painstaking research relied upon personal inquiry and home visitations, with "each house, tenement, and room visited and inspected."⁴¹ Their efforts were evident in the publication's detailed, color-coded maps of individual housing units in a "congested district of Chicago." The Commission's investigative staff similarly enlisted local participation in gathering first-hand empirical data for their study of race relations. For example, newspaper announcements, such as those found in the *Chicago Tribune*, solicited communications from members of the public.⁴² Although Park regularly taught a course on the social survey at the University of Chicago, such large-scale survey work was unconventional for Chicago school monographs.⁴³ The published housing maps in *The Negro in Chicago*, like the Hull House maps that derived information from home visitations, were also key results of investigators' first-hand observations in the city (Figure 3).

38 Owens, 276.

39 Agnes Sinclair Holbrook, "Map Notes and Comments," in *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 11.

40 Letter, University of Chicago Press to Edgar Bancroft, November 3, 1922, box 104, folder 6, University of Chicago Press Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.

41 Holbrook, 11.

42 "Chicago News in Brief," *Chicago Tribune*, December 13, 1919, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

43 Bulmer, 298.

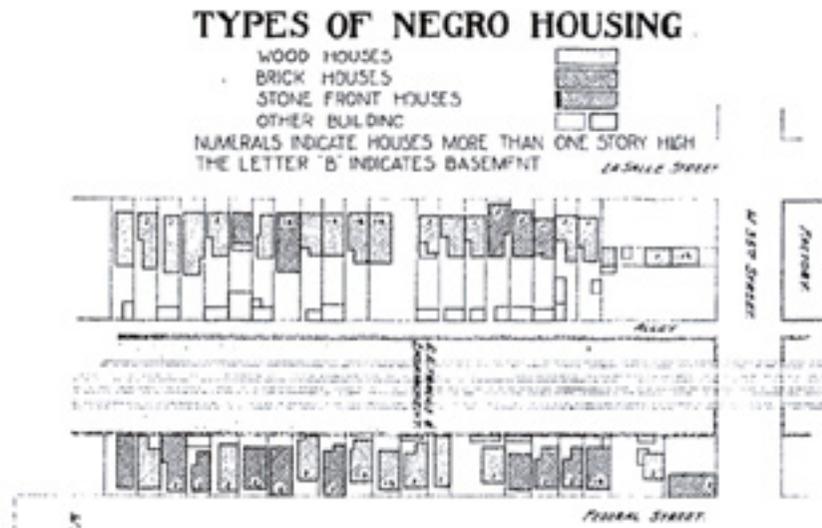


Figure 3. A housing map by the Commission, showing an area bounded by La Salle Street, Federal Street, W. 35th Street, and W. 36th Street. Individual houses are shaded according to building material and marked by number of stories. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 184.

DESIGNING MAPS FOR THE PUBLIC

The Commission began preparing its maps as early as December 1919, five months after its formation. By then, the executive secretaries had requested from the City Club of Chicago the use of their base map of the city, which they called “far and away the best and most accurate map on a large scale for the purpose of plotting data secured by the Commission.”⁴⁴ The City Club, an organization of civic and business leaders interested in urban development, was eager to help the Commission address the race “problem.”⁴⁵ With its own committee on city planning and zoning ventures, the City Club sought the “improvement of the physical framework of the City,”⁴⁶ selling prints of a comprehensive set of Chicago maps for use by social and civic organizations.⁴⁷ In these maps, the city was divided into sections and shown at a scale of 1/8 inch to the mile. The Commission evidently believed in the potential of such maps, with their ability to represent the city at a greater level of detail, for scientific objectivity and the accurate presentation of data in the service of their project.

By December, the Commission also had a tentative scheme of at least twelve maps. Some intriguing maps were ultimately not made or not included in the published report, such as a map of the United States showing the geographic origins of black Americans who

44 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, December 11, 1919, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

45 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, January 8, 1920, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

46 “The City Club and Zoning,” *City Club Bulletin* XII, no. 51, December 22, 1919.

47 “City Map,” *City Club Bulletin* XIII, no. 11, March 15, 1920, 65.

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had migrated to Chicago between 1916 and 1919 and a housing map showing fluctuations in rents and real estate value in relation to black occupancy.⁴⁸ The latter map surely intended to address white homeowners' fears of property depreciation in areas occupied by black Chicagoans. Given the Commission's financial limitations, these maps were likely infeasible due to the type and sheer quantity of data they would have required. All told, however, the final maps in *The Negro in Chicago* more or less matched the initial list drawn up by Johnson and Taylor.

The maps for the report were designed "to present most effectively data collected by the Commission" under the supervision of Frederick Jehnck, an employee at the architectural office of George C. Nimmons & Company.⁴⁹ A November 23, 1920 progress report indicates that 43 maps were under preparation at the time and were set to be completed in December.⁵⁰ With twenty-two such maps in the works, by far the greatest number were being prepared by the housing committee, attesting to the centrality of housing conflicts in the city's racial tensions.⁵¹

The Commission eventually chose eighteen maps for publication in *The Negro in Chicago*. Six were printed as large fold-out maps: a map of the 1919 race riot, several maps of population distributions, and maps of vice resorts. There were also eleven single-page inserts and one two-page insert, printed on enamel paper.⁵² During the publishing process, the executive secretaries took great care (and incurred great expense) to ensure that the maps could be printed at a high quality. Executive Secretary Graham R. Taylor even consulted Barnes, Crosby & Company, the engraving company that handled the Commission's maps and photographs, regarding the best method of making zinc line cuts from the maps.⁵³ Initially, the Commission had intended to publish the maps of recreation and industrial plants as fold-out sheets as well,⁵⁴ but the cost was likely too large. Given the high cost, it is notable that the Commission chose to include the maps it did.⁵⁵

The Commission evidently took some pride in its maps and later regarded them as suitable for exhibition. In September 1921, after the committee had finished compiling its

48 Minutes, Commission on Race Relations, January 8, 1920, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

49 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, xviii-xix.

50 Progress report, Commission on Race Relations, November 23, 1920, Julius Rosenwald Papers, box 6, folder 3.

51 Ibid. By then, the Commission had obtained the federal census data and were in the midst of computing the figures and proportions for graphic presentation on maps.

52 Book specifications for *The Negro in Chicago*, June 23, 1922, University of Chicago Press Records, box 104, folder 6.

53 Letter, Graham R. Taylor to Edgar Bancroft, July 6, 1922, University of Chicago Press Records, box 104, folder 6.

54 Ibid.

55 Letter, University of Chicago Press to Edgar Bancroft, November 26, 1922, University of Chicago Press Records, box 104, folder 6. For 1000 copies of *The Negro in Chicago*, a regular page cost \$2.45, whereas a single map cost \$3.70 and a folded map cost \$6.80.

material, Graham R. Taylor suggested to Francis Shepardson, the acting chairman, that the maps should be placed on display rather than being turned over permanently to the Union League. “I sometimes have a little feeling,” Taylor wrote, “that the maps particularly...are the sort of thing that ought to be in a place like the University of Chicago Library, or the Crerar Library.”⁵⁶ In his response, Shepardson concurred that the maps would be “of greater value to students, particularly if the Library would display the maps somewhere where they might be observed by visitors.”⁵⁷ It is unclear whether the maps were indeed ever displayed, but the exchange is telling. Though they were designed for inclusion in a print book, they were also regarded as independently comprehensible to students and the general public alike. As Christian Topalov has written in regard to Charles Booth’s influential map of poverty in London, the social map “stands in a tradition in which things are shown rather than said.”⁵⁸

MAKING BLACK CHICAGO VISIBLE

This section will analyze specific maps in the report that are particularly representative of Johnson and the Commission’s cartographic approach. These maps both reflect and elucidate the remedies that the Commission proposed to the public in response to racial strife. They seek to present an “objective” evaluation of race relations in Chicago, guided by a deliberate awareness of broad social policies and their disparate effects on urban residents. Scientific objectivity, freed from the distortions of racial prejudice, promised to see what others had not. In reality, the maps advance their own, quite specific political outlook, ultimately constructing an accommodationist vision of racial integration.

The Chicago Riot: July 27 to August 8, 1919

The Commission members were not the only ones to map the 1919 race riot, but their published map (Figure 4) is notable for its meticulous sensitivity to racial categories. Accompanied by detailed counts of casualties and property damage in the text of the report, the map uses different symbols for black and white residents to mark the deaths, injuries, and residences of those harmed during the riot.

56 Letter, Graham R. Taylor to Francis Shepardson, September 12, 1921, Julius Rosenwald Papers, box 6, folder 3.

57 Letter, Francis Shepardson to Graham R. Taylor, September 20, 1921, Julius Rosenwald Papers.

58 Christian Topalov, “The city as *terra incognita*: Charles Booth’s poverty survey and the people of London, 1886-1891,” *Planning Perspectives* 8 (1993): 418.

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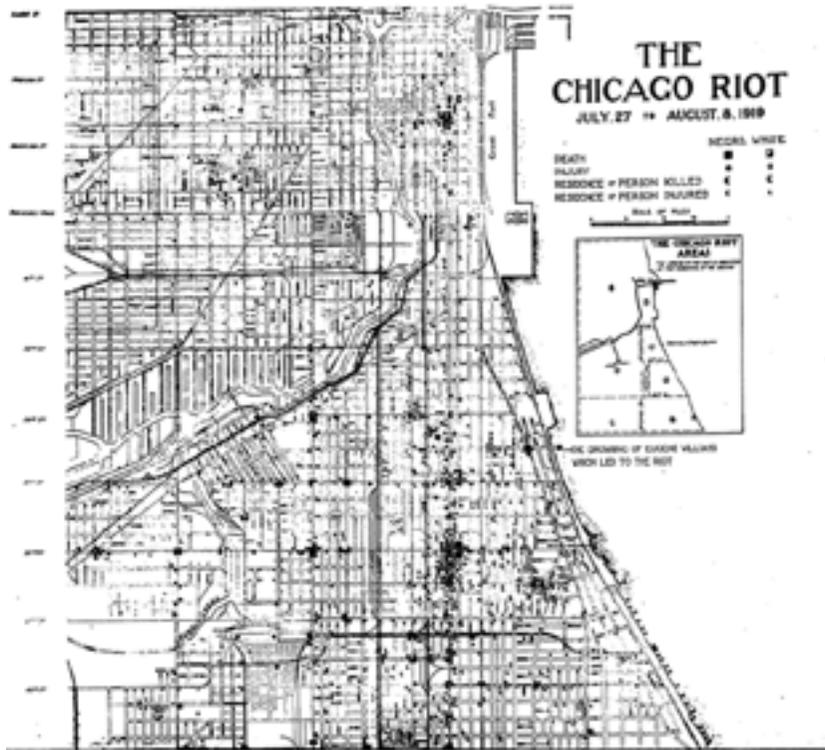


Figure 4. The Commission's map of the 1919 Chicago riot. Note the different symbols used for white and black deaths, injuries, and residences. The inset depicts numbered areas, indicating the temporal spread of the riot. Both the larger map and the inset mark the site where seventeen-year-old Eugene Williams was drowned. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 8.

The map poses a stark contrast to other maps of the riot, such as those published in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. The *Tribune* maps, of which there were at least three, depicted sites of rioting and arson over the course of the riot, but they specified neither the racial composition of the properties affected nor the race of individuals injured or killed (Figure 5). The concentration of property damage, injuries, and deaths in the black community, readily apparent in the Commission's map, was thus made ambiguous in the *Tribune* maps. Certainly, the Commission had had more time to conduct a thorough investigation of the riot conditions. However, the maps pointed to a fundamental difference in political outlook. The *Tribune* tended either to report the misdeeds of black rioters, or not to specify race at all. For example, the caption accompanying one of its maps related that black prisoners on the North side had broken out of jail in a "violent attack on the guards and white prisoners."⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 30, 1919, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 2.

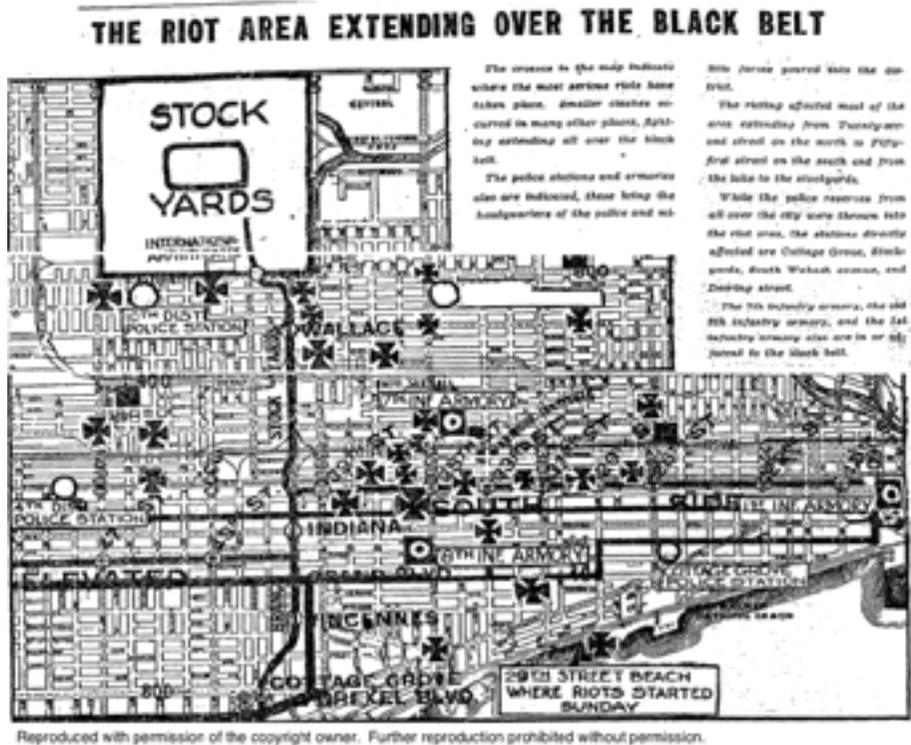


Figure 5. “The Riot Area Extending Over the Black Belt” in the *Chicago Tribune*. The black crosses show the locations of the “most serious riots” without any specifications regarding race. Armories and police stations are highlighted on the map, as well as the location where the riots began. Unlike the Commission’s maps, the *Tribune* maps do not mention the death of Eugene Williams. Published in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1872-1922), July 29, 1919, p. 4, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

In contrast, the Commission sought to combat the vagaries of public opinion with what it saw as objective analyses and graphical representations. Its official report criticized the circulation of “wild rumors” in the press, rumors which had provoked numerous clashes during the riot. On July 29, for instance, the *Chicago Tribune* had reported the deaths of twenty people, thirteen of whom were white and seven black. Yet the true figures were exactly the opposite (that is, thirteen of the dead were black and seven white).⁶⁰ According to the Commission’s own findings, there was no record of police captains’ having warned white residents to arm or prepare for invasion by black mobs, as was also reported by the press. Rather, it was overwhelmingly black residents who were alerted to the threat of white violence in their neighborhoods.⁶¹

As seen in the case of the *Chicago Tribune*, a map itself is not “objective” solely because it is a map, a visual description of a given space. This principle also applies to

60 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 598.

61 *Ibid.*, 599.

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the Commission on Race Relations, which did not necessarily create a more scientific or broadly appealing graphic representation of the riot. What the Commission's report did accomplish was to advance a visual framework by which individual occurrences (i.e. injuries, deaths, and property damage) were classified and made visible according to clearly stated racial categories. *The Negro in Chicago* argued that "the riot was merely a symptom of serious and profound disorders lying beneath the surface of race relations in Chicago,"⁶² and the Commission hoped to show the underlying causes of the riot partly through the graphical argument above.

Population of Negroes, 1910 and 1920

To prepare its population maps, the Commission carried out a preliminary survey to delimit the main areas where black Chicagoans lived. For these areas, they used federal census data showing the total populations and Negro populations by census enumeration district in 1910 and 1920. Each enumeration district comprised a few city blocks in the more crowded portions of the city, allowing the Commission to, by its own evaluation, "prepare maps showing with a fair degree of accuracy where Negroes in Chicago lived."⁶³ The population maps showed that the large influx of black migrants had not established new areas of residence since 1910, but rather increased the size and density of existing communities (Figure 6).

One of the more remarkable aspects of the Commission's approach to population mapping was that it analyzed the black population in relation to total population, rather than studying the black population in isolation. This framework allowed the Commission to make novel observations about the ecology of the city. For instance, in its report, the Commission pointed to a surprising absence of friction within the "Black Belt" in 1920. Though the area was home to most of Chicago's black population, they found that one of the most densely populated sections comprised roughly equal proportions of black and white residents (Figure 7), who coexisted in relative peace.⁶⁴ This so-called "adjusted" neighborhood contrasted with the "non-adjusted" ones toward the south and north, where outright hostility toward the incursion of non-white residents into predominantly-white neighborhoods had led to acute housing shortages for black homeowners. West of Wentworth Avenue, for example, Irish working-class neighborhoods, such as Bridgeport, were home to youth gangs (formed from athletic clubs) who often instigated racial violence.⁶⁵

62 Ibid., 602.

63 Ibid., 106.

64 Ibid., 606.

65 Ibid., 608.

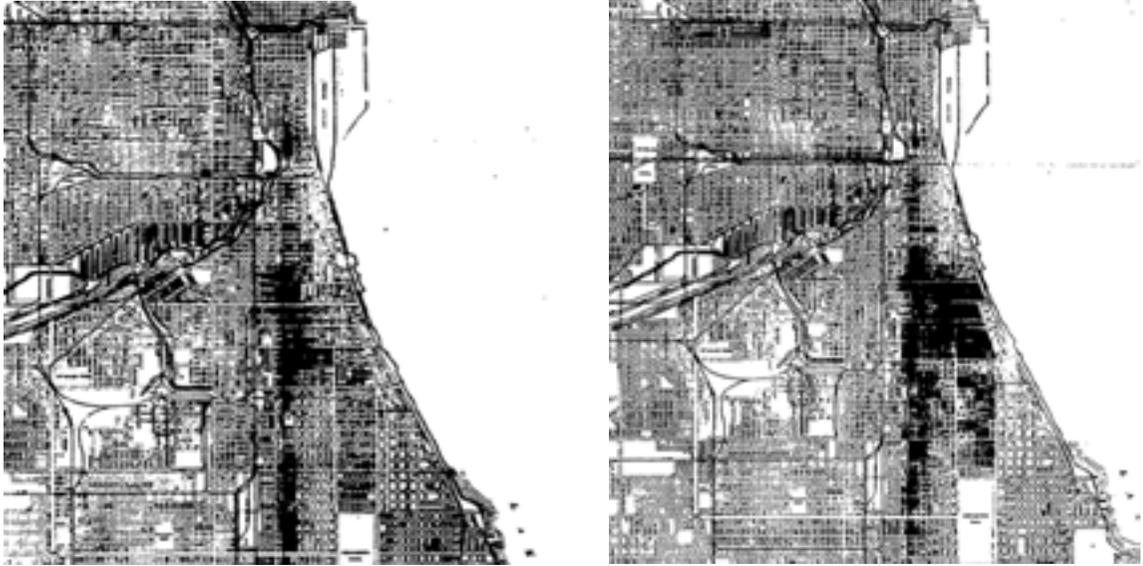


Figure 6. Details from *Distribution of Negro Population, 1910* (left) and *1920* (right). These maps are based on federal census data, with each dot representing 40 black residents. Black residence areas expanded and became denser, though new communities were not necessarily established. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 106 & 110.

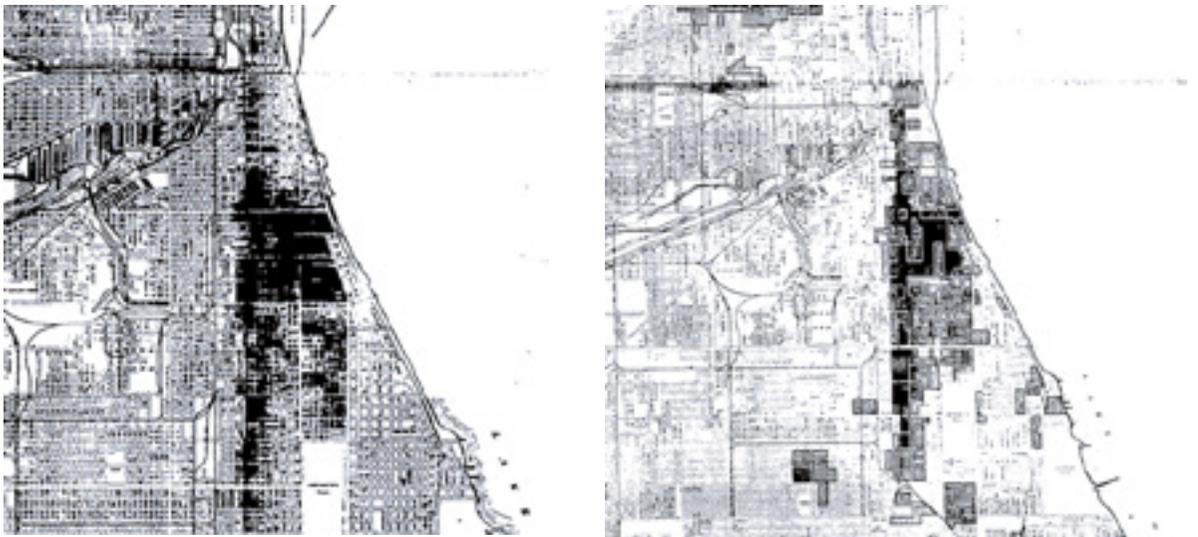


Figure 7. Details from “*Distribution of Negro Population, 1920*” (left) and “*Proportion of Negroes to Total Population, 1920*” (right). The data for both maps was obtained from the federal census. In the map on the right, darker areas indicate a higher proportion of black residents, with the darkest sections containing 80 to 100% black residents. Unshaded areas have fewer than 1% black residents. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 110 & 120.

At the University of Chicago, Park and Burgess were particularly interested in looking at the city as an “aggregation of many small territorial groupings,” an attitude that neces-

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sitated meticulous study of the individual, discrete social environments thought to comprise a single city.⁶⁶ In contrast, the Commission did not take such a reductionist view of the city's residence areas. They mapped white and black Chicago as interdependent and existing in the same space, rather than depicting the black community as a homogeneous and internally coherent geographic area with clearly delineated boundaries.

Urban neighborhood boundaries were not, after all, clearly demarcated. Rather, they were the nebulous zones of interaction between black residents and their ethnic white neighbors that engendered the greatest tensions and physical violence. The Commission's mapping approach, which views Black Chicago in context, is consistent with the report's declaration that the "Negro community in Chicago is virtually a city within a city. It affords opportunity to observe how it is accomplishing its own *adjustment to the larger community, and how it attempts to function in its own behalf and for the betterment of the community at large*" (emphasis mine).⁶⁷ In other words, the black community in Chicago was not a city within a vacuum. It could be understood only in relation to the community at large – how it was shaped and challenged by, as well as how it responded to, broader society. According to Johnson, such group efforts at adjustment to the larger city included civic organizations such as the Chicago Urban League and Provident Hospital.⁶⁸ Indeed, these social organizations were separately mapped in relation to black residence areas (Figure 8).⁶⁹ Ultimately, Johnson and the Commission viewed the lives of black Chicagoans – where they resided, worked, or sought recreation – in the context of the city as a whole. As Farber has noted, subsequent research on urban life tended to focus on the internal life of black communities, emphasizing their separation from the larger society.⁷⁰ In addressing race relations, the Commission advocated a specifically integrationist, as opposed to separatist, paradigm. The maps of social organizations reflected this focus on racial adjustment. It was necessary for the Commission's maps to show the stubborn limits (which were presented as a matter of cultural adjustment) and the possibilities of assimilation, a prospect for which Johnson was optimistic. As he wrote in 1925 in Alain Locke's *The New Negro*, "a common purpose is integrating these energies born of new conflicts, and it is not at all improbable that the culture which has both nourished and abused these strivings will, in the end, be enriched by them."⁷¹

66 Owens, 274.

67 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 612.

68 *Ibid.*, 613.

69 *Ibid.*, 148.

70 Farber, 86.

71 Charles S. Johnson, "The New Frontage on American Life," in *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 298.

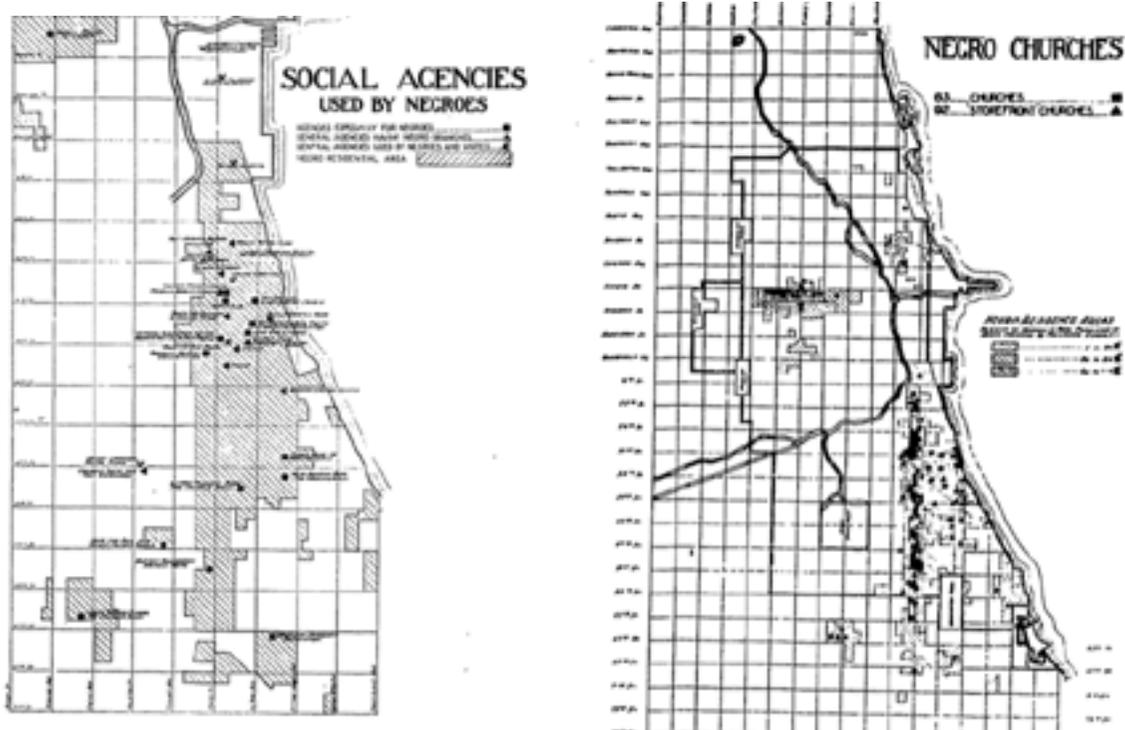


Figure 8. Maps of social organizations, with “Social Agencies Used by Negroes” on the left and “Negro Churches” on the right. Both are plotted relative to black residence areas; the map of Negro churches shows black population by density. The map of social agencies specifies whether the agencies are intended exclusively for blacks, have branches serving black residents, or serve both blacks and whites. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 144-148.

Houses of Prostitution, 1916 and 1918

By 1913, at the height of American social Progressivism, vice reformers across the country were mobilizing to shut down red-light districts.⁷² In Chicago, for example, the Committee of Fifteen served as a private organization primarily targeting prostitution. Another such organization, the Chicago Vice Commission, related to the Committee of Fifteen, even published a report on prostitution in 1911 called “The Social Evil in Chicago.” Reformers subsequently acted on the Vice Commission’s conclusion that the segregated vice districts should be abolished altogether, rather than be subjected to a European style of regulation.⁷³ Progressive reformers crusaded to remove prostitution from public view and to strike it from the perspective of an agenda concerned with “white” social issues – in other words, to remove it from white spaces. As a result, vice was driven into black neighborhoods.⁷⁴

Several years later, Johnson and the Commission on Race Relations grappled with this legacy in their discussion of vice in black residential areas. *The Negro in Chicago* con-

72 Kevin J. Mumford, *Interzones* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 20.

73 Historical Note, Chicago Committee of Fifteen Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Chicago, IL.

74 Mumford, 44.

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tains three maps depicting “the environment of the South Side Negro”: the first two maps show the location and prevalence of prostitution in 1916 and 1918 (Figure 9), while the third map shows resorts—saloons, gambling halls, cabarets, and brothels.⁷⁵ The “Social Evil” was now firmly established in Black Chicago.

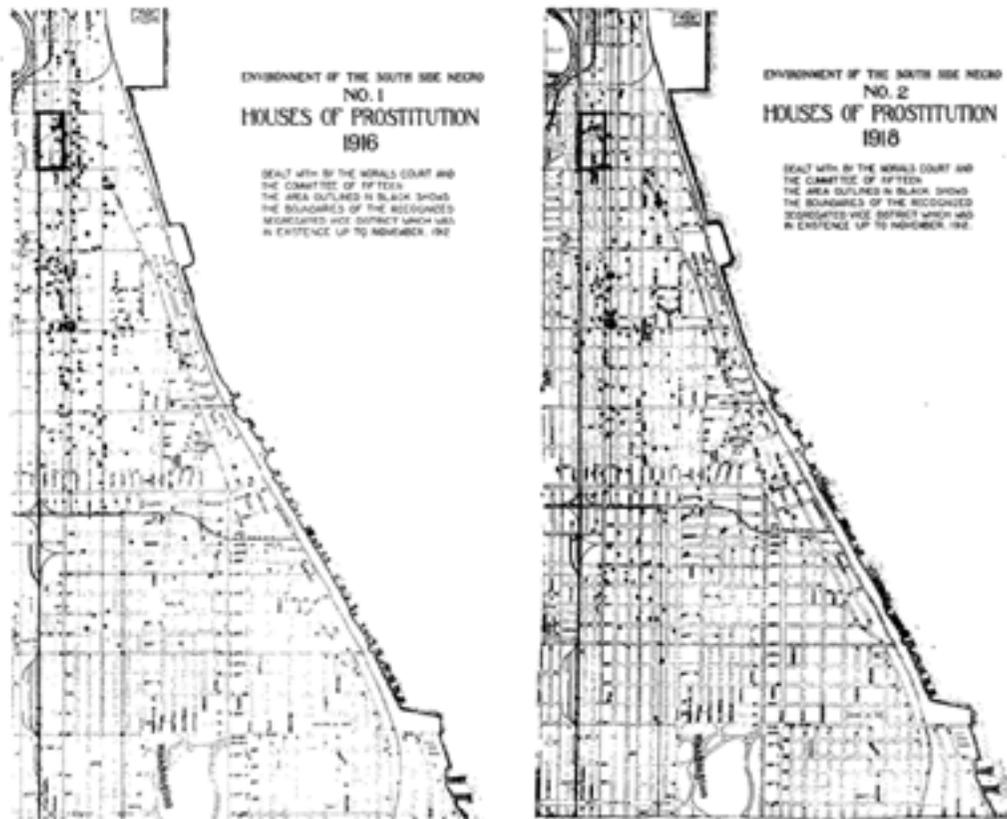


Figure 9. Maps showing houses of prostitution in 1916 (left) and 1918 (right), dealt with by the Chicago morals court and the Committee of Fifteen. On each map, the rectangular area outlined in black shows the boundaries of the segregated vice district, which was abolished in November 1912. Published in *The Negro in Chicago*, 342.

The Negro in Chicago sought to present “the danger inherent in the vicious environment in which Negroes are forced to live,”⁷⁶ arguing that black residents lacked sufficient power to protest against the encroachments of vice.⁷⁷ The maps showed that prostitution had gradually drifted southward since the segregated vice district was abolished in 1912, a movement that coincided with the expansion of the main areas of black residence. The maps thus rest on the implicit claim that vice is best understood not as a general rate within a neutrally defined population, but rather in terms of distinct and harmful processes affecting specific

⁷⁵ Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 346.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 621.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 344.

populations. Rather than being an inherent feature of black morality, the maps argued, vice was historically and socially contingent and specifically detrimental to black residents.

The Commission on Race Relations was not fundamentally antithetical to the Vice Commission – after all, Julius Rosenwald had been a member of the Vice Commission, and both groups relied on first-hand investigation and had a certain impulse toward reform. But the prostitution maps did make apparent the long-ranging effects of a pre-war municipal reform policy on Chicago’s black neighborhoods, which had now become a significant part of the city. In essence, by making visible the people it now affected, Johnson and the Commission put prostitution back on the map.

The maps were a subtle reminder, too, that race and class were not always aligned in physical space. Ninety percent of the black population in Chicago – which included lower-, middle-, and upper-class residents alike – lived in the “Black Belt” near the city’s former segregated vice district, partly because they had been excluded from white neighborhoods.⁷⁸ The report complained that the “entire population, good and bad, [was] thrown together.”⁷⁹ In its concluding recommendations, the Commission urged black members of the public to “vigorously and continuously protest” the presence of vice in their communities.⁸⁰

In this implicit appeal to moral rectitude, the Commission advocated a perspective that was not uniformly shared among advocates for racial justice at the time – namely, one that promoted assimilation into capitalist, white norms of social conduct, industriousness, and efficiency.⁸¹ This was consistent with the group’s strong ties to figures like Booker T. Washington, as opposed to W.E.B. Du Bois. In the Commission’s opinion, the black folk culture and mannerisms of recent migrants needed to be reformed according to urban norms of the North.⁸² The Commission attributed many of the clashes in public transit, for example, to the “blundering efforts of migrants to adjust themselves to northern city life.”⁸³ The Chicago Urban League, whose influence had come to bear significantly on the Commission’s work, devoted itself to “rehabilitating” such migrants into industrial workers and campaigned against barriers to their inclusion into the workforce.⁸⁴

At the outset of *The Negro in Chicago*, the Commission wrote that the black race must develop “from lower to higher planes of living; and must base its progress upon

78 Ibid., 621.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., 646.

81 Davarian L. Baldwin, *Chicago’s New Negroes* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 35.

82 Ibid.

83 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 621.

84 Johnson, 294.

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industry, efficiency, and moral character.”⁸⁵ The report’s accommodationist argument also led it to criticize black Chicagoans who expressed “race pride,” warning them that “thinking and talking too much in terms of race alone” would interfere with racial integration.⁸⁶ While the Commission argued for an understanding of race relation in terms of environmental and cultural factors, its specific response was one of social assimilation and remodeling at the individual level.

FROM CARTOGRAPHIC INTENT TO POLITICAL IMPACT

Proposing a vision of interracial harmony and “active opposition...to the spirit of antagonism and hatred,” *The Negro in Chicago* urged both races to pursue dispassionate and objective consideration of each other’s needs and aims.⁸⁷ The work received wide publicity and acclaim. Advertisements appeared in periodicals like *The Crisis*, the official NAACP publication,⁸⁸ and the *Chicago Defender* featured a full-page summary of the book and its recommendations. The newspaper commended the report’s “fair, wise and impartial” suggestions and applicability “to every state and city in the United States.”⁸⁹ Equally positive reviews appeared in *The New Republic* and *The Nation*. The first edition of the book, issued by the University of Chicago Press, sold out within three months despite high prices. Equally positive reviews appeared in *The New Republic* and *The Nation*.⁹⁰ The first edition of the book, issued by the University of Chicago Press, sold out within three months despite high prices.⁹¹

For twenty years after the report’s publication, the Commission’s suggestions guided the activity of social agencies like the Urban League and the YMCA.⁹² Yet, over the next few decades, racial boundaries became only more rigid as the color line became inscribed into property law and other areas of social and legal containment. For instance, racially restrictive covenants – enforceable contracts, rare in Chicago before the 1920s, that prohibited the sale of property to racial or ethnic minorities – became widespread.

85 Chicago Commission on Race Relations, xxiv.

86 *Ibid.*, 647.

87 *Ibid.*, 644.

88 Augustus Granville Dill, *The Crisis* 24, no. 3, January 1923, The Modernist Journals Project, Brown University and the University of Tulsa.

89 “Commission on Race Relations,” *The Chicago Defender*, October 7, 1922, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

90 Letter, Walter White to Edgar Bancroft, November 2, 1922, University of Chicago Press Records, box 104, folder 6.

91 Letter, G.R. Taylor to Francis Shepardson, March 14, 1923, University of Chicago Press Records.

92 Drake and Cayton, 69.

The Commission had gone to great lengths to incorporate an ethos of spatial accuracy and statistical science in its maps, hoping to combat public prejudice and seek practical solutions to issues of race relations. Even in the short term, however, the proclaimed objectivity of the Commission's maps did not necessarily translate into political action. As early as 1924, Arthur Evans noted in the *Chicago Tribune* that, despite the Commission's recommendations, housing for black residents remained a pressing issue.⁹³ As Christian Topalov writes, "If people and the spaces they occupy are reclassified, the aim is to reform them in new ways."⁹⁴ Had *The Negro in Chicago* been unsuccessful in this respect? Perhaps it had. Perhaps the report had overestimated the power of objective analysis, or underestimated the difficulty of inducing those in power to enact necessary social and political changes.

Still, the maps of Johnson and the Commission represent a unique approach that responded to the exigencies of a city in transformation. The diverse maps of the Commission under Charles S. Johnson were not so much simple descriptions of the city as racially conscious, inherently political, value-laden classifications of space and social relations. They made racial disparities, as well as attempts at racial adjustment, visible in the city. Moreover, they focused on race as a social and cultural, rather than biological, phenomenon. Whatever their shortcomings, the maps offered Chicago – an increasingly contested space – a different mode of understanding itself.

93 Arthur Evans, "Housing Still Chief Problem of Negro Here" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 25, 1924, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

94 Topalov, 420.

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TITLE IMAGE

Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*. 1922. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Available from: Flickr Commons, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/internetarchivebookimages/14782311184/>.



THE FORGOTTEN STRAND SOCIALISM IN THE SOUTHERN CONSERVATIVE TRADITION, 1850–1950

On the fringes of Southern intellectualism, migrating from university to university, mentor to mentor, a man named Richard Weaver is the entry point by which Daniel Judt, TD '18, brings us into the school of thought he has uncovered. Weaver was enamored with Southern tradition and the hierarchy and honor that came with it, and with socialism as a thoughtful stance against capitalism – and he held these positions at the same time. What makes this seeming contradiction so amazing is that it seems to have been repeated in thinkers throughout history, who saw a path to maintaining their Southern lifestyles in this seemingly far-fetched conjunction. In short portraits and well-traced legacies, Judt's thinkers come alive.

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On an autumn day in 1939, twenty-nine-year-old Richard Weaver was driving through the “monotonous prairies of Texas” when he experienced a “revelation.” Weaver was in the third year of a graduate teaching post at Texas A&M, and he felt intellectually lost. As an undergraduate at the University of Kentucky, he had become an ardent socialist. But then he entered Vanderbilt to pursue a master’s degree and studied under the Southern Agrarians, an informal group of twelve men best known for their manifesto in defense of Southern culture and traditionalist values, titled *I’ll Take My Stand*. Their influence had left him politically adrift, “poised between the two alternatives”: socialism and agrarianism. On that autumn day in 1939, Weaver made his decision. He realized that “clichés of liberalism...were becoming meaningless to me.”¹ He finished his year at Texas, packed his bags, and set out to “start [his] education over” as a late-but-happy convert from socialism to what he called the “church of Agrarianism.”²

Less than a decade later, Weaver – now a professor at the University of Chicago – published *Ideas Have Consequences*. The book was a jeremiad, a short but potent cry for the Old South that drew heavily on Weaver’s agrarianism. *Ideas* called on 1950s America to return to tradition – specifically, Southern tradition. By Southern tradition, he meant a society based on classical European thought: a civilization with hierarchy, moral absolutes, and small plots of private property – an anti-modern, anti-industrial America.³ Weaver’s little book left a sizeable mark on modern conservatism. *Ideas* drew praise from a parade of 1950s conservative intellectuals, including William F. Buckley, Jr., Russell Kirk, and Willmoore Kendall.⁴ Richard Regnery later called *Ideas* one of three books that “provided the intellectual basis for the modern conservative movement,” therefore making one of modern conservatism’s founding fathers a socialist turned Agrarian.⁵

Part of the foundation of Weaver’s “revelation” was his realization that Agrarian values stood in direct opposition to socialist ones. As he later wrote, the Agrarians were a

1 Richard Weaver, “Up From Liberalism,” in *Modern Age* 3 (1958–59): 23–24. http://www.mmsi.org/ma/03_01/weaver.pdf

2 Quoted in John J. Langdale III, *Superfluous Southerners: Cultural Conservatism and the South, 1920-1990* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2012), 88.

3 Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

4 George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 41; Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 94.

5 George Nash, “The Influence of Ideas Have Consequences on the Conservative Intellectual Movement in America” in *Steps Toward Restoration: The Consequences of Richard Weaver’s Ideas*, ed. Ted J. Smith (Wilmington, Delaware: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1998), 82.

“brilliant group” with positions “antithetical in almost every point to socialism.”⁶ To today’s reader, this makes perfect sense. We think of socialism and conservatism as nemeses, situated at opposite ends of the political spectrum. Yet the Southern-traditionalist position on socialism and communism was never quite so simple. When Weaver wrote *Ideas*, he contributed to a century-long trend of Southern traditionalists treating socialism as both friend and foe in their fight against Northern industrial values. Most immediately, Weaver drew on the Agrarians of *I’ll Take My Stand*, but both he and the Agrarians also owe their own fight against industrial corrosion – and their complex relationship with socialism – to an even older Old South thinker: George Fitzhugh, who defended slavery and Southern culture in the 1850s as nothing less than “the best and most common form of socialism.”⁷

If Weaver’s influence on modern conservatism is as significant as advertised – and I believe it is – we ought to look carefully at his intellectual influences. When we do, we find a group of anti-industrial, traditionalist Southerners who searched for a way to transcend sectionalism and gain national recognition. In their effort to reach beyond the South, those thinkers – starting with Fitzhugh and running all the way through Weaver’s Agrarian professors at Vanderbilt – wrestled with their relationship to socialism, sometimes even clinging to a tortured affection for socialism’s more successful critique of industrial capitalism. In the end, Richard Weaver brought this heritage out of the Old South and introduced it into modern American conservatism. The problem is that American historians cemented the idea of a Liberal Tradition just as Southern traditionalism found a national platform. Historians wrote Fitzhugh and the Agrarians out of American intellectual history at the precise moment that Weaver wrote them in.

II

Richard Malcolm Weaver grew up a Southerner and a socialist. Raised in Weaver-ville (named after his great-grandfather, Montraville Weaver) and Lexington, Kentucky, Weaver enrolled in the University of Kentucky in 1928. There, he joined the Liberal Club and wrote a proudly leftist column for the college newspaper, the *Kentucky Kernal*.⁸ Though Weaver later blamed his left-wing professors for his liberalism, calling them “Social democrats... [who] read and circulated *The Nation*,” at the time he remained “persuaded entirely that the future was with science, liberalism, and egalitarianism, and that all opposed to these trends were people of ignorance and malevolence.”⁹

In one of his *Kernal* articles in 1930, Weaver reviewed a controversial new book

6 Weaver, “Up from Liberalism,” 23.

7 George Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society: Or, Sociology of the South* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1854), 72.

8 Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 87.

9 Weaver, “Up from Liberalism,” 22.

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that had just come out of Vanderbilt University, some 200 miles south of Lexington: *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*. The book was a defense of traditional Southern values, a cry against materialism, a lashing out against industrial capitalism. Weaver wasn't sure what to make of it. In his review for the *Kernal*, he noted that the Southerner in him appreciated the Agrarians' refutation of the South's "intellectual barrenness," and added that his socialism meant that their critique of capitalism appealed to him.¹⁰ But the book's traditionalist values – the constant praise of hierarchy and aristocratic social order – were too much. Weaver concluded that *I'll Take My Stand* was a "striking if ineffectual rally against the onward sweep of industrialism."¹¹ Though he may not have realized it at the time, Weaver's uncertain review of Agrarianism mirrored the Agrarians' own wavering feelings on socialism.

At first, though, Weaver did not seem all that concerned with the Agrarians; his focus was socialism. In 1932, he graduated from Kentucky and joined the American Socialist Party.¹² He served for two years as the local Party Secretary, enthusiastically campaigning for socialist presidential candidate Norman Thomas.¹³ But at the same time, he began to feel disillusioned. "I discovered that although the socialist program had a certain intellectual appeal for me," he later recalled, "the members of the movement as persons... seemed dry, insistent people, of shallow objectives."¹⁴

In those same two years, Weaver began a master's in literature at Vanderbilt under the direction of the Agrarian John Crowe Ransom, one of the principal architects of *I'll Take My Stand*. He also met other Agrarians – including Donald Davidson, with whom he corresponded long after he left Vanderbilt – and found "that although I disagreed with these men on matters of social and political doctrine, I liked them all as persons."¹⁵ Weaver read Ransom's other works.¹⁶ He began to suspect that traditionalism had something to say, and that the Agrarians were the first group in a long time to say it well. He left Vanderbilt four years later, conflicted and uncertain. Then, on the road to Texas, came his "conversion" to Agrarianism.¹⁷

10 Clifford Amyx and Richard Weaver, "Looking Over the Magazines," *Kentucky Kernel*, August 7, 1931, in *In Defense of Tradition: Collected Shorter Writings of Richard M. Weaver*, ed. Ted J. Smith (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000), 25.

11 *Loc. Cit.*

12 Weaver, "Up from Liberalism," 22.

13 Fred Douglas Young, *Richard M. Weaver, 1910–1963: A Life of the Mind* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1995), 3.

14 Weaver, "Up from Liberalism," 22. Of note, however, is that Weaver did not say he left socialism because of its ideas. It was the people who turned him off.

15 *Loc. Cit.* In other words, the polar opposite of his feelings about socialists.

16 Weaver was particularly struck by Ransom's *God Without Thunder: An Unorthodox Defense of Orthodoxy* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1930).

17 *Ibid.*, 24. "Conversion" is Weaver's word.

The Agrarians, as they came to be known after *I'll Take My Stand*, were a loose group of twelve Southern intellectuals. Their leaders – John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Donald Davidson – were all at Vanderbilt in 1930. All coming from different perspectives in different fields of study, they had spent the 1920s growing increasingly determined to defend the South and her traditional values against what they saw as insidious Northern industrialism.¹⁸

By the 1920s, that Northern industrialism had begun to creep into the South. “New South” politics – famously popularized by Henry Grady and other postbellum Southern thinkers – called for a robust Southern industry that could keep pace with Northern capitalism and bring the South out of poverty. Davidson, Ransom, and Tate believed that the New South pandered to Northern industrial values that would destroy whatever was left of true, traditional Southern society. They wanted none of it.¹⁹

In 1929, when the Great Depression shook America’s faith in laissez-faire capitalism, Ransom and Davidson saw an opportunity to promote their own model. They began writing to their friends and gathering voices for a collection of essays.²⁰ In a letter to a promising former student, Robert Penn Warren, Davidson laid out the Agrarian model:

What we propose to do is set forth the fundamentals of a provincial, decentralized, local, agrarian life as opposed to the dominant brand of “American” life, which is industrial, “big city”...Though the battle is centered in the South, we shan’t hesitate to make a broad appeal that will attract restive spirits in all parts of the country...we shall not be “Southern” sectionalists merely, but philosophic sectionalists, upholding a fundamental rural economy, with ramifications in all directions.²¹

The idea of a “broad appeal” was crucial. The Agrarians intended to use the South as a model for their vision of a good society. But they would aim their message at all Americans – especially the industrial North. This meant breaking free from Old South tropes. Allen Tate emphasized in an interview: “I do not want to restore any previous age. I do not

18 Paul Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 2–3. Conkin provides a narrow but excellent account of the development of the Agrarians as a group and as individuals. For the Agrarian influence on Weaver, see Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*.

19 For an overview of the New South movement and its origins, see Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

20 Donald Davidson to Robert Penn Warren, 20 January 1930, in Robert Penn Warren Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Box 21, Folder 399).

21 *Loc. Cit.*

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want to restore anything whatsoever. It is our task to create something.”²² Davidson’s proposal worked. Warren, and nine other Southerners, accepted the call to arms.

The Agrarians’ urge to reinvigorate traditionalism caused an argument over the title of their manifesto. Davidson and Ransom liked *I’ll Take My Stand*, a clear reference to the Southern song “Dixie”: “In Dixie’s land, I’ll take my stand, to live and die in Dixie.” But when Warren got wind of this, he balked. The title, he wrote to Tate, was “the goddamnest thing [he] had ever heard of... block it if you can.”²³ Tate agreed—an appeal to “Dixie” would tar the Agrarians with Old South nostalgia. He, Warren, and Andrew Lytle—another contributor—proposed an alternative: *Tracts Against Communism*.²⁴

The title dispute reveals a tension in Agrarian thought. Industrial capitalism ran directly counter to Agrarian values; that much was clear. But how to handle socialism in all its forms? As Weaver argued in the review he wrote for the *Kentucky Kernel*, socialists and Agrarians had something very powerful in common: a critique of the industrial system.²⁵ On the other hand, the Agrarians had no patience for socialism’s egalitarianism and intrusive State. And there remained the strategic question: if the Agrarians wanted to break from an Old South mold and appeal to a national audience, whom should they declare their main enemy? Davidson and others thought that Tate and Warren had it wrong. The true Agrarian opponent was industrial liberalism, not its communist foe. In the end, Davidson’s camp won. *I’ll Take My Stand* hit the shelves in 1930.²⁶

Much of the Agrarian cause was standard European traditionalism filtered through a Southern lens. The book’s introduction, authored by Ransom but signed by all twelve Agrarians, distilled its argument to a simple motto: “Agrarian *versus* Industrial.”²⁷ Industrialism had poisoned American life. Traditional values—of family, of natural hierarchy, of small plots of private land and the American yeoman—had gone by the wayside, replaced by an urge for progress that left laborers in the dust and corroded human relations. The South, Ransom and his collaborators argued, stood fast as the final holdout, still defending true conservative principles.

But the Agrarians’ most original argument—and the one most likely to catch a young Richard Weaver’s eye—concerned communism. Perhaps as a compromise of sorts, Ransom claimed that communism was the logical end of capitalist industrialism, thereby

22 Allen Tate, “Letter to Grace Lumpkin,” *New Republic* (May 27, 1936) 75, quoted in Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 62.

23 Quoted in Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 43.

24 Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians*, 71.

25 Amyx and Weaver, “Looking Over the Magazines,” *Kentucky Kernel*, August 7, 1931, in ed. Smith, *In Defense of Tradition*, 25.

26 Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians*, 71. Davidson and Ransom did allow Tate to add a footnote at the beginning of his essay expressing his dissent.

27 Twelve Southerners, *I’ll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* (New York: Harper Torchbook Edition, 1962), xix.

combining two enemies into one. “Communists... are Industrialists themselves,” he wrote. “We therefore look upon the Communist menace as a menace indeed, but not as a Red one.” Forget the Soviets; America was already on its way to becoming communist from *within*, thanks to “the blind drift of our industrial development.”²⁸

One essay in particular, “The Philosophy of Progress” by psychologist Lyle Lanier, laid bare the Agrarian view of socialism and communism (it’s worth noting that Weaver believed Lanier’s was the “most penetrating essay” in *I’ll Take My Stand*).²⁹ Lanier analyzed the philosophy of John Dewey, whom he identified as a socialist. He deemed Dewey’s critique of contemporary society “admirable.”³⁰ But when it came to curing America’s industrial disease, Lanier accused Dewey of trying to introduce a utopian socialism and, worse, of trying to “*remake human nature* to secure it.”³¹ What would happen instead, Lanier went on to say, was a “centralization of political power...[that would] offer even greater possibilities of economic domination.”³² This was Ransom’s argument from the introduction. Socialism provided a useful and correct diagnosis of capitalist ills. Its proposed solution, though, could only work in an alternate universe where humans were not inherently hierarchical, local beings. In America, socialism would inevitably morph into a kind of ultra-industrialism: instead of big business oppressing laborers and encouraging an unsavory devotion to materialism, the State would take over and encourage identical values.

I’ll Take My Stand never enjoyed the national success Davidson had hoped for in his letter to Warren. The Agrarians sparked momentary controversy and interest, but almost no one penned a favorable critique. Reviewers dismissed the Agrarians as neo-Confederates, utopians, and amusing reactionaries.³³ Just as Davidson had feared, *I’ll Take My Stand* quickly became known as a book by twelve sectional Southerners. Tate acknowledged that the Agrarians themselves were to blame. In a letter to a fellow Agrarian, he admitted,

28 Ibid, xxiii. The reader will note (and has perhaps already noted) that I play fast-and-loose with “socialism” and “communism,” often using the two terms as synonymous and sometimes switching quickly from one to the other. A longer essay on this topic would address the ways in which definitions of “socialism” and “communism” changed in Southern traditionalist writings from 1850 to 1950. For now, though, suffice it to say that the Agrarians themselves never agreed on how to distinguish “socialism” from “communism”—indeed, they never really defined either term. One could reasonably say, though, that for the Agrarians “socialism” meant a critique of industrial capitalism based on (problematic) egalitarian principles. “Communism” was the outcome of this socialist critique. It helps to know that Tate instructed Ransom to avoid criticizing “socialism” in the introduction to *I’ll Take My Stand*, but still argued vehemently for *Tracts Against Communism* as a title (Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians*, 74).

29 Richard Weaver, “The Southern Phoenix,” *Georgia Review* 17 (1963), 12.

30 Lyle Lanier, “The Philosophy of Progress” in *I’ll Take My Stand*, 140.

31 Ibid, 142 (original emphasis).

32 *Loc. Cit.*

33 Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians*, 86, 90.

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“we made the South, and especially the Old South, an object of idolatry.”³⁴

But Tate might also have implicated the Agrarian dispute over how to handle the relation of socialism and capitalism. Ransom’s merging of socialism and capitalism was clever, but it also made for an introduction that lashed out at both conservative Northern industrialists and socialists—the two main blocks the Agrarians would need to attract to transcend their Southern traditionalist roots. In a sense, there was not much to be done about this paradox. The Agrarians wanted to reach beyond the South. But Agrarian thought truly did oppose industrialism and socialism. Weaver noticed this inherent flaw. He later noted that *I’ll Take My Stand* was “both anti-socialist and anti-capitalist.” As a result, the Agrarian tract appeared “obnoxious or incomprehensible to many.”³⁵ Weaver saw this as a strategic, as opposed to theoretical, problem. It was perfectly coherent for the Agrarians to be both anti-capitalist and anti-socialist. But that stance did not do any favors for their reception.

In 1941, Davidson penned a mournful letter to all members of the group: *I’ll Take My Stand* was out of print. As a closing remark, Davidson bemoaned the “non-participation of those who ten years and even five years ago spoke out boldly, and were looked to by many interested persons.”³⁶ The Agrarians, it seemed, had stood down.

III

After his revelation in Texas, Richard Weaver headed straight for Louisiana State University. The choice was a deliberate one. Baton Rouge had become what one historian called “a second home to Agrarianism.”³⁷ Weaver sought out renowned literary critic and Agrarian sympathizer Cleanth Brooks as his dissertation advisor.³⁸ From 1940 to 1943, he worked tirelessly on what he hoped would become a publishable history of conservatism in the postbellum South. He titled his dissertation “The Confederate South, 1865–1910: A Study in the Survival of a Mind and a Culture.”³⁹

The marks of Agrarianism on Weaver’s writing were hard to miss. Weaver maintained that the antebellum South was “*the last non-materialist civilization in the Western world,*”

34 Tate quoted in Eugene Warner, “South is U.S. Literary Center, Asserts Allen Tate, Noted Poet,” *Washington Post*, 5 January 1937, 13.

35 Weaver, “Southern Phoenix,” 7.

36 Donald Davidson, letter to Authors of *I’ll Take My Stand*, 3 January 1941, in Robert Penn Warren Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Box 21, Folder 399).

37 Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 89.

38 Young, *Richard M. Weaver*, 3.

39 Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 89–90. Weaver’s dissertation was published posthumously under the title *The Southern Tradition at Bay*.

struggling “against the modern.”⁴⁰ With the South’s defeat in the Civil War, the region had come under attack from the “secular spirit of science, materialism, and democracy.”⁴¹ In particular, Weaver bemoaned the downfall of what he termed “Southern feudalism... [which] possessed stability, an indispensable condition for positive values.”⁴² His words could have come straight from *I’ll Take My Stand*.

Unlike the Agrarians, though, Weaver then implicated the South in its own downfall. The antebellum South had failed to recognize its “metaphysical foundation.” In other words, Weaver argued that Southern thinkers did not understand what they were fighting for. The South, Weaver claimed, “is in the curious position of having been right without realizing the grounds for its rightness.”⁴³ Southerners were too preoccupied defending slavery and the Old South to notice that the true threat was to their traditional values.

And yet this Southern shortcoming was not without exceptions. Weaver praised one thinker who *did* recognize what Southern conservatism sought to conserve. It was George Fitzhugh, Weaver wrote, who, in his socialist defense of the South, provided a “remarkable foreshadowing of the modern corporate state.”⁴⁴ This remark was telling: Fitzhugh’s thought exerted a clear and present influence on Weaver’s writing from his dissertation onward – when it came to the South, but especially when it came to socialism.

Born in 1806 in the heart of tidewater Virginia, Fitzhugh had only the beginnings of a formal education (field school) before settling down to read law and move to his wife’s house in Port Royal. He owned a few slaves through his marriage, but he was no planter. Instead, he holed up in his local practice and produced a simply prolific amount of fascinating, original, and wildly repetitive proslavery writing.⁴⁵

40 Richard Weaver, *The Southern Tradition at Bay: A History of Postbellum Thought* (New York: Arlington House, 1968), 388–90.

41 *Ibid.*, 110.

42 *Ibid.*, 57.

43 *Ibid.*, 388–90.

44 *Ibid.*, 35, quoted in Young, *Richard M. Weaver*, 79.

45 Michael O’Brien, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 972–73; see also Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 341. The only biography of Fitzhugh is Harvey Wish’s *George Fitzhugh: Propagandist of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1943). Because Fitzhugh’s education, travel, and correspondence were so limited, we need not scrounge around for hints to the origins of his ideas. Fitzhugh himself said he drew only from the Bible, Aristotle, and “our own successful experiment” – by which he meant the antebellum American South. He also read and frequently referenced Thomas Carlyle, whose biting critique of industrialism in British society Fitzhugh found spot-on. Fitzhugh insisted over and over that he pretended to no philosophy, hoping only

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Fitzhugh entered Southern proslavery thought at a crucial moment. By the 1850s, writers like Henry Hughes, George Frederick Holmes, and James Hammond had taken once-disparate arguments for their peculiar institution and unified them into a single, traditionalist defense.⁴⁶ This coalescing of proslavery ideology came as a response to an ever-greater threat from the North. By the 1850s, proslavery thinkers believed their society was under siege. Industrialization had reached its zenith in Western Europe and the American North. With it came a wave of anti-slavery thought, which in the United States soon cohered into Northern abolitionism. At the same time, socialism—then a wide-ranging movement responding to the brutal inequalities of unchecked industrial capitalism—began to catch on in earnest, especially in Europe. It was into this world of tectonic shifts in thought that Fitzhugh entered in the 1850s, eager to yell “stop!” to history and drive the argument for slavery to its most extreme conclusions.⁴⁷

Even more than the Agrarians, much of Fitzhugh’s thought is standard anti-Enlightenment traditionalism. He believed man was a naturally social creature, “born a member of society.” He railed against “freedom” and “rights.” Man “has no rights whatever, as opposed to the interests of society...whatever rights he has are subordinate to the good of the whole,” he wrote in his first book, *Failure of Free Society*.⁴⁸ The Declaration of Independence, Locke, Jefferson—Fitzhugh attacked them all. The notion of “liberty” ran counter to basic human nature. Man was “born [society’s] slave⁴⁹, and had no rights to cede.”⁵⁰

By Fitzhugh’s definition, almost everyone in society—save rich, educated white males—was a slave. Slavery simply meant the forfeiture of liberty to “a common despotic head or ruler.”⁵¹ It was a good and natural state. Different people were meant to be slaves to different masters. Blacks were domestic slaves. Women were slaves to their husbands. And masters, in a contorted twist, were slaves to their slaves.⁵² They felt obligated to protect

to “point out what is natural and universal” through observation and avid reading of British journals.

46 *Loc. Cit.*

47 I owe much of this hasty, wholly imperfect summary of mid-nineteenth century Western thought to two works. *The Anti-Slavery Debate*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) explores the link between anti-slavery and proindustrial thought. Drew Faust’s introduction to *The Ideology of Slavery* offers a look at this same moment from the view of proslavery Southerners.

48 Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society*, 26.

49 *Ibid.*, 25, 178.

50 *Ibid.*, 26.

51 *Ibid.*, 61.

52 Though this part of Fitzhugh’s argument might look like a revision of Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, there’s no evidence the Virginian ever read Hegel. There is some debate as to whether he encountered Karl Marx’s work. Harvey Wish insists Fitzhugh read Marx’s early work, some of which had been translated into English by the late 1850s. Edmund Wilson, citing Wish, agrees

their property; the master “loves them [the slaves] because they are his.”⁵³ A society was good when everyone felt an obligation to someone else. This “association of labor” ensured that the strong would provide for the weak. “Slavery without domestic affection,” Fitzhugh conceded, “would be a curse.”⁵⁴

Slavery without domestic affection was precisely what Fitzhugh believed had taken hold in the North. The Virginian used “free society,” “free trade,” and “free competition” interchangeably to refer to what we now know as industrial capitalism: “private ownership of the means of production and the freedom of the laborer to sell his labor power,” in the definition of one historian.⁵⁵ Fitzhugh believed such a system was not only against human nature, but also that it abused most of its members, especially the poorest ones: “The free laborer is excluded...shelterless, naked, and hungry, he is exposed to the bleak winds, the cold rains, and hot sun of heaven.”⁵⁶ Without the familial bonds of a slave society, humans turned on each other, and the strong overpowered the weak. “It has been justly observed,” he wrote, “that under this system the rich are continually growing richer and the poor poorer.”⁵⁷

It is here that Fitzhugh arrives at the most striking and original piece of his argument: an unflinching embrace of socialism. By socialism, Fitzhugh meant any system that “provide[s] for sick and unfortunate members” of society.⁵⁸ British conservative philosopher Thomas Carlyle was a socialist. So was Louis Napoleon. So were abolitionists.⁵⁹ Anyone remotely anti-laissez-faire or anti-industry could qualify.⁶⁰ This gave slavery and socialism a common enemy, and from there Fitzhugh made his boldest leap, one he repeated dozens of times in his works:

Socialism proposes to do away with free competition; to afford protection

(Wilson, *Patriotic Gore*, 344). But Eugene Genovese refuted Wish, convincingly arguing that despite some of Fitzhugh’s ideas about capitalism strongly resembling Marx’s, there is no concrete evidence whatsoever that Fitzhugh had encountered the German philosopher (Eugene Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation*, [New York: Pantheon, 1969], 183).

53 Ibid., 46.

54 Ibid., 106.

55 Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 165.

56 Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society*, 107.

57 Ibid., 13.

58 Ibid., 44.

59 Ibid., 45, 291.

60 Fitzhugh’s definition of socialism is perhaps even broader and foggier than the Agrarians’. Though he mostly uses “socialism” and not “communism,” he occasionally opts for the latter, and one gets the sense that he means the same thing with either word. Genovese breaks down Fitzhugh’s socialisms into three categories: proletarian, feudal, and bourgeois. I suspect these categories are more Genovese’s than they are Fitzhugh’s..

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and support at all times to the laboring class; to bring about, at least, a qualified community of property, and to associate labor. All these purposes, slavery fully and perfectly attains.⁶¹

Human nature demanded a society with hierarchy and feudal protection. Industrial capitalism sought to remove the protection, thereby brutalizing human relations. Socialists wanted to break down capitalism and institute associative labor; so did slavery. And so Fitzhugh proposed an unlikely, but in his mind perfectly logical, alliance. Socialists and traditionalists; the far-left and far-right. He returned ceaselessly to socialism's similarities to slavery in *Failure of Free Society*, tugging at socialists' sleeves: didn't they see that railing against free society necessarily implied favoring slavery?

Fitzhugh's motivation for insisting on such strange bedfellows was at least in part strategic. He was an avid reader of British periodicals, and knew of the 1848 revolutions that had swept Europe by the time he wrote *Failure of Free Society* in 1854.⁶² He doubtless recognized—and perhaps envied—socialism's success against his capitalist foes.

Strategy aside, however, there's no reason to doubt that Fitzhugh genuinely believed socialism was the traditionalist Southerner's intellectual partner. *Failure of Free Society* is a revealing title; the greatest threat to the values Fitzhugh sought to defend came from industrial capitalism. He had only to convince socialists of this truth. "Our only quarrel with Socialism," Fitzhugh concluded, "is that it will not honestly admit that it...is seeking to bring about slavery again in some form."⁶³

Just three years later, though, Fitzhugh's tone toward socialism shifted. In his second book, *Cannibals, All! Or, Slaves without Masters*, Fitzhugh contradicted his proposed partnership with socialism: "We think that by a kind of alliance, offensive and defensive, with the South, *Northern Conservatism* may now arrest and turn back the tide of Radicalism and Agrarianism" [emphasis added].⁶⁴ Either Fitzhugh had radically revised his view on industrial capitalism (he had not), or something strange was at play. Why the sudden shift away from a sympathetic stance on socialism, and why the olive branch to Fitzhugh's arch nemesis, the Northern industrialists?

In *Cannibals*, Fitzhugh presented socialism as the gravest of threats. The socialist critique of capitalism was still correct ("the works of the socialists contain the true defence of slavery").⁶⁵ But the socialist endgame would be an utter disaster. Socialists and com-

61 Ibid., 48.

62 Wilson, *Patriotic Gore*, 344; Wish, George Fitzhugh, 71.

63 Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society*, 70.

64 George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals, All! Or, Slaves without Masters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press edition, 1960), 245.

65 Ibid., 21.

munists “are as presumptuous as the anatomist who should attempt to create a man...they would heal the diseases of society by destroying its most vital functions.”⁶⁶ In a chapter he called his “trump card,” Fitzhugh accused the Northern socialist-abolitionists of seeking to abolish “husband and wife, parent and child, the institution of private property of all kinds...and the institution of Christian churches...[they attempt] to upset and reorganize society in the North.”⁶⁷ Socialism had arrived at its horrid conclusion, a nihilism that eliminated not just capitalism, but *all* forms of structure and hierarchy – including the natural ones.

Once again, Fitzhugh’s title proves helpful. “Slaves without masters” was a reference to the capitalist laborer, stripped of his protective overseer.⁶⁸ However, it was also a reference to socialism, which Fitzhugh described in *Failure of Free Society* as “slavery in all save the master.”⁶⁹ Socialism had become an extreme form of capitalism. Free society perverted natural values; socialism destroyed them. And so perhaps Fitzhugh’s about-face was primarily intellectual. By 1857, he believed socialism to be *more* hostile to his cause than the conservative, industry-loving north. Ransom’s argument in the introduction of *I’ll Take My Stand* was not so original after all.

And yet Fitzhugh’s treatment of socialism never quite mirrored the Agrarians’. Fitzhugh knew he had to attract Northern sympathy for his cause. Unlike the Agrarians, he always played a strategic hand. If he condemned Northern industrialism with all his might, he sympathized with socialists. If he turned on socialism, he extended a hand to Northern conservatives (though no doubt holding his own nose while he did). Historian Eugene Genovese suggests Fitzhugh’s reversal on Northern conservatism “constituted a strategic holding operation.”⁷⁰ Fitzhugh saw industrial capitalism was winning and civil war looming, and so made a last-ditch effort to preserve his traditional Southern system by uniting against a new common enemy: socialists. My own sense is that Genovese’s hunch seems right. We know Fitzhugh thought strategically about how he ought to present his argument to a Northern audience.⁷¹ It’s possible the stubborn Virginian realized that if he

66 Ibid., 22.

67 Ibid., 85.

68 Ibid., 38.

69 Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society*, 70.

70 Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 232.

71 The question of how best to engage with a Northern audience was always on Fitzhugh’s mind. “I see great evils in slavery,” Fitzhugh once confessed to his close friend and fellow pro-slavery intellectual George Frederick Holmes, “but I think in a controversial work I ought not to admit them” (quoted in Faust, ed. *The Ideology of Slavery*, 6). We also know that Fitzhugh subscribed to abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison’s *The Liberator* (Calvin Schermerhorn, “George Fitzhugh,” in *Encyclopedia Virginia*: http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Fitzhugh_George_1806-1881).

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could swallow his pride and convince Northern industrialists to align themselves with the South, he might be able to preserve at least some element of his traditional society.

Either way, Fitzhugh acknowledged what the Agrarians would cautiously skirt: conservative traditionalists shared more with socialists than they did with conservative capitalists. Richard Weaver, the former socialist, probably understood Fitzhugh's conflicted affection for socialism more than most modern readers. But Weaver the Southerner probably understood Fitzhugh's eventual attempt at a Northern conservative alliance. Seventy years before Donald Davidson and the Agrarians set out to export traditionalist Southern conservatism to a larger American audience, Fitzhugh had followed the same instinct. Weaver, reading Fitzhugh in Louisiana under Agrarian tutelage, may well have recognized that the antebellum Virginian had grappled with the heart of the Southern conservative dilemma. To transcend its regional roots, Southern conservatism had to pick an imperfect ally: socialists or Northern industrialists? For Fitzhugh and the Agrarians, there was no good solution.

Like the Agrarians after him, Fitzhugh remained stuck in his time and place. In the 1860s, his writing grew acerbic and desperate. "We begin a great conservative reaction," he desperately proclaimed in 1863 as his South slowly crumbled under Union forces.⁷² His racism, always present beneath his traditionalist grumblings, grew harsher.⁷³ He lived until 1881, long enough to see Henry Grady's New South take hold and his beloved Southern traditionalism attacked from within its own ranks. A century later, in 1960, historian C. Vann Woodward wrote: "In the America of the post-Civil War period, admittedly, it is impossible to imagine a more completely irrelevant and thoroughly neglected thinker than George Fitzhugh."⁷⁴

IV

One autumn morning of 1945, Richard Weaver sat down at his desk in Ingleside Hall at the University of Chicago.⁷⁵ The Second World War had just ended; modernism and the modern world were in shambles. Perhaps Weaver thought of his dissertation, of Fitzhugh, and the Agrarians. He wondered "whether it would not be possible to deduce, from fundamental causes, the fallacies of modern life." He took a few notes, and *Ideas*

72 Fitzhugh quoted in Louis Hartz, *The American Liberal Tradition* (New York: Harcourt, 1955), 145.

73 Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 235.

74 C. Vann Woodward, "George Fitzhugh: Sui Generis," introduction to Fitzhugh, *Cannibals, All!*, vii.

75 In Weaver's autobiographical essay, "Up from Liberalism," almost every major turning point in Weaver's life seems to have occurred on an autumn morning.

Have Consequences was born.⁷⁶

Perhaps more than any of Weaver's other writing, *Ideas* reflected a mix of Agrarian and Fitzhughian heritage. Weaver described a dark world plagued by "modern disintegration," where "modern man has become a moral idiot."⁷⁷ This world "desires to believe again in value and obligation."⁷⁸ Those values and obligations make up a laundry list of demands straight out of Weaver's Southern traditionalist lineage. A belief in absolute morals; "structure," which meant "hierarchy"; fraternity, which sounded exactly like Fitzhugh's "association"; religion; family; small plots of private property. I am hardly the first person to point out these links.⁷⁹ But few – if any – historians have bothered to look carefully at Weaver's treatment of socialism in *Ideas*. It is there that the influence of Agrarians and Fitzhugh shines brightest.

Weaver confronted the same Southern conservative dilemma as Fitzhugh and the Agrarians when it came to communism and industrialism. At first glance, he appears to have chosen the Agrarian approach. Weaver labeled socialist thought "the materialistic offspring of bourgeois capitalism." Like the Agrarians, he insisted that "socialism, whose goal is materialism... [turns] authoritarian; that is to say, it is willing to institute control by dictation in order to raise living standards and not disappoint the consumptive soul."⁸¹ This sounded like Lanier and Ransom, redux. Capitalism and socialism were reaching for the same materialist values. The former would breed the latter, and neither would work.

However, Weaver could not quite bring himself to lump the socialists – or at least the communists – in with capitalist liberals.⁸² "Hating this world they never made, after its debauchery of centuries, the modern Communists – revolutionaries and logicians – move toward intellectual rigor," he wrote.⁸³ "In their decision lies the sharpest reproach

76 Weaver, "Up from Liberalism," 30.

77 Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1955), v, 1.

78 *Ibid.*, vi.

79 For example, George Nash: "In his mordant criticisms of industrialism and technology, in his negative appraisal of urban man and urban living, and in his plea for a society based on 'distinction and hierarchy,' he resembled no one so much as the authors of the agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand*."

80 Weaver, *Ideas*, 37.

81 *Ibid.*, 125.

82 In keeping with Fitzhugh and the Agrarians, Weaver never settled on firm definitions of "socialism" and "communism." It seems fair to hazard, however, that for Weaver socialism came to mean something closer to social democracy (synonymous with "meaningless clichés of liberalism," as he put it) while communism, by the time he wrote *Ideas Have Consequences*, resembled a purer form of communitarian, anti-capitalist thought. Here, as I did with Fitzhugh and the Agrarians, I've chosen to treat the terms as interchangeable.

83 *Ibid.*, 9.

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yet to the desertion of intellect...nothing is more disturbing to modern men of the West than the logical clarity with which the Communists face all problems.”⁸⁴ And Weaver went on: “they [the communists] have never lost sight of the fact that life is a struggle... [communism] has generated a body of ideas with a terrifying power to spread.”⁸⁵

These are decidedly un-Agrarian sentiments. Yet they echo an early Fitzhugh. Weaver seemed to take pleasure in taunting the “modern men of the West” (Fitzhugh’s “Northern conservatives”) with the communist threat. His praise for communism’s “intellectual rigor,” “logical clarity,” and “body of ideas” suggests that Fitzhugh – whom Weaver at one point cites – might have worked his way into *Ideas*.⁸⁶

“Monopoly capitalism must be condemned along with communism,” Weaver wrote.⁸⁷ And indeed, he indeed attacked monopoly capitalism without mercy. But – in perfect keeping with Fitzhugh – Weaver never subjected communism to the same wrath. The worst enemy of *true* conservatism was not communism. It was the industrialist North.

In 1955, seven years after Weaver made clear his rejection of Northern conservatives, the conservative North reached out to him. Weaver received a letter from William F. Buckley, Jr. The letter sought Weaver’s support. Buckley wanted to establish a new conservative magazine, a project not only to “renew the attack on the Left, but to consolidate the Right.”⁸⁸ Buckley called this strategy “fusionism,” and he aimed to bridge the divide between (mostly Northern) free market libertarians and (mostly Southern) traditionalists to form a united conservative front.⁸⁹ Here it was: Fitzhugh’s “alliance” with Northern conservatives, a century later. From 1955 until his death in 1963, Weaver wrote thirty-six articles for Buckley’s *National Review*.⁹⁰

Just as Fitzhugh had done in the 1850s, Weaver tempered whatever affection for socialism he had left. He argued against integration on the grounds that “‘integration’ and ‘communization’ are, after all, pretty closely synonymous...the first may be little more

84 *Loc. Cit.*

85 *Ibid.*, 122.

86 *Ibid.*, 182.

87 *Ibid.*, 134.

88 Buckley quoted in Langdale, *Superfluous Southerners*, 94.

89 The term “fusionism” is commonly attributed to Buckley’s co-editor at the *National Review*, Frank Meyer. But Buckley quickly assumed the role of fusionist-in-chief. “More than any other man it was Buckley...who personified fusionism,” writes George Nash (Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement*, 184. For a complete discussion of fusionism, see Nash, 170–185).

90 Nash, “The Influence of *Ideas Have Consequences*,” in Smith ed., *Steps Toward Restoration*, 102.

than a euphemism for the second.”⁹¹ (Recall Fitzhugh: “We treat the Abolitionists and Socialists as identical...the former contains the germ of the latter, and very soon ripens into it.”⁹²) Rather than threatening industrialism with their “intellectual rigor,” the communists “hack at the present moral and physical order with all the resolution and enterprise of the old-time entrepreneur.”⁹³ If the Weaver of *Ideas Have Consequences* sounded like the George Fitzhugh of *Failure of Free Society*, the Weaver of the *National Review* had become the Fitzhugh of *Cannibals, All!*, willing, for the sake of a national forum, to drop his appeal to communists and soften his “anti-materialistic, anti-bourgeois, anti-capitalist biases.”⁹⁴

Whenever Weaver did revert to his fiercest Southern traditionalism, he had to take his work to smaller Southern journals. In the *Georgia Review*, he could write, “Socialism is by definition anti-conservative, and capitalism cannot be conservative in the true sense as long as its reliance is upon industrialism.”⁹⁵ The difference is subtle but important; Weaver couldn’t get away with such a blunt condemnation of capitalism in the *National Review*. When he did try to take similar prose to Buckley in a piece titled “The Southern Tradition,” Buckley turned it down.⁹⁶

Why did Weaver make the tonal shift? Perhaps for some of the same reasons as Fitzhugh. Even in his dissertation, Weaver argued that Southern principles would only catch on if couched “in such presentation that mankind will feel that the march is forward.”⁹⁷ He had always found the North “comparatively willing to listen to criticism,” he wrote in 1950.⁹⁸ It was just a matter of critiquing industrialism the right way. If that meant dropping a Fitzhughian – or even an Agrarian – affection for socialism and making it the traditionalist’s worst enemy, so be it.

And besides, Weaver had already left his mark with *Ideas*. As George Nash notes, “books – and, particularly, great books – can outlive their authors, and such was the fate of Weaver’s *Ideas Have Consequences*.”⁹⁹ Though he may have talked less about the evils of capitalism and more about the communist threat once he began writing for the *Review*,

91 Richard Weaver, “Integration is Communization,” in *National Review* (13 July 1957), 67.

92 Fitzhugh, *Failure of Free Society*, 291.

93 Richard Weaver, “On Setting the Clock Right,” in *National Review* (12 October 1957), 323.

94 Nash, “The Influence of *Ideas Have Consequences*,” in Smith ed., *Steps Toward Restoration*, 105–6.

95 Weaver, “Southern Phoenix,” 8.

96 Young, *Richard M. Weaver*, 173. “The Southern Tradition” was published posthumously in the *New Individualist Review* (Issue 3, 1964), 7–17. It was reprinted in *The Southern Essays of Richard M. Weaver*.

97 Weaver, *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, 395.

98 Weaver, “Agrarianism in Exile,” in *Sewanee Review* 58 (1950), 596.

99 Nash, “The Influence of *Ideas Have Consequences*,” in Smith ed., *Steps Toward Restoration*, 105–6.

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the marks that Fitzhugh and the Agrarians had left on Weaver's thought had already made it into the national spotlight. A century after Fitzhugh and some twenty years after the Agrarians, Weaver had brought Southern traditionalism, complete with its lingering affection for socialism, into the national fold.

But at the exact same moment that Weaver brought his intellectual roots to a national audience, American historians sent them back to the antebellum South.

V

The same year that Richard Weaver began to write for the *National Review*, a political scientist at Harvard named Louis Hartz published *The Liberal Tradition in America*. Hartz argued that all American political thought came directly from the liberal Enlightenment. America had no feudalism, no *ancien régime* to conserve: the country simply took Locke's liberal philosophy and ran with it. The American right "exemplifies...big-property liberalism"; the left, "the European 'petit-bourgeois.'"¹⁰⁰ Both were liberals, just of slightly different shades. "Fundamental value struggles have not been characteristic of the United States," Hartz wrote. "The ironic flaw in American liberalism lies in the fact that we have never had a real conservative tradition."¹⁰¹ In fact, he concluded, American thought had absorbed liberalism so completely that it no longer understood its own unanimity.

In an influential chapter, "The Reactionary Enlightenment," Hartz detailed one exception to the American liberal rule: George Fitzhugh. He rescues Fitzhugh from historical insignificance and praises his writing as "one of the great and creative episodes in the history of American thought," the only moment when American traditionalists began to inject dissent into the liberal mold. Hartz did emphasize, though, that Americans were right to reject Fitzhugh's proslavery logic.¹⁰²

The problem, though, is that Hartz then demonstrates how little impact Fitzhugh had on American thought. Confronted by a nation, the South included, "wedded still to ancient liberal notions," Fitzhugh was "crucified by the American general will."¹⁰³ The Virginian's "great conservative reaction," as Hartz (and Fitzhugh) called it, "die[d] without impact on the mind of a nation."¹⁰⁴ Hartz resurrected Fitzhugh only to tell readers why he was hardly worth remembering.

Certainly, the combined force of *The Liberal Tradition* and Weaver's *Ideas* sparked interest in Fitzhugh and the Agrarians. In 1960, Harvard University Press republished Fitzhugh's *Cannibals, All!* In his introduction, C. Vann Woodward made certain to pay tribute to Hartz's

100 Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, 15.

101 *Ibid.*, 57.

102 *Ibid.*, 147.

103 *Ibid.*, 171, 10.

104 *Ibid.*, 177.

analysis of Fitzhugh: “Hartz is quite justified in placing Fitzhugh near the center and in the forefront of the Reactionary Enlightenment.”¹⁰⁵ Woodward thanked Hartz for giving “serious attention to a neglected and provocative thinker.”¹⁰⁶ And in 1962, *I’ll Take My Stand* went back in print. “Probably it is unusual,” Donald Davidson happily noted, “for a reprint edition...to receive [this] attention from reviewers.”¹⁰⁷

However, *The Liberal Tradition in America* lay beneath nearly every analysis of Weaver, the Agrarians, and especially Fitzhugh. As a result, historians and reviewers treated the Southern traditionalists as rogue reactionaries from the sectionist South, individual flecks on an otherwise spotless history of liberalism.¹⁰⁸ If neither Fitzhugh nor the Agrarians ever escaped the South – or their respective moments in history – their thought cannot have much impact on Weaver. And, the logic goes, if Weaver’s traditionalism was smothered by a national (read: Northern) conservatism that loves free-market industrial capitalism, his Southern traditionalism cannot have had much impact either.

One historian comes close to breaking free from Hartz’s gravity.¹⁰⁹ In both *The World the Slave-Holders Made* and *The Southern Tradition*, Eugene Genovese attempted to trace a straight line from Fitzhugh to the Southern Agrarians of the 1930s to Weaver in the 1950s. Genovese even gave serious attention to Fitzhugh’s relationship to socialism.¹¹⁰ He argued that conservatives from Fitzhugh to Weaver created “a tradition that has resisted bourgeois society, its atomistic culture, and its marketplace morality.”¹¹¹ But even as he connected these reactionary moments, Genovese acknowledged that Hartz “is right, of course, in saying...that no later American conservative has built on [Fitzhugh’s] work. American conservatism accepts and has always accepted capitalism as a proper so-

105 Woodward, “George Fitzhugh: Sui Generis,” in Fitzhugh, *Cannibals, All!*, ix.

106 Ibid., x.

107 Donald Davidson, letter to Robert Penn Warren, 4 May 1963, in Robert Penn Warren Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Box 21, Folder 400).

108 For example, see Wilson, *Patriotic Gore*; O’Brien, *Conjectures of Order*; Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made* and *The Southern Tradition*; and Woodward, “George Fitzhugh: Sui Generis.” There are far too many dissertations on Fitzhugh, the Agrarians, and Weaver to cite here. Suffice it to say that the four giants of American intellectual history cited above all accepted Hartz’s premise that Fitzhugh and his intellectual followers were forever Southern, isolated, and stuck outside national currents of American political thought.

109 I do not mean to imply that Hartz has had a death grip on all American intellectual history since 1955. Many historians have critiqued his liberal tradition thesis (see, for example, *The American Liberal Tradition Reconsidered: The Contested Legacy of Louis Hartz*, ed. Mark Hulliung [Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010]). But when it comes to analyzing Fitzhugh and the Agrarians’ place in American intellectual thought, Hartz’s thesis looms large – and largely uncontested.

110 In particular, see Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 217–25.

111 Genovese quoted in David Brion Davis, “Southern Comfort,” in *New York Review of Books* (October 5, 1995): <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1995/10/05/southern-comfort/>.

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cial order—if that makes it ‘liberal’, very well.”¹¹² And so Genovese, too, fell into line. The links he established between Fitzhugh, the Agrarians, and Weaver are part of a *Southern* conservative tradition, important but forever outside the realm of national conservative movements.

Up until 1955, Louis Hartz may well have been right about American liberalism. But in what can only be described as a case of incredibly bad timing, Hartz’s thesis became false at the precise moment he published it. Richard Weaver was introducing Fitzhugh and the Agrarians into the American liberal tradition (to use Hartz’s framework). Weaver wrote Fitzhugh and the Agrarians into a *national* American intellectual history; Hartz, in a perverse though unintentional twist, wrote them out.¹¹³

This unfortunate paradox—where the normally parallel wires of history and historiography met, crossed, and short-circuited—leaves us with a strange historical disconnect. We have forgotten the Southern traditionalist influence on modern American conservatism. In particular, we have laid aside the complex intellectual and strategic relationship that Weaver, the Agrarians, and Fitzhugh struggled with when they wrote about socialism. That relationship, and the profound tension it reveals at the heart of our nation’s conservative movement, is lost. It, along with its authors, remain stuck in the South and in the past. Ideas do have consequences—but only if they are remembered.

112 Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 239.

113 In a spectacular perversion of history, Fitzhugh’s legacy recently resurfaced when the white nationalist website *Breitbart News* used Fitzhugh’s praise of socialism to argue that the American left had its roots in proslavery thought. See (or perhaps don’t bother) “The Very Best Form of Socialism: The Pro-Slavery Roots of the Modern Left,” *Breitbart News*, 6 August 2013: <http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2013/08/06/the-pro-slaver>.

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and Manuscript Library.

TITLE IMAGE

Allen Tate, Merrill Moore, Robert Penn Warren, John Crowe Ransom, and Donald Davidson, May 4, 1956. Vanderbilt University Special Collections and University Archives.



MOVE THE CHAINS

FOOTBALL AND INTEGRATION IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE 1950–1980

Half a century ago this year, the University of Tennessee Volunteers football team finally integrated with the recruitment of its first black player, Albert Davis. The journey taken by this football-obsessed Southern university, from keeping an all-white team throughout the early postwar period to fielding a team that is majority-black today, was one predictably filled with segregationist protests, progressive activism, and challenges to historical unfounded notions stereotypes of black inferiority. In this essay, Ethan Young, BK '18, critically examines the steps taken by the university, the city of Knoxville, and, most importantly, the first black Volunteer players to demonstrate how sports can, and did, serve as the perfect sphere for black advancement. Young leaves us with a notion about the ability of athletics, and the non-political in general, to bring seemingly distinct communities together.

By Ethan Young BK '18

Written for "The American South, 1870–present"

Professor Glenda Gilmore

Edited by Adrian Rivera, Mark Gustaferrero, and Matthew Sáenz

MOVE THE CHAINS

In Knoxville, football reigns supreme. When the announcer proudly exclaims John Ward's famous words, "It's football time in Tennessee!", 102,000 fans from a city of 180,000 respond with a thunderous roar.¹ As a symbol of its significance to the city *and* to the state as a whole, Neyland Stadium rests directly beside the Tennessee River, the winding passage that connects this eastern metropolis to the West. Tennesseans pride themselves on their football more than anything else, and game day combines culture, community, and regional pride into a typically day-long exhibit. Fans sing "Rocky Top" and sway to "Tennessee Waltz," drink inordinate amounts of alcohol, sweet tea, and coke, and befriend complete strangers, young and old, made family by their vivid orange outfits.

Today, the Volunteers' star athletes are young, strong, tenacious, and mostly black. However, the first black player for the University of Tennessee did not walk into the maelstrom of Neyland Stadium until 1968. Within the past fifty years, the pride of Tennessee transitioned from entirely white to predominately black, a process of integration mirrored in the larger community of Knoxville. The Civil Rights Era rapidly changed the landscape of college sports throughout the South, raising the proportion of black Southeastern Conference (SEC) lettermen from zero before 1966 to one-third by 1980.² Today, the average college football team, just like Tennessee's, is mostly black.³

One certainly would not have predicted this transition based upon racial attitudes of the 1960s. For example, the introductory spread in *The Volunteer Yearbook* of 1962, which lacks explanatory captions or copy,⁴ features a burning "T" before a group of huddled young men. This odd ritual resembles the infamous burning cross of Ku Klux Klan meetings, a supremely recognizable symbol of racism, segregation, and white supremacy.

Even if, to modern eyes, it remains unclear whether this symbol solely represented solely school pride or stood for a mixture of spirit and white supremacy, it is clear that racial tension permeated the ordinary citizen's subconscious. Perhaps this is even better exemplified by the city's and university's generally passive behavior throughout the Civil Rights Era. However, almost miraculously, by 1982, when Knoxville hosted the World's Fair, organizers were crediting its diversity of race and nationality for making the city "the most exciting...on Earth."⁵ Predictably, given its cultural significance in Knoxville, one of

1 "Neyland Stadium," accessed January 16, 2017, <http://www.utsports.com/facilities/neyland/>.

2 Charles H. Martin, *Benching Jim Crow: The Rise and Fall of the Color Line in Southern College Sports, 1890-1980* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 257.

3 Diane Roberts, "College Football's Big Problem With Race," *Time* (New York, NY), Nov. 12, 2015.

4 See Figure 1 (page 57). The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, *The 1962 Volunteer Yearbook* (Knoxville, TN: Graduating Class of 1962, 1962), University of Tennessee Digital Archives, The Volunteer Yearbooks Collection, 7.

5 See Figure 2 (page 57). 1982 Knoxville World's Fair, Box 25, Alfred E. Heller Collection of

the driving factors behind this journey from burning crosses to a poster heralding diversity had to be football.



Left, Figure 1. *Volunteer Yearbook page.* Right, Figure 2. *1982 Knoxville World's Fair promotional poster.*

The sport provided a naturally captivating and suitable venue for ideological expression, and the presence of players of color was unmistakably political. Throughout the mid-twentieth century, contests with integrated Northern teams and the success of their black athletes forced the university to confront discrimination within its own team head-on. Though massive resistance took hold in Knoxville, establishing steeper barriers to integration and inspiring a new generation of civil rights activists, Tennessee's team, when integrated, functioned alongside rising national beliefs about racial equality, the simultaneous desegregation of public schools, and newer university policies to improve racial equity across the campus and state. Progress, of course, came at a cost. Since football stereotyped black men as exceptional athletes and nothing more, it laid the foundation for a distinct student-athlete class that even today receives less than it is promised. Still, the story of black Tennessee Volunteers remains one of the triumphs of new, more equitable

World's Fair Material, 1851–2005, Manuscripts and Archives, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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higher education for African Americans.

THE “GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT”: POST-WAR RACE AND SPORTS

Racial sentiments shifted dramatically across the United States at the close of the Second World War. From 1939 to 1945, the United States mobilized around the preservation of democracy in the face of tyranny and ethnic genocide. As a result, the Allied cause increasingly came to promote human dignity and equality.⁶ Similarly significant was the fact that the enormous demand for soldiers expanded military participation to include African Americans and other minority populations.⁷ Having fought on the front lines with increasingly diverse military comrades, returning soldiers more readily accepted multiracial communities.

The Supreme Court contributed to this new national ethos by demonstrating a greater commitment to equality than was evident in its pre-war rulings. In particular, the Court developed a precedent that defended African American rights in application and admission to universities.⁸ Decisions such as *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), which mandated African American application rights at the University of Texas Law School, began to reject the “separate but equal” philosophy of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). These rulings laid the groundwork for the landmark decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Now, more so than ever before, African Americans began to occupy roles historically available exclusively to whites.

Black athletes participated in sports programs in the North before World War II, but their full inclusion at most predominately white institutions (PWIs) occurred only when wartime ideals permeated institutions – as returning veterans, thanks to the G.I. Bill, started to attend universities.⁹ Harvard and Yale featured black football players as early as 1892, but 50 years elapsed before, in 1949, Yale players elected the first African American team captain, Levi Jackson.¹⁰ A New York columnist wrote in response that “This is the direction of the times, and the men of Yale, by their warm and unaffected ac-

6 Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 56.

7 David H. Onkst, “First a Negro, Incidentally a Veteran: Black World War Two Veterans and the G. I. Bill of Rights in the Deep South, 1944-1948,” *Journal of Social History* 31, no. 3 (1998): 517-8.

8 Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950's* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 6.

9 The subsequent massification of higher education forced the University of Tennessee to cap enrollment for the first time in 1946; Clinton B. Allison, *Teachers for the South: Pedagogy and Educationists in the University of Tennessee, 1844-1995* (Washington, DC: Peter Lang, 1998), 173; Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 57.

10 Ocania Chalk, *Black College Sport* (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1976), 147.

tion, added materially to our quickening achievement.”¹¹ Simultaneously, many Northern black football players started to become famous All-Americans, including Fred “Duke” Slater of Iowa, Frederick Douglas “Fritz” Pollard of Brown University, and David Myers of New York University.¹² Even professional baseball reflected these cultural shifts when Jackie Robinson made his debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.¹³

However, the Southern story was quite different. There, major universities not only banned black people from athletics altogether but also refused to compete against integrated teams. On December 23, 1946, mere months before Jackie Robinson joined the Dodgers, the University of Tennessee arrived in Pennsylvania to play basketball at Duquesne University.¹⁴ Minutes before tipoff, Duquesne coaches refused to bench a black center at Tennessee’s request, so Knoxville coach John Mauer drove the Volunteers back home.¹⁵ The expectation that a Northern, integrated team would bench its black players when competing in intersectional games – a practice informally known as the “gentlemen’s agreement” – pervaded intercollegiate competition from Reconstruction until just after World War II.

Eventually, post-war cultural, legal, and athletic shifts caused the collapse of the “gentlemen’s agreement” as universities such as Duquesne refused to comply. These refusals, however, subjected black players to charged criticism from spectators and ultimately highlighted their skin color rather than their athletic accomplishments. Thus, starting black athletes became a form of protest that both catalyzed Southern integration and reinforced a simplistic understanding of race. Though imperfect, the eradication of the “gentlemen’s agreement” proved to be a remarkable mechanism: by 1965, all Southern schools competed against black players.¹⁶

Outside the battle for PWI sports integration, incredible athletic talent emerged from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) across the South, including those in Tennessee.¹⁷ Despite being under-resourced, football players from black colleges were among the first seventeen athletes in the state to sign contracts with the National

11 “Honor to Yale,” *New York Herald Tribune* (New York, NY), Nov. 24, 1948.

12 Chalk, *Black College Sport*, 182.

13 Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 57.

14 *Ibid.*, 55.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 57.

17 Beginning in 1863, missionaries established freedmen’s schools that later developed into black high schools or colleges, including Knoxville College, East Tennessee’s African American educational hub. The proliferation of all-black schools installed *de facto* segregation and a 1901 Tennessee law prohibited any college to allow white and non-white persons to attend the same school (*de jure* segregation); Bobby L. Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 337–45.

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Football League. Nine of these emerged from a single school—Tennessee State—in one year.¹⁸ Black coaches were instrumental to this success, according to HBCU athletes, since their presence demonstrated potential for black achievement in scholarship *and* athletics.¹⁹ For talented black athletes, HBCUs presented significantly greater opportunities for collegiate and professional athletic careers than PWIs. However, in the coming *Brown* era, a growing number of exceptional black Southern athletes sacrificed these opportunities and chose instead to demonstrate their talent at a PWI.

The integration of Vanderbilt University, a private school in Nashville, Tennessee, foreshadowed the change to come in Knoxville. Vanderbilt's status as a private institution afforded the university greater flexibility. Moreover, many Vanderbilt alumni were Northerners whose ideas forced the school to confront race sooner than the intensely local University of Tennessee.²⁰ Despite the growing popularity of college sport spectatorship, Vanderbilt Chancellor Harvie Branscomb disliked the cultural obsession with student-athletes because of its negative effect on students' scholarship.²¹ Consequently, he attempted to minimize the dominant football culture on campus through a 1951 six-part de-escalation plan that entailed fewer scholarships, restrictions on light course-loads for athletes, and rules against heavy outside funding for football.²² This plan also had the effect of reducing sports spectatorship and extensive public awareness of the university more broadly, allowing for the hushed admittance of African American graduate students in the early 1950s. By 1967, Vanderbilt was even able to accept Percy Wallace as the SEC's first black athlete.²³

Throughout the post-war era, football became a powerful political and cultural stage that connected individual communities to a larger ideological framework. With the collapse of the "gentlemen's agreement," Northern universities started to use athletics to force racial tolerance. Meanwhile, despite being disconnected from states' flagship universities, HBCUs produced impressive athletes whose success demonstrated African American excellence. Furthermore, within the state of Tennessee itself, the integration of Vanderbilt's team signaled to Knoxvilleians that a tide of change was underway. However, East Tennesseans, alongside the rest of the white South, would not accept this change passively.

18 Arthur Ashe, *A Hard Road to Glory: A History of the African-American Athlete Since 1946* (New York: Warner Books, 1988), 117; Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 347.

19 Ibid., 119.

20 Paul Keith Conkin, *Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 528–47.

21 Ibid., 544.

22 Ibid., 528.

23 Nashvilleans eventually did notice this and other signs of an integrated society and rioted two years later, a decade before similar events took place in Knoxville; Ibid., 547.

BIG ORANGE RESISTANCE: THE IMPACT OF BROWN ON KNOXVILLE

Knoxville's racism quietly endured throughout the twentieth century, only surfacing publicly in a handful of incidents. A race riot in which World War I veterans framed a black café owner, Maurice Mays, for murdering a young white girl loomed in the city's past.²⁴ During Mays' trial in 1919, thousands crowded onto Gay Street in support or in protest of a conviction, leading to a conflict whose resultant bullet holes adorn buildings on Vine and Central to this day.²⁵ Knoxville's next mid-century riot occurred not in downtown streets but in classrooms across the region. *Brown v. Board of Education* had held that segregated public schools were "inherently unequal," forcing Southerners to reckon with the integration of their children's communities.²⁶ Southerners, including Knoxvilleans, relentlessly resisted desegregation before and after *Brown*, a period historians term "massive resistance."²⁷

Jim Crow laws served throughout the American South as a means of separating restrooms, water fountains, and schools by race: creating separate restrooms, water fountains, and schools.²⁸ These codes wound up being crucial in helping white supremacists successfully resist external pressures to desegregate throughout the early twentieth century, especially when coupled with relatively ambivalent federal policy.²⁹ Many white families also managed to separate themselves from black people entirely by relocating to suburbs, creating a color line around urban centers. In fact, from 1940 to 1960, Knox County's population increased by up to 25 percent while the City of Knoxville's population decreased by up to 10.4 percent.³⁰ During the same period, the percentage of African Americans living in the city, closest to the University of Tennessee, increased.³¹

The five Deep South states of Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina began a multi-pronged political defense of separate school systems in 1953 that included state legislation and Constitutional appeals to the Tenth Amend-

24 Matthew Lakin, "A Dark Night: The Knoxville Race Riot of 1919," *The Journal of East Tennessee History*, no. 72 (2000): 6.

25 *Ibid.*

26 Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech, "Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1)," Oyez, accessed Dec. 9, 2016, <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483>.

27 Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*.

28 See Appendix A for a comparative chart of Jim Crow laws by state (page 76).

29 Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 5–6.

30 Wilbur Smith and Associates, "Mass Transportation in the Knoxville Metropolitan Area," Report prepared for the Metropolitan Planning Commission of Knoxville, Tennessee (New Haven, C.T., 1963), 3.

31 *Ibid.*

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ment.³² Keenly aware of the failing “gentlemen’s agreement” with Northern schools, in 1956 many of these states explicitly forbade their public universities from allowing interracial sports.³³ Resistance existed in the minds of regular citizens most of all: a 1956 poll found that sixteen percent of white Deep Southerners supported *Brown* and eighty percent disapproved.³⁴

Peripheral southern states, such as Tennessee and Kentucky, responded more ambiguously to *Brown*.³⁵ The failure of grassroots white-supremacy organizations to effectively counteract the decision supports the case that the racism that did exist in Tennessee was more subdued. Citizens’ Councils, white groups aimed at economically disenfranchising black or white integrationists to restore Southern values, appeared across the South by 1955.³⁶ However, except for one Nashville group, these councils failed in Tennessee due to low participation.³⁷ Other indications of tolerance also existed, such as the Knox County Welfare Department’s race-blind applications and biracial drinking fountains and toilets.³⁸ This demonstrates a significant change in attitude from a community that had been willing to abandon intersectional competitions over race just eight years prior.

Even at the state level, Tennessee’s 1954 elections eschewed political extremism and expressed constituent support for *Brown*. On August 6, the *New York Times* reported that the relatively progressive Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver and Governor Frank Clement won re-election by great margins. According to one newspaper, their victory was a “resounding rejection of [other] candidates ... [who] would ‘find a way’ to preserve racial segregation in Tennessee’s public schools.”³⁹ Governor Frank G. Clement wrote in 1956 that “the public schools of Tennessee have been operating since the first flat boat came in and the public schools will continue to operate for the benefit of all of our children.”⁴⁰ Yet despite this period of acceptance, massive resistance would build toward a climax in 1958, and it would become clear that even 1950s Tennessee was not immune to racial strife.

32 Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 54.

33 “Desegregation at UT: The Beginnings,” Sep. 21, 1989, University Historian’s Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 20, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

34 Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 14.

35 *Ibid.*, 341.

36 *Ibid.*, 83.

37 *Ibid.*, 99.

38 Douglas Rupert Jones, “An Opinion Poll on Attitudes of White Adults about Desegregation in the Public Schools of Knoxville, Tennessee” (Phd diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1958), 128.

39 John N. Popham, “Kefauver Victor in Tennessee Vote,” *The New York Times*, Aug. 6, 1954.

40 Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 56.

In the late 50s, Tennessee underwent radical policy shifts. State authorities launched investigations into black college presidents' affairs as a means of silencing student protests and other forms of progressive speech.⁴¹ The same Governor Frank Clement who had previously vetoed four reactionary bills in 1955, primarily due to their "attempt to circumvent...the recent opinion handed down by the Supreme Court" in *Brown*, supported comprehensive anti-integration legislation that allowed individual communities to assign pupils to schools just three years later.⁴² Nashville's public schools, not coincidentally, were to be integrated during the following school year.⁴³ Despite this dramatic change in policy decisions, Clement maintained high public approval ratings due to segregationist ideological shifts among Tennessee constituents.⁴⁴

Citizens of Knoxville began expressing overwhelming anti-integration sentiments around 1958.⁴⁵ No evidence concretely reveals whether these beliefs were developed or merely vocalized that year, but given growing public outcry in the Deep South states, Tennesseans likely became more comfortable revealing anxieties they had felt for many years prior. Graduate students at the University of Tennessee studied Knoxville's opinions concerning the *Brown* decision: of 167 randomly sampled respondents, 94.5 percent self-identified as pro-segregationist.⁴⁶ Within that subset population, 44.5 percent intended to accept *Brown* because it was the law, and another 39.9 percent intended to transfer their children to a private, all-white school.⁴⁷ These forms of racial isolationism were mirrored by the University of Tennessee, the state's flagship university.⁴⁸

While Southerners resisted, the black population continued to seek opportunities for self-advancement through education and employment. African Americans comprised fifteen percent of Knoxville's population in 1950, and 4,400 students of 22,000

41 Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes," 349.

42 Ibid., 275.

43 Allison, *Teachers for the South*, 270.

44 Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 47.

45 See Appendices B and C (pages 77 and 78, respectively) for a more detailed analysis of respondents' reasoning and background.

46 Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes," 155.

47 Ibid., 149, 155.

48 One Knoxville dissertation states that "the question of the Negro's intellectual quotient has been answered pro and con by many researchers." Another 1966 researcher condemns children who were born out of wedlock or with absent father figures. One researcher argues in 1961 that a lack of "equitable educational experiences" explains the achievement gap, evident at Knoxville's all-black Austin High School and its lack of vocational training in comparison to suburban schools; Ibid., 93; Robert Louis Ilardi, "Family Disorganization and Intelligence in Negro Pre-school Children" (Phd diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1966); Ralph H. Martin, "A Biracial Study of Entry Job Facts Found Among Selected Manufacturing and Research Industries Located in Metropolitan Knoxville, Tennessee, and Their Implications for Selected Secondary Schools and Colleges" (Phd diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1961), 5, 76.

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county-wide were black.⁴⁹ Only one high school existed for black students, Austin High School, which maintains its predominately black student population today. The greatest obstacle for most black Knoxvilleians remained obtaining quality education and employment. Among employees of the 1957 Southern workforce who had not completed the fifth grade, African Americans made up 30.3 percent, whereas whites totaled 7.3 percent.⁵⁰ Similarly, only 9.8 percent of employed blacks graduated from high school, as compared with 27 percent of whites.⁵¹ Discrimination in hiring, though, often proved a greater challenge than lacking educational credentials when it came time to look for a job; one dissertation finds that racial employment discrimination existed in most professions in Tennessee.⁵² Even public transportation became less accessible to many African Americans, as Knoxville's bus system shifted toward suburban connection lines after 1959 despite the overwhelming concentration of transit riders who lived downtown.⁵³

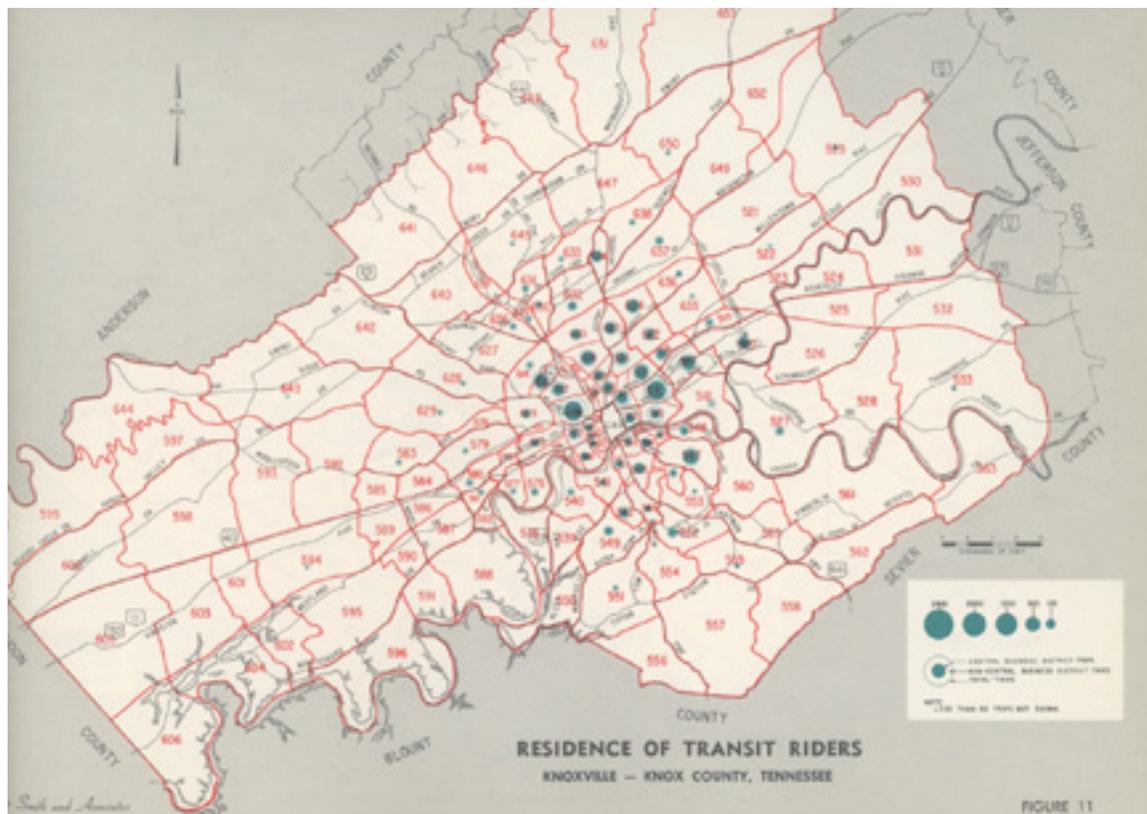


Figure 3. Residence of Transit Riders on Knoxville Area Public Transit. Notice the concentration of residents in the heart of downtown Knoxville and the lack of concentrated population towards the suburban sprawls in the West, East, or North. Also, note the availability of commuter roadways.

49 Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes," 131.

50 Martin, "A Biracial Study," 13.

51 Ibid., 78.

52 Ibid., 72.

53 See Figure 3. Wilbur Smith and Associates, "Mass Transportation," vii.

Throughout the period of “massive resistance,” an entire region became consumed with keeping spaces white at the expense of providing basic civic, social, and economic opportunities for African Americans. Ironically, pervasive racism not only failed to prevent integration, but actually catalyzed a new generation of youth activists who would demonstrate renewed willingness to challenge the status quo. Indeed, almost all of the University of Tennessee’s first black athletes were children during “massive resistance.”

ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF WHITE TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee resisted the admission of African American students in its graduate and undergraduate programs until 1952, when it finally yielded to legal and cultural pressures. The university had long deterred black applicants by its charging out-of-state tuition, a steep financial burden, for students of color, and its creation of a separate Agricultural and Industrial State College primarily for students of color in Nashville.⁵⁴ Andrew Holt, president of the university from 1959–1970, said of the two schools: “If a wholesale influx of Negroes into the University is to be avoided, the two schools should provide comparable educational quality.”⁵⁵ Similarly, one university trustee said that “public welfare could best be maintained by continued segregation of the races in education.”⁵⁶ In practice, these separate campuses were very unequal in quality, compelling two black students seeking better educational enrichment to apply for admission at Knoxville’s law school in 1950.⁵⁷

After extensive debate among the multi-generational Board of Trustees, one of these applicants, Gene Mitchell Gray, was admitted for a graduate program in 1952.⁵⁸ Little documentation exists about Gray’s experience, but the Dean of Students recalled interacting with the first African American at UT Knoxville: “He was all around...My only contact with him was he’d come in, always with a question...He asked, ‘Can I attend the basketball game?’ I said, ‘Sure, you’re a student.’”⁵⁹ Following *Brown*, a greater influx of black students followed Gray’s example. By 1955, forty-six black law students were enrolled at Knoxville.⁶⁰

54 Allison, *Teachers for the South*, 175.

55 *Ibid.*, 176.

56 “Desegregation at UT: The Beginnings,” Sep. 21, 1989, University Historian’s Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 20, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

57 James Riley Montgomery, *To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 228.

58 *Ibid.*, 229.

59 Montgomery, *To Foster Knowledge*, 229.

60 This figure should be qualified by the simultaneous growth of UT’s student population: 10,000 in 1950 to 30,000 in 1970; Allison, *Teachers for the South*, 190.

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The first black undergraduate student at UT Knoxville, Theotis Robinson, had graduated from Knoxville's all-black Austin High School.⁶¹ His 1960 application was originally rejected because of his race. Robinson recalled, "In my letter of application I did not indicate my race, nor did I indicate which high school I graduated from... However, somehow they learned I was black."⁶² He and his family arranged a meeting with President Andy Holt to dispute the admissions decision. Holt deferred to the Board of Trustees, which changed its policy under increasing pressure on January 3, 1961. Robinson proved to be a talented student and would later become a Knoxville City Councilman and Vice President for Development in the 1982 World's Fair.⁶³

While the Robinsons met with the University, a large-scale civil rights demonstration was taking place four blocks away in downtown Knoxville. Merrill Proudfoot, a white, Yale-educated professor at Knoxville College, participated in sit-ins alongside his black students throughout 1960.⁶⁴ On May 16, 1960, students organized a multi-store sit-in after several small-scale efforts had failed to elicit much attention amongst business owners or city leaders.⁶⁵ Over time, this prolonged protest prompted white hecklers to verbally accost the young men, even to a degree necessitating police protection for the activists.⁶⁶ One day later, the Mayor's Committee, led by Mayor John Duncan, requested that downtown businesses desegregate operations immediately.⁶⁷ Knoxvilleians complied with the request, reflecting Proudfoot's assessment that "the attitude of white customers seemed to be one of casual interest or indifference."⁶⁸ Indeed, Knoxville was relatively receptive to sit-ins in contrast to those occurring in Greensboro or Nashville.⁶⁹ Yet even within this atmosphere of relative tolerance, clear remnants of Jim Crow and "massive resistance" pervaded day-to-day life for many black residents, especially for those studying at the University of Tennessee.

Segregation continued to define the black student experience in Knoxville. No

61 "UTK's First Black Undergraduate Remembers" Feb. 26, 1986, University Historian's Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 6, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 See Figures 4 and 5 (page 67). Merrill Proudfoot, *Diary of a Sit-in*, ed. Michael S. Mayer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), xli.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid., 100.

67 Ibid., 213.

68 Proudfoot, *Diary of a Sit-in*, 20.

69 Ibid., 218.



Left, Figure 4. Sit-in demonstration at a Knoxville lunch counter. Note the white passers-by. Right, Figure 5. Knoxville College students and Prof. Merrill Proudfoot at Grant's restaurant.

black students lived in student dorms until 1963.⁷⁰ No blacks were allowed to enter into fraternities or sororities until 1966.⁷¹ An official report from this time concluded “surprising[ly]” that no disciplinary problems had been reported among black students at Tennessee colleges, aside from the theft of a book from the campus library.⁷² While Knoxville’s pioneer black students were unable to participate in the fullness of student life, it is clear that they were also being held to higher levels of scrutiny by faculty and peers. Billy Hawkins describes an invisible and hyper-visible reality for black students at PWIs: students and faculty failed to acknowledge students’ black identity and racial equality, while everyone noticed if black students missed class.⁷³

By 1962, seven thousand black undergrads were enrolled in PWIs across the South. By this time, black undergrads had a drop-out rate of merely 9.9 percent (as compared to the 40 percent rate among all students).⁷⁴ Almost all of these enrolled black students cited one of four main reasons for choosing a predominately white college over the safer, closer all-black alternatives. They wanted to understand another culture, advance racial harmony, keep pace with whites, or receive a better education. Notably, three of these motivations are explicitly racial.⁷⁵

By the mid-1960s, black Tennesseans had proved their academic capacity and their willingness to fight for equality. Finally, the stage was finally set for an athletic revolution. Two primary milestones within the Tennessee football program drove its ultimate

70 Nolen E. Bradley, Jr., “The Negro Undergraduate Student: Factors Relative to Performance in Predominantly White State Colleges and Universities in Tennessee” (PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1966), 57.

71 Ibid., 155.

72 Ibid., 58.

73 Billy Hawkins, *The New Plantation: Black Athletes, College Sports, and Predominantly White NCAA Institutions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 37.

74 Bradley, “The Negro Undergraduate Student,” 20–2.

75 See Appendix D (page 79) for a table of responses that further nuance these students’ experience at PWI’s in Tennessee.

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integration. General Robert Neyland coached the Volunteers for thirty-six years before dying suddenly in 1962, leaving a deep void in university athletic leadership.⁷⁶ Although Neyland is fondly remembered today (the stadium still bears his name), he adamantly refused to play integrated teams and never considered the possibility of black players.⁷⁷ Douglas A. Dickey, an Army veteran who had served with African Americans, became the new head coach in 1964.⁷⁸ Within three seasons of Dickey's coaching, Tennessee won the college football National Championship in 1967, the school's only national title until Peyton Manning's 1998 season.⁷⁹ Not only did this victory give the university a great deal of athletic prestige and national attention, but it also signaled a changing UT policy toward integrated teams and the school's own integration. For example, in that championship season, the Tennessee team traveled to Los Angeles to take on the integrated University of California, Los Angeles.⁸⁰ More importantly, since Tennessee's team was more publicized (and under more scrutiny) than ever, the nation, which watched football more than any other sport, responded overwhelmingly harshly to the triumph of an all-white team.⁸¹ Eventually, the coaching staff, led by Coach Dickey, would respond to negative press from around the nation by recruiting the team's first black athletes.

Albert Davis, a high school football star, became the first African American athletic recruit for the University of Tennessee in 1967. Tennessee students responded favorably to the announcement of Davis's recruitment. One commented, "It's a good idea in that a Negro athlete can now participate in the South where he lives." Another said, "UT should get some local talent they've been letting slip through their fingers in the last few years."⁸² These remarks suggest that tolerance of African Americans varied dramatically between administrators and students. Just weeks after choosing the Volunteers, however, Davis's SAT scores were called into question in a mysterious article by the *Knoxville News Sentinel*. Considered to be "surprisingly high," Davis's SAT scores were rejected and the Athletics Department rescinded his invitation.⁸³

Lester McClain would fill Davis's spot as the first black man to take the field at

76 Montgomery, *To Foster Knowledge*, 361.

77 Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 262.

78 Montgomery, *To Foster Knowledge*, 361.

79 Haywood Harris, *Six Seasons Remembered: The National Championship Years of Tennessee Football* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 102.

80 Ibid.

81 Joel Nathan Rosen, *The Erosion of the American Sporting Ethos: Shifting Attitudes Toward Competition* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007), 51.

82 "UTK Recruits First Black Athlete," *The Daily Beacon* (Knoxville, TN), April 15, 1967, University of Tennessee News Releases and Other Materials, Box 4, Folder 2, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

83 "Football Desegregation at UT," Feb. 26, 1986, University Historian's Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Neyland Stadium. McClain played for Antioch High School in Nashville, where he was recruited for an athletic scholarship in 1967.⁸⁴ When reflecting upon his experience in 1969, McClain noted that “they didn’t integrate the high schools in Nashville until my senior year.”⁸⁵ Before the Albert Davis controversy, Tennessee coaches had intended for McClain and Davis to become roommates, thinking that such an arrangement would provide them with mutual support.⁸⁶ Once Davis’s scholarship was rescinded, McClain recalled “[he] didn’t have a roommate [his] freshman year.”⁸⁷ During his next two years at the university, he would go on to live with a white teammate, John Rippatoe, a close friend with whom McClain had, as he described it, “a wonderful relationship.”⁸⁸

McClain’s contributions to the Volunteers went far beyond the tokenism of “gentlemen’s agreement” days. The wide receiver rushed for 93 yards his senior season and had receptions totaling over 300 yards during each of his three seasons.⁸⁹ Despite his athletic performance and supportive teammates, McClain endured racial slurs hurled by other teams throughout his career. “There is a time when you question whether you want to pack your bags and go home. I would be lying if I said I never considered that. But I just couldn’t. I knew the next day the headline would say: ‘Lester McClain, first black athlete, quits UT,’ he said.⁹⁰ Especially after the Davis controversy, McClain carried an enormous burden to prove himself, and future black players, worthy of wearing the orange and white.

After McClain’s pioneering seasons, other African Americans broke barriers and records within the football program. In 1972, Condredge Holloway became the team’s first black quarterback, as well as the first in the Southeastern Conference.⁹¹ Former teammates captured Holloway’s success best. Larry Sievers joked, “If you gon’ beat ‘im, you’re gon’ kill ‘im,” and Lester McClain said, “When he touches the ball people stand in their seats.”⁹² Holloway’s contributions to the sport are so well regarded that a full-length

84 Mike Organ, “Vols trailblazer Lester McClain weighs in on racial tensions,” *The Tennessean* (Nashville, TN), July 23, 2016.

85 Harry Mehre, “1968 Vols Running on Courage,” *The Atlanta Constitution* (Atlanta, GA), Jan. 25, 1969.

86 Athletics Board Meeting Minutes, Feb. 26, 1986, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 2, Folder 33, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 3.

87 Organ, “Vols trailblazer.”

88 Ibid.

89 “Tennessee Career Football Statistics,” accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.utsports.com/sports/m-footbl/fball-stats/m.htm>.

90 “Black Athletes at UTK,” 1990, University Historian’s Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 21, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

91 “Desegregation at UT: The Beginnings,” Sep. 21, 1989, University Historian’s Vignettes, Box 1, Folder 20, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

92 Shaun Silva, *The Color Orange: The Conredge Holloway Story* (2011; Nashville, TN: Tackle

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ESPN documentary, *The Color Orange: The Condredge Holloway Story*, was produced to chronicle his early sports career.⁹³ When asked about racial slurs and other forms of discrimination, Holloway recalled encountering them everywhere. “But that's not important and it's not worth dwelling on. I'm not Martin Luther King. I'm just a former football player who loved his time at Tennessee,” he said.⁹⁴ In this remark, Holloway exhibited both resilience and the same sort of deracialized rhetoric employed by coaches and other administrators.

There was a disconnect between the coaching staffs and athletes surrounding the conditions of early integrated teams. The UT coaching staff congratulated themselves for “hav[ing] the first SEC Negro athlete to receive a football grant-in-aid – Lester McClain. Other Blacks have since been recruited in football and other sports. Relationships among athletes are excellent.”⁹⁵ Although the memories of Lester McClain seem relatively pleasant, the relative lack of racial turbulence concerning his time at Tennessee was not mirrored elsewhere. In fact, black athletes across the country initiated thirty-seven campus movements in 1968 alone.⁹⁶ In Washington, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and California, athletes protested racism from both players and coaches.⁹⁷ In almost every case, these student demonstrations were supported by on-campus resources, often in the form of a black cultural center. Though Knoxville did not experience these widespread protests at this time, that may be due as much to the lack of an on-campus cultural center for supporting anti-racism movements as to the relative harmony between black and white athletes. In fact, for a long time, the administration of the university would continue to resist the creation of a cultural center that “would enable blacks to have a distinct location where they could reinforce their own separate social and cultural identity.”⁹⁸

By the 1960s and 70s, the creation of a Black Cultural Center was the subject of

Box Films, 2011), Online.

93 Mark Wiedmeer, “Conredge Holloway Ahead of his time,” *Chattanooga Times Free Press* (Chattanooga, TN), Feb. 19, 2011.

94 Ibid.

95 Athletics Board Meeting Minutes, April 24, 1970, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 2, Folder 33, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 4.

96 David Kenneth Wiggins, *Glory Bound: Black Athletes in a White America* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 124.

97 One prominent incident occurred at the University of Oregon in 1969 when black football player Fred Milton refused to shave his mustache after a coach's request. After a year of university and legal proceedings, a proclamation was issued declaring the coach's request a violation of Milton's rights and mandating his reinstatement on the team in 1970; Ibid., 125–143.

98 Report to the Chancellor on “The Establishment of a Black Cultural Center,” Aug. 19, 1974, Office of the Chancellor Records, Box 12, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 4.

hundreds of letters between University Chancellor Jack Reese and various advocates.⁹⁹ Black students and faculty pressured administrators to create such a center, with one undergraduate testifying: “At UT, a Black student finishes a day of classes and work, goes to his/her room and still deals with ignorant neighbors, R.A.s, Assistant Head Residents and Head Residents, most of whom would just as soon you were dead than have to deal with you.”¹⁰⁰ In 1974, Chancellor Reese finally promised black faculty that a cultural center would be created the following school year. However, he stated, “In light of current shortages of space and the dim prospects for state funds for new facilities, I do not know of any...space at present.”¹⁰¹ A civil rights advocacy group called the Afro-American Studies Liberation Force (AASLF) refused this excuse adamantly. After a long series of negotiations and faculty rebuttals, a Black Cultural Center was ultimately established in 1977.¹⁰² Even after its creation, administrative oversight and budgetary restrictions engendered mixed reactions to the center from black students on campus.¹⁰³

Other exciting advances in racial equality were also to be found on the University of Tennessee’s campus during this period. For instance, in 1969, the student body elected Jim Baxter as their president. Baxter was a black Air Force veteran, and, as student body president, he was an ex-officio member of the Athletic Board (the governing organization for football and other athletic programs).¹⁰⁴ Additionally, a 1972 football program printed male and female African American cheerleaders leading the student section in game-time cheers.¹⁰⁵ Though isolated, these examples illustrate the remarkable transformation of the university’s racial makeup, as well as the rising ideology of racial equity on campus.

99 Ibid., 7.

100 Ibid.

101 Letter from Chancellor Reese to Prof. Littlejohn, April 30, 1974, Office of the Chancellor Records, Box 12, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

102 Letter from Harold I. Dozier, Co-Chairman of the Afro-American Student Liberation Force, Jan. 14, 1975, Office of the Chancellor Records, Box 12, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

103 One student, Alva G. Trimble, wrote to the Chancellor after a dramatic reduction in facility funding: “Personally, I feel like you, a stranger, are coming into my house and rearranging the furniture...How can you determine what is needed in the Center without consulting the people who work there and the people who utilize the facilities there?”; Letter from Alva Trimble to Chancellor Reese, Oct. 25, 1979, Office of the Chancellor Records, Box 12, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

104 Montgomery, *To Foster Knowledge*, 393; Letter from Earl Ramer to James Baxter, May 38, 1969, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 12, Folder 11, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

105 1972 Football Program, UT vs. Alabama, Oct. 21, 1972 (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Athletics Department), University of Tennessee Digital Archives, *The Volunteer Football Programs and Guides*, 95.

MOVING THE CHAINS: THE EFFECT OF FOOTBALL

Like the game of football, the story of black football players in Tennessee unfolded in a series of dramatic plays, each of which advanced the cause for athletic and academic equality. In the end, though, these plays almost inevitably fell short of the goal line. First down: World War II changed Americans' beliefs, and football became a scene of token advocacy. Second down: The South reacted to *Brown*, and Knoxville's racism came to the fore. Third down: Black students began to attend the University of Tennessee and fought for the respect of classmates and administrators alike. During this suspenseful moment, black athletes arrived on the field and stunned Tennesseans with their ability. So, they moved the chains – not only the 10-yard markers, but also the chains of segregationist bondage that had withheld full equality from black Americans for centuries. But they only moved the chains; they failed to break them. Today we are at first-and-goal, closer than ever before to real equity. Nonetheless, we continue to be bound by inherited rules and systemic racism.

With the rise of African American recruitment by athletic powerhouses, universities today increasingly provide separate, but allegedly equal, student experiences: one for students, another for student-athletes.¹⁰⁶ To retain top athletes, some institutions, such as the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, have resorted to faking academic eligibility requirements for at least 3,100 student athletes.¹⁰⁷ Owing both to their frequent general lack of adequate university preparation and to the busy schedule and high demands of an athletics program, these students continue to experience high attrition and low graduation rates.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, athletic scholarships generally cover the costs of tuition, but any injuries or disqualifications from a sport spell the end of a student's higher education.¹⁰⁹

It was Dr. Earl Ramer, president of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) from 1971 to 1972 and long-serving chairman of the UT Athletics Board, who stated that “the NCAA views the proper participation in intercollegiate athletics to be [by] an amateur (not principally motivated by direct and current economic gain), a student (by the ordinarily applicable standards of his institution), [and] an athlete who partici-

106 Bear Bryant, head coach of the Alabama Crimson Tide, began earnest recruitment of black players after a terrible defeat against the integrated University of Southern California in 1970. Bryant's version of recruitment, however, sparked a shift across the Southeastern Conference in which black students were recruited exclusively for athleticism; Martin, *Benching Jim Crow*, 256.

107 Sara Ganim and Devon Sayers, “UNC report finds 18 years of academic fraud to keep athletes playing,” CNN, Oct. 23, 2014.

108 Hawkins, *The New Plantation*, 31.

109 Bradley, “The Negro Undergraduate,” 155.

pates in an honorable, vigorous competitive undertaking which will have long range educational value to him.”¹¹⁰ Yet for these athletes, the game has become a gateway to sparse (and highly selective) professional sports careers, and the academics have become tangential to training. This system, which plagues our scholar-athletes today, first emerged alongside the integration of Southern teams.



Left, Figure 6. Black demonstrators outside of the Tennessee Theatre. The marquee reads “Never did so few cook up so much excitement,” which refers to the film on display. Of course, it also seems to refer to the men and their protest. Right, Figure 7. Lester McClain’s biography in the 1969 Football Guide. Note the thin stripes drawn on his skin to indicate his race.

College football programs may be a far cry from extreme forms of historical and present disfranchisement, but the current system does bear facets with striking resemblance to certain qualities of African American enslavement. For instance, Billy Hawkins argues that the economics, politics, and racism of colonialism exist in modern college football, rejecting the idea that “intercollegiate athletics...[are] assumed by many to be apolitical.”¹¹¹ Perhaps more powerfully, sports sociologist Harry Edwards describes football as “a trap leading nowhere for most black youngsters, and the failure, the disillusion-

110 At a half-hour lecture on the future of the NCAA in 1972, Ramer discussed widening participation for ten minutes. His comments focus entirely upon female programs, only alluding to race once: “I must not be naïve and imply that all students have a legal right to athletic participation in its inter-school aspects. In my opinion, the opportunity to try for the team and, indeed to make it, is a right to be sought for larger numbers of our young people.” Despite Dr. Ramer’s omission of race from this lecture, the number of black athletes in the SEC rose from seven in 1967-8 to 394 in 1979-80. Lecture notes for Oregon State Presentation, March 14, 1972, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 13, Folder 6, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 7; Joan Paul, Richard V. McGhee, and Helen Fant, “The Arrival and Ascendance of Black Athletes in the SEC, 1966-1980,” 1984, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 13, Folder 6, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 4.289.

111 Hawkins, *The New Plantation*, 49, 133.

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ment, leads to social unrest and subsequent crime.”¹¹²

Yet despite these serious qualifications to the nature of progress through sports integration, football contributed much more to people’s daily lives and changing opinions about race than contemporary leaders and theorists recognize today.¹¹³ As a modern analyst writes, “Sport is able to symbolically impact the racial order precisely because it can simultaneously claim to be a space removed from politics.”¹¹⁴ For African American athletes, sports provided white institutions that could be disrupted not only by their presence but also by their physical ability. Their athleticism and strength genuinely inspired spectators and certainly forced fans to reckon with preconceptions of black inferiority.¹¹⁵ It is no coincidence that while Lester McClain ran from goalpost to goalpost in Neyland Stadium, other young black students sat perfectly still at lunch counters across the city of Knoxville.¹¹⁶

Ultimately, Tennessee football provided artificial objectives, rules, times, and spaces that demanded a temporary unity amongst all Volunteers – black or white, fan or player. By substituting game rules in place of real, societal ones, people could neglect existing divides. Overall, this sport allowed a community to overlook negative presumptions about race and suspend historical time in a two-hour ball game. Unfortunately, this same effect also allows fans today to overlook the modern plight of college athletes.

The thirty-year period of Knoxville’s transition seems short. Artifacts such as the 1962 yearbook page and the 1982 World’s Fair poster convey the incredible rapidity of change on their own. When 1982 did arrive, Neyland Stadium hosted a professional

112 Rosen, *The Erosion of the American*, 203.

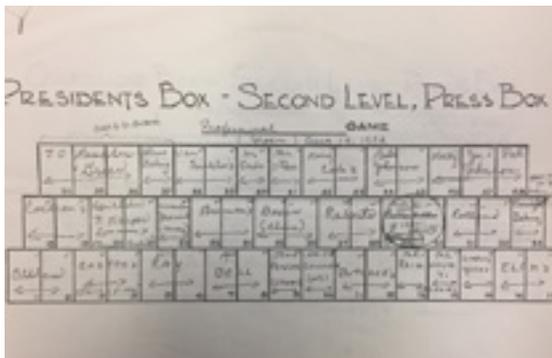
113 At least one commentator from the period understood this to be true: “Sports are too beautiful and profound for simplistic slogans. How we play the game may turn out to be more important than we imagine, for it signifies nothing less than our way of being in the world”; Untitled abstract, Box 13, Folder 6, Page 47, 1969 Tennessee Football Guide, Tom Siler Collection, Box 8, Folder 18, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

114 Ben Carrington, *Race, Sport and Politics: The Sporting Black Diaspora* (London: SAGE, 2010), 93.

115 UT Coach Doug Dickey wrote in 1969 that “Wherever [football] is played today, the name of Tennessee is known and honored. Its heroes are household names to football fans across the nation. Here at Tennessee we will always welcome the graduating high school athlete who is a good student, a dedicated football player, and a responsible citizen. He has a role to play in a great football legend”; Coach Doug Dickey’s Letter to Prospective Vols, 1969 Tennessee Football Guide, Tom Siler Collection, Box 8, Folder 18, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Country music icon Kenny Chesney recalled his boyhood admiration of Conredge Holloway, saying “[he] stood for opportunity and hope”; Shaun Silva, *The Color Orange: The Conredge Holloway Story* (2011; Nashville, TN: Tackle Box Films, 2011), Online.

116 See Figures 6 and 7. Figure 6: Proudfoot, *Diary of a Sit-in*, 15. Figure 7: 1969 Tennessee Football Guide, Tom Siler Collection, Box 8, Folder 18, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 23.

game between the New England Patriots and the Pittsburgh Steelers. At the event, Chancellor Jack Reese used seating charts to carefully plan interactions between guests from Canada, Germany, Britain, Saudi Arabia, France, Mexico, China, Japan, Hungary, the Philippines, and Korea.¹¹⁷ Although this multicultural international exhibition of racial harmony remains impressive for a quiet city on the Tennessee River, the Volunteers do not so easily forget their troubled past. As the first black football player at the University of Tennessee said, “Fifty years ago is really not a long time. My grandfather was born a slave. That’s how short it is.”¹¹⁸



Left, Figure 8. Paper Schematic of the President’s Box for the Patriots vs. Steelers Game, August 14, 1982, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 13, Folder 6, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Right, Figure 9. Aerial image of Neyland Stadium, circa 1969.

117 See Figures 8 and 9. Figure 8: Seating assignment sheet, Patriots vs. Steelers, Aug. 14, 1982, Earl M. Ramer Papers, Box 13, Folder 6, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Figure 9: 1969 Tennessee Football Guide, Tom Siler Collection, Box 8, Folder 18, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Cover.

118 Silva, *The Color Orange*.

APPENDIX A

Reprinted from Douglas Rupert Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes of White Adults about Desegregation in the Public Schools of Knoxville, Tennessee" (PhD University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1958), 46.

The patterns of opposition by the southern states as reflected in legislative action are summarized by the Southern School News in the following table:

MAJOR TYPES OF LEGISLATION ADOPTED IN ELEVEN SOUTHERN STATES SINCE 1952 DESIGNED TO PREVENT OR CONTROL DESEGREGATION

Measures Authorizing or Requiring-	Ala.	Ark.	Fla.	Ga.	La.	Miss.	N.C.	S.C.	Tenn.	Yes.	Va.
Abolition of Schools by Local (Legislation/Option)	O			L		L	O	L			O
Grants for Private Education	X			X			X				X
Sale or Lease of School Facilities	X			X	X	X	X	X			
Use of Public Funds for Segregated Schools Only				X	X			X			X
Specific Pupil Assignments	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Compulsory Attendance (Repeal/Modification)	M	M		M	M	R	M	R			M
Extraordinary Powers for Governor				X	X			X			X
Teacher Employment Laws (Repeal/Modification)	M	M		M			R	R			
Restriction on or Probe of Pro-Integration and Pro-Segregation Groups	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interposition, Nullification or Protest	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Use of State Sovereignty or Police Powers		X		X	X	X					
Provision for Legal Counsel to Oppose Desegregation Suits		X	X	X							X
Regulation of Pupil Transfers								X	X		
Guarantee Teacher Benefits in Private Schools	X			X							X
Elimination of Barratry				X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Withholding State Approval of Desegregated Schools					X						
Local Referenda to Determine Desegregation											X
Prohibition of Interracial Sports Events					X						X
Study Committees to Work on Segregation Issue	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Separate Schools on Voluntary Basis	X									X	
Segregation by Sex									X		
Specific New Provisions for Segregated Schools	X			X	X	X					X
Teachers to Instruct Own Race Only				X							

Source: Southern School News, September, 1957.

APPENDIX B

Reprinted from Douglas Rupert Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes of White Adults about Desegregation in the Public Schools of Knoxville, Tennessee" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1958), 191.

Table 18
Responses by Prosegregationists to Question on Reasons
the Respondents Favored Desegregation,
Knoxville, Tennessee, 1957

Categories	Number	Per Cent
Way I was brought up	50	39.1
Fear of intermarriage	31	24.2
Religion	30	23.4
Attitudes of Negroes	28	21.9
Influence of family	20	15.6
Social contact with Negroes	18	14.1
Negroes have or want separate facilities	18	14.1
Politics and northern leadership	16	12.5
Mixing the blood	12	9.4
Low morals	11	8.6
State rights and tradition	9	7.0
Education or schooling	6	4.7
Housing problems	6	4.7
Cramming desegregation down our throats	6	4.7
Influence of friends	5	3.9
No reasons given	5	3.9

APPENDIX C

Reprinted from Douglas Rupert Jones, "An Opinion Poll on Attitudes of White Adults about Desegregation in the Public Schools of Knoxville, Tennessee" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1958), 224.

Table 31.

Responses by Persons Favoring Desegregation to Question on
Reasons the Respondents Favored Desegregation
in Knoxville, Tennessee, 1957

Categories	Number	Per Cent
Religion	19	76
Education or schooling	10	40
American way of life	7	28
Pleasant experiences with Negroes	7	28
Family	5	20
Friends	5	20
Law of the land	5	20
Place myself in Negro's position	4	16
Influence of politicians and the political question	3	12
Negroes do not want to mix	1	4
Agitators among the Negroes	1	4
Small number of Negroes in parochial school	1	4
Unequal school facilities for Negroes	1	4
Tax structure	1	4
Negroes will make good citizens	1	4

"The Negroes haven't been given a good chance. Some (Negroes) have been treated badly. No democracy unless you

APPENDIX D

Reprinted from Nolen E. Bradley, Jr., "The Negro Undergraduate Student: Factors Relative to Performance in Predominantly White State Colleges and Universities in Tennessee" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1966), 79.

TABLE XI

ATTITUDE TOWARD COLLEGE EXPERIENCE: RESPONSES OF 253
NEGRO UNDERGRADUATES AT SEVEN TENNESSEE
STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES--
FALL, 1963, TO SPRING, 1965

Questionnaire Item	Number of Responses				
	Yes Very Much	Yes	Cannot Decide	No	No Definitely
	a	b	c	d	e
1. My college experience was a most valuable one which I would not have wanted to miss.	110	92	24	16	13
2. I could have received as good an education in a predominantly Negro college.	41	69	84	49	10
3. I was accepted by the student body.	22	113	61	43	14
4. I had to be on the alert most of the time because I am Negro.	34	85	18	96	20
5. My college teachers were fair and treated me as they treated other students.	47	109	44	38	15
6. It was difficult to keep up with the academic level of white students in my classes.	14	39	19	114	67
7. My high school education adequately prepared me to do college work.	25	65	32	102	29
8. I regret having decided to attend an interracial college.	14	17	17	122	83
9. I had to work harder than other students to prove that Negroes are not inferior students.	25	76	30	93	29

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TITLE IMAGE

Aerial photograph of Neyland Stadium, circa 1966, Football Photographs, Box 73, Folder 8, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



MODERNIZING THE COLONIAL CITY OPERATION BOOTSTRAP AND URBANIZATION IN SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

In 1949, Puerto Rico celebrated the election of its first native governor. Conscious of its historic importance, this first government had not only to articulate Puerto Rico's evolving relationship to the United States mainland but also to equip Puerto Rico for the impending necessity of urbanization and economic development. Angelo Pis-Dudot, TC '17, shows how these two projects were always intertwined: as San Juan's explosion economic opportunities drew migrants from around the island, U.S. investment never faded from the city's successes.

By Angelo Pis-Dudot TC '17
Written for "Latin American Cities"
Professor Andra Chastain
Faculty Advisor: Professor Anne Eller
Edited by Heidi Katter, Sally Ma, Max Norman, and Saumya Malhotra

In January 1949, fifty years after control of Puerto Rico changed hands from Spain to the United States, the island witnessed the inauguration of its first native governor. Celebrations and ceremonies marked the overwhelming electoral victory of Luis Muñoz Marín, the leader and founder of the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) who had enjoyed a decade of widespread support for his party's populist politics and modernizing economic program. Although Muñoz's inauguration preceded the 1952 constitutional reformulation of Puerto Rico's political status that established the current Estado Libre Asociado (Free Associated State, or Commonwealth as it is more commonly known), the symbolic event shared the calendar year with another significant first in the island's capital. In December 1949, over 400 guests from the mainland U.S., including movie stars and radio personalities, and prominent Puerto Ricans, including Governor Muñoz, descended on San Juan to inaugurate Puerto Rico's first modern luxury hotel, the Hilton Caribe.¹

The ostensibly patriotic celebration of a major milestone in Puerto Rico's self-governance may seem to contrast somewhat with the establishment of an industry that catered to mostly high-end tourists and businesspeople from the mainland U.S. Yet both events were in fact complementary examples of two important and intertwined historical movements in mid-century Puerto Rico. The inauguration of Marín and the opening of the Hilton Caribe were linked by the island's fundamentally colonial political and economic framework, which was easily susceptible to such internal contradictions. The 1940s witnessed Muñoz's successful leadership of the PPD and his conversion on the perennial question of the island's political status: originally an independista, Muñoz came to embrace the middle ground of autonomy as embodied in the Commonwealth constitution. And in the early 1940s, a massive effort to industrialize and modernize Puerto Rico began, with the island eventually adopting the development model of export promotion. In a July 1949 address to the U.S. House Committee on Public Lands, Governor Muñoz announced the end of a Puerto Rico whose economic situation many on the island and the continent saw as hopeless and the beginning of its industrial revolution: "In the last few years we have abandoned what we might call 'Operation Lament' and are now in the midst of 'Operation Bootstrap'... We are trying to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps."²

Operation Bootstrap, as it came to be known thereafter, was to be the engine for improved standards of living and government services for all Puerto Ricans. Yet despite the PPD's populist roots, Operation Bootstrap came to embody a New Deal ethos of

1 Richard Rosa, "Governing Tourism: Representation, Domination and Freedom in Puerto Rico: 1949," *The Global South* 6, no. 1 (2012): 87–88. A photo of the Hilton Caribe from this era is included in appendix one.

2 A. W. Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso and Puerto Rico's Operation Bootstrap*, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1997, 70.

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bureaucratic government intervention and planning ultimately aimed at attracting foreign investment to Puerto Rico. Although PPD founder Muñoz presided over the island as governor from 1948 to 1964 and largely shaped the politics of Operation Bootstrap, it was Teodoro Moscoso, head of *Fomento*, the government agency principally responsible for Operation Bootstrap, who drove the official plan to reorient Puerto Rico's economy from agriculture to export production of manufactured goods.³ And this fact is hardly surprising: Moscoso, a son of a well-to-do family in the southern city of Ponce, began his career in planning at the Ponce Housing Authority and rose to administrative prominence under the tutelage of Rexford Tugwell, a member of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Brain Trust" and the appointed governor of Puerto Rico from 1941 to 1946. At the center of Operation Bootstrap, therefore, was a belief in the power of the insular government—through careful planning and in partnership with the U.S. government—to expand Puerto Rico's economy and improve standards of living for all *borinqueños*.

The industrial jobs and nascent tourism industry created by Bootstrap drew waves of Puerto Ricans from economically depressed rural areas into the island's cities, resulting in unprecedented levels of urbanization and new demands on the urban planning apparatus. This situation was especially true for the island's capital, San Juan. While Ponce and Mayaguez were primary centers of cultural and economic activity in the early twentieth century, Operation Bootstrap propelled San Juan to primate city status: it was double the size of the island's second-largest city, Ponce. Between 1940 and 1960, the population of metropolitan San Juan more than doubled, from roughly 300,000 to 647,979, accounting in 1960 for 28 percent of the island's total population.⁴ The old fringes of the city sprawled into the interior of the island as the importation of automobile-centered planning met extensive construction of public and private housing developments, called *urbanizaciones*, which never quite kept up with demand. Along the coast, new luxury hotels like the Hilton Caribe and high-rise apartment buildings transformed the old colonial capital's skyline and reframed San Juaneros' relationship with visitors from the mainland.

This essay examines how Operation Bootstrap reshaped San Juan under the governorship of Luis Muñoz Marín from 1948 to 1964, focusing primarily on economic development, housing and transportation, and tourism. Various studies have explored the conflicts, progress, and inconsistencies generated by the island's colonial relationship with the United States during this period, though few have specifically investigated the intersection between Operation Bootstrap's practical and ideological aspects and the mid-

3 César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, "Transformation and Relocation: Puerto Rico's Operation Bootstrap," *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007. 180.

4 Eduardo Seda Bonilla, "La condición urbana: San Juan, Puerto Rico," *Caribbean Studies* 11, no. 4 (1971): 12. Translations are the author's own.

century urban changes in the island's capital.⁵ Most obviously, Bootstrap and the larger modernization project of which it was a part attracted enterprise and capital to San Juan that stimulated the city's economic and demographic growth and raised standards of living in the city and beyond, allowing the insular government to invest heavily in housing and other services for the urban poor. Yet San Juan's dependence on foreign investment and the emigration of thousands of Puerto Ricans to the U.S. mainland, where growth and stability were to be found, revealed the paradoxes central to the city's colonial status. While San Juan certainly modernized and grew to prominence in the mid-twentieth century under Puerto Rican leadership, planners were ultimately unable to control and provide for the demographic forces unleashed by a restructured economy in the context of its relationship with the United States.

THE PPD WEARS BOOTS: THE EMBRACE OF AUTONOMY AND OPERATION BOOTSTRAP

The Popular Democratic Party had its roots in the populism of Depression-era Puerto Rico. By the 1940s, over 80 percent of Puerto Rico's external trade was with the United States.⁶ The collapse of the sugar industry during the Great Depression, in part due to the U.S.'s abrogation of favorable trade agreements with the island, devastated Puerto Rico's economy and led to increased criticism of the colonial regime and to militant pro-independence politics.⁷ Muñoz sought to harness the new political winds to tackle these issues, founding the PPD in 1938 on a platform of agrarian reform and government intervention intended to reduce the island's dependence on U.S. capital. In its 1940 electoral program, the PPD promised to break up agricultural holdings larger than 500 acres (the vast majority of which were sugar plantations); to establish new state-owned industries to reduce absentee control of the economy and boost employment; and to improve workers' rights and conditions, guaranteeing a minimum wage in the process.⁸ Muñoz's platform and American-style campaign, which effectively utilized radio and other campaign tactics, helped the PPD sweep the 1940 elections and won him the presidency of the Puerto Rican senate.

The PPD did not go so far as to fully endorse Puerto Rican independence, however, and in fact sought to maintain a coalition that included moderate-to-conservative

5 See, for instance, Ayala and Bernabe's Puerto Rico in the *American Century* or A.W. Maldonado's *Teodoro Moscoso and Operation Bootstrap*.

6 Emilio Pantojas-García, *Development Strategies as Ideology: Puerto Rico's Export-Led Industrialization Experience*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990. 32–34.

7 *Ibid.*, 4.

8 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 182.

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elements focused primarily on economic development. Three ideological factions formed within the *Populares* on the question of Puerto Rico's political status. The first faction considered the idea of a “no status” policy as a tactical move that would allow Muñoz to gain the necessary power before pushing for independence; the second recognized real economic impediments before the shift to independence could be made; and the third was primarily interested in economic development and social reform. Teodoro Moscoso fell into the last group and was no particular fan of independence, preferring autonomy or statehood, which he saw as the only options that would ensure the economic prospects necessary for industrializing Puerto Rico and modernizing its economy.⁹

In helping establish the Puerto Rican Development Company (Pridco) in 1942, Moscoso reoriented the PPD's priorities around industrializing the country. Reflecting on its importance to the trajectory of the PPD decades later, Moscoso stated that “In 1942 the [PPD] platform didn't have one word in it about industrialization so we decided to do something about it.”¹⁰ Under the direction of Governor Tugwell and with the assistance of several attorney friends, Moscoso drew heavily upon the plans that established Chile's *Corporación de Fomento de la Producción* to draft the proposed legislation for Pridco's creation. Throughout the 1940s, Pridco was responsible for creating various state-run enterprises in light manufacturing that were aimed at diversifying Puerto Rico's economy and making it more self-sufficient. The Pridco enterprises struggled to find a market on the island, however, due to private economic interests that opposed expansions of government planning and intervention in the market. Private enterprises refused to buy goods produced in Pridco factories such as glass bottles for the rum industry, paper for newspapers, or cardboard.¹¹ The PPD was ultimately reluctant to directly challenge the interests opposed to expanding government economic planning. As a result, manufacturing as a share of the island's national income barely budged from 11.8 percent in 1940 to 13.6 percent in 1949.¹²

Puerto Rico's stalled economic takeoff took place amidst a wave of global decolonization following World War II, which pushed Muñoz to reconsider his stance on economic development models and their relation to the question of the island's political status. The congressional independence hearings for the Philippines – another colony taken from Spain as part of the spoils of the Spanish-American War – were the decisive turning point in Muñoz's political thought. As he explained years later, the independence hearings “convinced me that Puerto Rico would never obtain the right to choose separate independence in a plebiscite except under economic conditions which would be disastrous to the

9 Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 16–17.

10 Martha Dreyer Magruder, *Son of Bootstrap*, Santurce: Permanent Press, 1976, 2.

11 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 184.

12 *Ibid.*, 189.

welfare of the people of Puerto Rico and which would destroy any hope of continuing to improve the standard of living.”¹³ By 1947, the PPD and Muñoz thus abandoned the goal of political independence and instead prioritized the development and modernization of Puerto Rico within the existing colonial framework.

Rather than developing insular markets for domestically manufactured goods and diversifying the agricultural sector, Operation Bootstrap turned to export production and attracting foreign – mainly U.S. – investment in manufacturing and other capitalist enterprises.¹⁴ In 1950, Pridco merged into the newly established Economic Development Administration, popularly known as Fomento, which was tasked with heading Operation Bootstrap and given access to Puerto Rico’s General Fund for financing.¹⁵ Fomento’s primary tool for attracting investment was a full tax exemption for whichever operations U.S. enterprises wished to open on the island, a measure passed by Puerto Rico’s legislature in 1948 after a contentious amendment process.¹⁶ The insular government repeatedly extended the deadline on tax exemptions through the 1950s and 1960s, sometimes using a tax exemption as an incentive to encourage corporations to locate their enterprises outside of major metropolitan areas, especially San Juan.¹⁷ Coupled with lower labor costs on the island due to wages below the U.S. federal minimum, the tax exemption strategy was largely successful in attracting investment and generated significant improvements in the material standard of living – wages increased; public utilities improved; and educational, health, and housing services expanded throughout the 1950s.¹⁸ Yet Puerto Rico’s economy was nevertheless characterized by weak internal connections and an almost exclusive reliance on U.S. capital and consumer markets.¹⁹ The scholar Eduardo Seda Bonilla has criticized Bootstrap for having failed to make Puerto Ricans more entrepreneurially autonomous, writing that “the purchasing power that [was] generated in the Puerto Rican population [was] not converted into entrepreneurial potential, for, to begin with, the competition with subsidiaries of giant U.S. companies [turned] out to be nearly impossible.”²⁰ While touted as a success in modernization and industrialization, Bootstrap thus seemed to suffer from an economic absenteeism – with foreign proprietors owning large portions of Puerto Rico’s economic holdings – that was present in the island’s history as a monocrop economy. Indeed, by 1974, 70 percent of all productive wealth in

13 Maldonado, Teodoro Moscoso, 55.

14 Ibid., 189.

15 Magruder, *Son of Bootstrap*, 3. Interview with Moscoso.

16 Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 57.

17 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 190.

18 Ibid., 200.

19 Ibid.

20 Seda Bonilla, “La condición urbana,” 12.

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Puerto Rico was owned by non-insular investors.²¹

The ideological shifts needed to justify the PPD's total rejection of Puerto Rican independence and embrace of foreign investment in Puerto Rico's economy hinged on discourses of democratic self-governance in the context of Cold War geopolitics and modernization theory. Staking a middle ground between calls for statehood and independence, Muñoz argued against nationalism of all sorts in a series of lectures delivered at Harvard in 1959. "In Puerto Rico," he asserted, "we are not Puerto Rican nationalists and have not become American nationalists. We are loyal, non-nationalist citizens of the United States."²² Nationalism, following the upheavals caused by socialist and fascist nationalist movements in WWII and the Cuban Revolution, was a dangerous form of politics to be avoided just as much as colonialism. According to Muñoz, "to overcome the obviously obsolescent colonialism... Puerto Rico did not embrace the darkly hidden obsolescence of nationalism. Puerto Ricans are anti-colonialists and still not nationalists—a fact unique and of some illumination."²³ Puerto Rico's constitutional status under the Commonwealth provided self-governance without nationhood, which was in Muñoz's eyes "an experiment in non-nationalistic political freedom for a Latin American people."²⁴ Operation Bootstrap's dependence on U.S. investment and market access thus found part of its political justification in an ambiguous, paradoxical conception of Puerto Rican national identity.

GROWING PAINS: HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION IN SAN JUAN

As Operation Bootstrap attracted more investment to Puerto Rico, San Juan underwent a rapid transformation and achieved preeminence among the island's cities. Most new industrial ventures were established in the city and in nearby towns such as Bayamón, Guaynabo, and Carolina, all of which became integrated into the San Juan metropolitan area as the city expanded. From 1950 to 1960, the greater San Juan region "accounted for almost half of the island's net income and for nearly three of every four nonagricultural jobs created in Puerto Rico."²⁵ The capital's economic growth exercised a magnetic pull on rural migrants who sought prospects better than the 80-cent minimum wage in the agricultural sector²⁶ — where even jobs were not guaranteed, as the agricul-

21 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 199.

22 Luis Muñoz Marín, "Godkin Lectures: Breakthrough Nationalism. A Small Island Looks At a Big Trouble," *Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín*, 1959, Web, Accessed December 10, 2016.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Helen Icken Safa, *The Urban Poor of Puerto Rico: A Study in Development and Inequality*, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1974, *The Urban Poor of Puerto Rico*. 5.

26 Ibid., 21. The figure reflects the minimum wage rate from 1969.

tural and home-needlework sectors that had dominated the countryside's economy had almost entirely collapsed by the late 1940s. In fact, as early as the period between 1935 and 1940, San Juan drew over half of Puerto Rico's interregional migrants.²⁷ During this time, the economic heart of San Juan shifted out of the old colonial city on the San Juan islet and into the nearby, more recently populated district of Santurce – a symbolic move that highlighted the pressure exerted on the city's existing infrastructure.

The thousands of internal migrants that moved to San Juan helped drive the city's rapid development through a massive demand for residential construction, both informal and formal, public and private. Despite large advances in living standards, estimates in 1969 suggested the existence of 421 shantytowns in Puerto Rico with a total of 79,382 dwellings.²⁸ The residents of San Juan's shantytowns were primarily rural migrants who found employment as unskilled laborers in other commercial and industrial sectors of the city.²⁹ Though the municipal and insular officials sometimes accommodated the informal structures, as a general rule planners strove to eliminate shantytowns and relocate residents to public housing projects as part of an ambitious urban renewal campaign.³⁰ During a comprehensive urban renewal project in Old San Juan, for example, planners proposed razing the La Perla shantytown that had developed beyond the colonial city's walls as part of an effort to clear "blight" and make way for a large park on the shores of the San Juan islet.³¹

The widespread construction of *urbanizaciones*, or housing developments, throughout San Juan at once embodied unplanned, sprawling development and a governmental commitment to a vision of a Puerto Rican welfare state. *Urbanizaciones* could either be privately owned and developed or publicly subsidized, mostly in the form of housing cooperatives.³² Tens of thousands of San Juaneros – many of whom moved or were relocated from shantytowns – benefitted from low to no-cost units with modern appliances and utilities that could withstand tropical storms and hurricanes. Yet many cultural critics and planners criticized the developments for poor planning and design. Law professor Federico Cordero criticized the *urbanizaciones*, claiming that many "lacked aesthetic appeal" and "added to the general impression that the urbanizations had been built on an assembly line."³³ Seda Bonilla inveighed against the planning of the *urban-*

27 Ibid., 2.

28 Ibid., 1.

29 Ibid., 20.

30 Ibid., 19.

31 Puerto Rico Urban Renewal and Housing Administration, Long-Range Planning Office, "Old San Juan and Puerta de Tierra: A General Neighborhood Renewal Plan," Río Piedras: 1964. 42.

32 Safa, *The Urban Poor of Puerto Rico*, 88.

33 Federico A. Cordero, "Operación Metro: A Case Study of the Power Structure in Action and the Crisis in the Planning Process in Puerto Rico," *Revista Jurídica de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*,

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izaciones for their widespread use of English place-names such as “Sabana Gardens,” “Royal Palm,” “Hyde Park,” and “Bayamón Gardens,” a phenomenon he dubbed the “genocide of Puerto Rican place-naming.”³⁴ Perhaps more concerning was the economic segregation that resulted from uniform price-points within the *urbanizaciones*. Understanding socioeconomically segregated urbanizaciones as an impediment to collective advancement, a 1963 study for the renovation of the Llorens Torres public housing project stated among its objectives the creation of “a community possessing a much higher degree of socio-economic integration with the immediately surrounding areas as well as with the embracing [sic] larger community – the San Juan Metropolitan Area – of which it constitutes an important part.”³⁵ Governor Muñoz’s 1963 address to the Puerto Rican legislature, which emphasized the plan’s intent to “minimize the institutional character of the [Llorens Torres] project while producing a more heterogeneous community – socially as well as economically,” demonstrated the insular government’s commitment to harnessing the economic productivity generated by Operation Bootstrap for the public welfare.³⁶

Mass migration to the United States provided a pressure valve for an insular government committed to providing newcomers essential government services as rural Puerto Ricans continued to trickle into San Juan. Nevertheless, planners struggled to keep up with the rate of the city’s demographic and topographic growth. According to a report from Ramón García Santiago, President of the Puerto Rico Planning Board, the metropolitan area expanded threefold from 1940 to 1960, a rate of spatial growth that outpaced population growth – in other words, the development of urban sprawl.³⁷ A transportation study commissioned in 1967 by the Puerto Rican Planning Board faulted the urbanizations, “which [were] built in ‘leap frog’ fashion, leaving large pockets of underdeveloped land,” for the city’s sprawl.³⁸ In the study’s estimation, “the San Juan Metropolitan Area grew without strong guidance or direction of land-use control” over the previous two decades.³⁹ Its recommendations – proposals for a multi-center model of

1963, 32(3): 382.

34 Seda Bonilla, “La condición urbana,” 16.

35 Puerto Rico Urban Renewal and Housing Administration, “A Plan for the Transformation of Llorens Torres Public Housing Project in San Juan, Puerto Rico. An Endeavor...to Improve its Community Living,” San Juan: 1963. 24. The Llorens Torres *urbanización*, built between 1950 and 1954 and home to 15,000 residents, was the largest public housing project in San Juan.

36 *Ibid.*, 3.

37 Seda Bonilla, “La condición urbana,” 13.

38 Wilbur Smith and Associates, “San Juan Metropolitan Area Transportation Study; Transportation Plan,” Prepared for Department of Public Works, Puerto Rico Planning Board, San Juan: 1967. 5. See figure 1, attached. The firm’s founder, Wilbur M. Smith, was a pioneer in major transportation system design and construction across the world and designed large parts of the interstate highway system.

39 *Ibid.*, 34.

urban concentration and vast expansions in highway and expressway construction – presumed that inhabitants of San Juan owned vehicles. It certainly seemed that way to the study’s authors, consultants from a major transportation design and construction firm with a potential stake in expanding the highway system. From 1950 to 1960, private motor vehicle registration increased by 342 percent to a total of 106,903 vehicles, vastly outpacing population growth in the city – an upward trajectory that showed no signs of slowing by the time of the study’s drafting.⁴⁰ By the mid-70s, that number had jumped to 800,000, a development that prompted Teodoro Moscoso to remark, “Now that I’m not so sure is progress.”⁴¹ Seda Bonilla shared Moscoso’s doubts: he attributed the encroachment of highways and housing into the countryside and the destruction of fertile agricultural lands to the lack of any serious planning efforts aimed at promoting pedestrian or bicycle transportation.⁴²

CARIBBEAN HOSPITALITY: TOURISM AND MODERNITY IN SAN JUAN

Parallel to the promotion of industrialization was the insular government’s development of the tourism industry, a symbolically charged component of Operation Bootstrap’s attempt to stimulate Puerto Rico’s economy and modernize its image. Conservative voices in Puerto Rico had for decades attempted to promote tourism and establish it as a key industry, but it was not until Moscoso became directly involved with the establishment of the Hilton Caribe that the industry took off and became an iconic and enduring part of San Juan’s cultural and economic landscape. Initially advanced under the pretext of providing accommodations for the foreign officials and businesspeople central to Operation Bootstrap, the tourism industry embodied major debates over modernization and cultural heritage, as well as the contours of the island’s colonial relationship with the United States, in the walls of its hotels.

Although the state quickly became one of the main investors in promoting the tourism sector, various officials of the insular government publicly voiced misgivings about expanding tourism, and in some cases vehemently denounced what many saw as a precarious cultural development.⁴³ Indeed, a skeptical official attitude toward tourism was what had stalled its establishment until the late 1940s in the first place. Even in 1960, Durand Manzanal, Moscoso’s successor at Fomento, warned of tourism’s corrupt-

40 Ibid., 8.

41 Magruder, *Son of Bootstrap*, 7.

42 Seda Bonilla, “La condición urbana,” 16.

43 Robert C. Mings, “Puerto Rico and Tourism: The Struggle for Cultural Autonomy Among Developing Nations: The Case of Puerto Rico and its Tourist Industry,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1968): 9.

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ing influence on the Puerto Rican body politic, writing, “The development of tourism should not result in the destruction of spiritual values.”⁴⁴ Muñoz shared those concerns, suggesting in 1954 that tourist facilities be cordoned off into park areas similar to today’s isolated all-inclusive resorts to minimize the industry’s interaction with Puerto Ricans.⁴⁵ Though tourism parks never came to pass, the governor’s attitude frustrated Moscoso, who claimed that Fomento was “never able to obtain from Muñoz the necessary directives as to how tourism was going to be developed.”⁴⁶ Indeed, when asked if he had any regrets about Bootstrap, Moscoso cited what he considered to be tourism’s unruly growth, partly blaming Muñoz: “I regret very deeply that we didn’t plan the orderly development of tourism any better than we did... We really worked out a good tourism plan and gave it to Muñoz. Unfortunately, however, nothing ever happened with it.”⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Moscoso had a direct hand in catalyzing tourism’s takeoff under Operation Bootstrap and saw it as a “major link in the program for industrial development for the island.”⁴⁸ In 1946, Moscoso reached out to various major hotel chains in the U.S. proposing that they consider opening ventures in Puerto Rico. Only Conrad Hilton responded, and within a year Moscoso had pushed the plans for the Hilton Caribe past opposition from the liberal wing of the PPD and from Rexford Tugwell, who was in his last year as governor.⁴⁹ By the end, the Commonwealth government had invested \$7.4 million into the Hilton Caribe.⁵⁰ A weeklong celebration showcasing Operation Bootstrap surrounded the grand opening of the hotel, demonstrating its importance for Bootstrap’s economic program and public relations campaign.⁵¹ In 1948, after persuading Muñoz to back the measure, Moscoso successfully lobbied the Puerto Rican legislature to declare tourism an industry, thereby extending Bootstrap’s tax exemptions to investments in hotels.⁵² Soon thereafter, he upped the ante in convincing the insular legislature to approve gambling in hotels, albeit under very strict regulation and only after having sustained withering personal criticism from PPD politicians and planners.

While officials claim that the development of a tourist industry aimed to accommodate visitors with a wide range of socioeconomic statuses, in reality the Puerto Rican tourism industry largely followed the price-points set by the Hilton Caribe and, later, the

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 120.

47 Magruder, *Son of Bootstrap*, 6. Interview with Magruder.

48 Ibid.

49 Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 122–123.

50 Mings, “Puerto Rico and Tourism,” 7.

51 Lee E. Cooper, “Puerto Rico Opens a \$6,000,000 Hotel,” *New York Times*, December 10, 1949.

52 Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 127.

La Concha hotel. Geopolitical shifts in the Caribbean in the 1950s, namely the Cuban Revolution, allowed Puerto Rico to attract the U.S. tourist market and boost its annual visitors to 500,000 by the mid-1960s, thereby making it the most visited island in the Caribbean.⁵³ From 1958 to 1964, between fifty and sixty percent of tourists visiting Puerto Rican hotels had an annual income over \$10,000 while just twenty percent of U.S. citizens fell into that income bracket in the 1963 fiscal year.⁵⁴ Sam Schweitzer, an American-born Puerto Rican businessman appointed by Muñoz to represent western Puerto Rico on a nine-person tourism planning committee, saw the homogeneity in the island's hotels as a challenge for the industry. "What we need is three types of facilities," he explained to the editor of a major Puerto Rican business tabloid. "[We need] luxury, middle priced and low priced for all people to be able to come here."⁵⁵ Though it is possible Moscoso may have intended to achieve this, the result at any rate was that prime coastal real estate in San Juan became dedicated to hosting and catering to well-heeled Americans travelling for business or vacation.

The construction of another iconic San Juan hotel, La Concha, further highlighted the tensions at the center of Operation Bootstrap and their manifestations in San Juan's architectural landscape. As with the Hilton, Fomento oversaw the planning and construction of La Concha, which opened its doors as a luxury hotel in the high-end district of Condado in 1958. In the bidding process for the design of La Concha, all three local architecture firms employed modernism, whereas the mainland firms submitted Spanish Revivalist styles to the Fomento board.⁵⁶ The Spanish Revivalist style was an elaboration of the California Mission style and others reminiscent of Spain's Golden Age – none of which were rooted in Puerto Rican culture. As Hertz argues, its implementation throughout Puerto Rico, notably on the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras campus, had the visual effect of preserving the island as an essentially non-North American, Hispanic sphere of U.S. influence.⁵⁷ Fomento rejected that tradition, ultimately selecting the submission of local firm of Osvaldo Toro and Miguel Ferrer, which was established not long

53 Alicia Swords and Ronald M. Mize, "Beyond Tourist Gazes and Performances: U.S. Consumption of Land and Labor in Puerto Rican and Mexican Destinations." *Latin American Perspectives* 35, no. 3 (2008): 56.

54 Mings, "Puerto Rico and Tourism," 19. Tourist statistics were taken from Mings' article, while income calculations are the author's own and are based on federal census statistics from the 1964 Consumer Income report prepared by the Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

55 Magruder, *Son of Bootstrap*, 58.

56 John B. Hertz, "Authenticity, Colonialism, and the Struggle with Modernity," *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 4 (2004): 222. A photo taken of La Concha from the era is included in appendix two.

57 Hertz, "The Struggle with Modernity," 221.

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before the competition to design La Concha was held and was also responsible for the design of the Hilton Caribe.

In their design for La Concha, Toro and Ferrer adapted modernist principles such as functionality to Puerto Rico's local conditions and aesthetics, emphasizing features like cross ventilation and natural illumination through the manipulation of screens, shades, and *brise-soleils*.⁵⁸ Simple though striking ornamental flourishes, such as the undulating roof structure atop La Concha's nightclub, referenced local tropical flora and the omnipresence of water on the island. Hertz points out that, internally, the hotel was "organized around a central interior patio, a space in the La Concha [sic] called the 'Batey,' which is the name of the traditional indigenous public space around which the structures of the island's pre-Columbian pueblos were organized."⁵⁹ The central patio may have also referenced the contemporary urban housing motif of a central internal patio, further grounding the hotel's spatial arrangements in local practice and knowledge and establishing an architectural style that synthesized forward-looking, utopian forms with distinctly Puerto Rican innovations. La Concha's modernist style, rooted in local traditions and references, mirrored and magnified the political project of the PPD, which sought a Puerto Rican "third way" of developing and modernizing the island. The tropical-modernist forms used in La Concha, however, contradict their purpose insofar as the local authenticity and cultural autonomy of the building were subverted by its function as a luxury hotel for foreigners, mainly from the U.S. mainland. La Concha was thus indicative of the wider paradox at the heart of Operation Bootstrap and the political project behind the *Estado Libre Asociado*. At the same time as planners sought a modern and autonomous Puerto Rico, they nevertheless continued to operate under a colonial framework.

CONCLUSION: FREE ASSOCIATED DEPENDENCE?

As Operation Bootstrap focused its promotional efforts in the U.S. mainland and had its ultimate shape determined by Puerto Rico's government and the island's colonial relationship with the U.S., San Juan was the main setting for the project of modernizing and industrializing Puerto Rico beginning in the 1940s and continues to be so to this day. Notwithstanding the limited autonomy conferred by Commonwealth status, the Muñoz administration's policies were the first enacted by a top-to-bottom insular government composed of Puerto Ricans; they aimed to raise standards of living on the island and transform its international image from one of helplessness and dependence to one of industry and self-reliance. In the process, San Juan became the showcase example of

58 Ibid, 222.

59 Ibid, 223.

the PPD's project to define a new, modern path for Puerto Rico that balanced economic expediency against self-governance. The architectural design of the La Concha hotel was a testament to that project, cementing its place in the Condado skyline.

Along the way, planners at the municipal and insular levels responded to unforeseen pressures on San Juan's infrastructure unleashed by Bootstrap while striving to construct and maintain the city's modern image. That meant a determined project of shantytown clearance and urban renewal that forcibly relocated thousands of newly arrived San Juaneros and denied them the status linked to home ownership. It also meant an equally determined effort to provide not only quantitatively sufficient housing to the city's poor and newly arrived residents, but also design and planning qualitatively suited to better integrate them into the larger city community. Both stances reflected a characteristically New Deal belief in social science and a commitment to a planning adapted to the island's needs.

Less rosy, and perhaps less obvious, was Bootstrap's legacy of dependence on foreign investment. In using tax exemptions to attract enterprises that created thousands of jobs in San Juan, Bootstrap left San Juaneros wide open to competition from foreign labor markets and the whims of U.S. corporations. As wages on the island increased and other emerging sectors began to industrialize, the manufacturing jobs that had attracted so many Puerto Ricans from the countryside began to disappear. Moreover, the fundamental economic model settled on by Bootstrap was never quite able to provide enough jobs. Unemployment rates on the island were persistently higher than in the U.S., pushing hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans in mid-century and beyond to leave the island for better economic prospects on the mainland. Though much of the tax exemption extended to companies by Bootstrap is no longer in place, U.S. multinationals on the island, on average, currently repatriate over forty percent of their earnings to the mainland U.S.⁶⁰ Puerto Rico's pharmaceutical industry, which produces a quarter of the island's GDP today, follows the model of export promotion established by Operation Bootstrap in mid-century.

Economic dependence on the U.S. was thus ultimately at the heart of Operation Bootstrap and Muñoz's decision to pursue Commonwealth status, and was the main factor contradicting the progress achieved in industrializing and modernizing Puerto Rico and especially San Juan. Although the city provided jobs and homes to hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans leaving a countryside devoid of economic prospects, it was unable to accommodate all of them – even as it strove to accommodate visitors from the U.S.

⁶⁰ Ed Morales, "Who is Responsible for Puerto Rico's Debt?" *The Nation*, June 7, 2016.

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APPENDIX A

Originally produced in Hertz, "The Struggle with Modernity."



3. Caribe Hilton Hotel. Courtesy of the Archivo de Arquitectura

APPENDIX B

Originally produced in Hertz, "The Struggle with Modernity."



4. La Concha Hotel. Courtesy of the Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

MODERNIZING THE COLONIAL CITY

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TITLE IMAGE

Waves crash against a natural barrier near Caribe Hilton Hotel. Photographed looking west from the Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza Hotel beach. Credit: Daniel Pancer, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/vxla/5299352764>.



THE ESSENTIAL DENIAL OF PELLAGRA IN THE NEW SOUTH THE DISEASE THAT SAID TOO MUCH

For a resident of the South in the early twentieth century, it was hard to know what to believe about pellagra: was it an infection, a bug carried in corn, or a punishment for too many processed dinners? Should you be ashamed of having it, or righteously indignant at the way Northern interests might use you in their arguments? James Wyatt Woodall, Columbia '18, masterfully sketches these confusions—and the self-interested moves engendering them—in this essay. Along the way, he explores “fantasies” of a New South and the obstacles to bringing such a dream to fruition. And a larger point about public health is both made and illustrated, in which rhetoric is a powerful obstacle to a disease and social change is necessary but hard to come by.

By James Wyatt Woodall, Columbia '18
Written for “Social History of American Public Health”
Professor James Colgrove
Edited by David Stevens, Christine Wang, and Serena Cho

On July 25, 1921, President Warren G. Harding wrote two letters concerning the prevalence of pellagra, a disease of malnutrition, in the South.¹ One of these letters was directed to Dr. Livingston Farrand, the Chairman of the American Red Cross, and the other to Surgeon-General Hugh S. Cumming of the Public Health Service, both urging immediate action regarding the disease. President Harding exclaimed that there is no reason that “any measures necessary to relieve the sufferers on the cotton plantations and in the textile villages should be delayed for a single day.”² The President stressed the importance of a report by Dr. Joseph Goldberger, a Public Health Officer studying pellagra, which revealed that there were over “100,000 new cases of pellagra among the little farmers, cotton tenants and cotton mill workers in the Southern States.”³ Harding emphasized sufferers in two iconic Southern economic institutions: cotton plantations and textile mill villages. The President, in his letters, described pellagra as a “menace,” a “plague,” and a “famine” connected to “economic dislocation,” and declared that “the problem of pellagra is in the main a problem of poverty” and the “depressed cotton market” and thus a problem of dependence on the staple economy in the South.⁴ Harding even compared the starvation conditions in the South to “underdeveloped countries” in the “Near and Far East.”⁵ These letters, published nationwide in *The New York Times*, declared pellagra as “one of the most serious situations that has developed in this country in years.”⁶ Following the publication of these letters, Dr. Joseph Goldberger continued to stress that this was not a matter of feeding those in “starvation conditions,” but rather a matter of improving the “economic conditions” of the South.⁷

These statements by President Harding and the sensationalism surrounding the issue turned Southern general indifference to and acceptance of pellagra into all-out denial of both the existence of the disease and the relevance of Southern socioeconomic predicates to its development. The outrage of Southern politicians, industrialists, investors, and wealthy doctors can be understood through the gospel of the “New South.” The New South ideology, as C. Vann Woodward claims, was a marriage of Lost Cause romanticism and regional pride of antebellum days with industrialization, capitalism, and an attempt to be “at last one in faith with the country” and “out yankee the yankee,” as Representative Henry Watterson, editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, stated in 1877.⁸ In accordance

1 Alan M. Kraut, *Goldberger's War: The Life and Work of a Public Health Crusader* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003), 101–102.

2 “Orders Relief for Pellagra Victims,” *New York Times*, July 26, 1921.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 “South Resents Federal Alarm Over Pellagra,” *New York Times*, July 27, 1921.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press,

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with this, the New South elite perceived pellagra as an indictment of the South by Dr. Goldberger, Surgeon-General Cumming, and President Harding. Thus, the disease, in so far as Harding and Goldberger perceived it, had to be denied. Pellagra was a symbol of poverty that represented an affront to the heavily advertised post-slavery labor alternatives of a cheap labor force in Southern textile mills—a hallmark of the New South—and tenant farming and sharecropping. And thus, it was an affront to the New South itself.⁹

Therefore, in typical Southern fashion, the New South elite triumvirate of politicians, businessmen, and even politically conservative doctors (like Seale Harris, respected president of the Southern Medical Association and owner-editor of the *Southern Medical Journal*) heralded the South as “the greatest country on the Earth,” looked to cast blame on “damyankees” and the poor, and sought to deny all accusations of the existence of pellagra, poverty, monoculture, insufficient labor standards, and low standards of living—even while pellagra, in actuality, revealed the failure of the New South promises and underlined the abuse of the average Southerner, both white and black, by the collusion of the new Southern business aristocracy and Northern speculators.¹⁰ Through this study, perhaps one can understand the ways in which pellagra, a public health issue, revealed underlying institutional problems. One can perhaps also see why the Southern elite denied available aid for it: not because they wanted to, but rather because they could not accept the problem; for if they did, they would be admitting both the inadequacy of the “New” socioeconomic structures on which their own power rode, as well as an “Old” cultural inferiority to the North, which the South had been fighting since its defense of its “peculiar institution.”

The first essential question to answer, as Dr. Joseph Goldberger did, is in what way the public health crisis of pellagra was essentially linked to the socioeconomics of the New South. Why was pellagra “in the main a problem of poverty”? Why could the “improvement in basic economic conditions alone...be expected to heal this festering ulcer in the body of our people,” as Dr. Goldberger stated?¹¹ In this way, one can reach a nuanced understanding of the relationship between socioeconomic institutions and public health at large and perceive, as Dr. Goldberger had—by understanding that the “economic condition of the entire cotton producing area is unfavorable”—that drastic socioeconomic change and the fundamental alteration of ways of life are often needed for such diseases

1971), 151.

9 Elizabeth W. Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste: A Social History of Pellagra in The South* (Westport, Greenwood Publishing Company, 1972), 152.

10 *Greensboro (N.C.) Daily News*, July 31, 1921.

11 Kraut, *Goldberger's War*, 101–102; Joseph Kirby and Edgar Sydenstricker, “Pellagra in the Mississippi Flood Area, PHR 42 (1927): 2711; Jack Temple Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South 1920–1960* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1987), 187.

to subsidize or disappear. Public health work alone is often not sufficient.

One of the new economic developments of the New South was the arrival of textile factories, cotton mills, and paternalist mill villages. With the arrival of Northern investment in the South came the advertisement by wealthy Southerners of a cheap, white, contented, healthy, and “un-Bolshevized” labor force.¹² These industries did maintain a cheap labor force, but the level of their workers’ contentment and health, and the sustainability of these calamitous institutions, were questionable considering the high prevalence of poverty and thus of pellagra. *The American Federationist* suggested that the average man earned approximately \$12.77 a week in a mill, of which \$11.33 went towards food to properly feed a family of five. Thus, with \$11.33 of a worker’s salary going towards food, plus the price of rent, clothing, and other expenses, one can see that it was near impossible for the average worker to properly support his family under such adverse economic conditions.¹³ Additionally, the majority of factory and mine workers were paid in scrip and thus were tied to the inventory of the local company store, which often lacked a proper diversity of foods. As a result, workers depended on the “benevolence” of the paternalistic mill or mine owner.¹⁴ In addition, even if the company store did have an ample supply of meats, dairy, and vegetables, workers were often diverted from these choices by their high prices and attracted instead to the cheap and culturally favorable but unhealthy choices of “corn bread, molasses, syrup, fatback, and coffee.”¹⁵ Goldberger assessed—comparing two Spartanburg, South Carolina mill towns, one with a high rate of pellagra and one with a low rate of pellagra—that the mill towns that had the highest rates of pellagra were ones where the workers were paid the lowest wages, had no plots for gardens or market of fresh produce and were most dependent on the commissary store; meanwhile, towns with the lowest rates of pellagra had all of the opposite conditions.¹⁶

Another economic condition of the New South not advertised by its proponents was the enslaving crop lien system and the cotton monoculture it reinforced.¹⁷ If a farmer wished to obtain credit (for seed, tools, fertilizer, mules, etc.), as all farmers had to following the Civil War, he was often forced to grow cotton, as “the furnishing merchant[s] demanded that their debtors plant the one certain cash crop, cotton.”¹⁸ When a farmer

12 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 151; Paul Blanshard, *Labor in the Southern Cotton Mills* (New York: New Republic Inc., 1927), 5.

13 “Southern Mill Villages, A Survey,” *The American Federationist* 38 (1931): 1091-1093; Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 194.

14 Kraut, *Goldberger’s War*, 98.

15 *Ibid.*, 98.

16 Daphne A. Roe, *A Plague of Corn: The Social History of Pellagra* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 105-106.

17 “Pellagra Probe to Go Forward,” *The Atlanta Constitution*.

18 Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*

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signed his first crop lien, he was in continual “bondage to his merchant as long as he failed to pay out”; and he often did fail to pay out, because farmers were overcharged with interest rates that frequently exceeded 100 percent.¹⁹ Thus, the one-time independent farmer fell into an endless chain of debt that occasioned tenancy or sharecropping on land, now owned by the furnishing merchant, that was once his own. As North Carolina farmer John Leard said in 1939, “Money’s the thing...and you can’t make any of it growin’ corn and ’taters.” The once independent yeoman farmer was forced to sacrifice his more diversified independent garden and the growing of “corn and ’taters” for the only thing that would earn him a loan: cotton.²⁰ Tenant farmers bound to this endless chain of credit in Macon, Georgia, to take one example, earned a wage that was 60 to 70 percent less than the U.S. average.²¹ Therefore, as Goldberger properly assessed, the reality of the New South did not match the imagined New South of the Southern elite triumvirate. The reality was that the average Southerner, in the mill or in the field, was impoverished, and pellagra was a physical manifestation of that Southern poverty.

Instead of accepting Goldberger and Harding’s indictment of the socioeconomic system of peonage and the unsustainable mill village paternalism of the New South, the Southern elite attempted to defend their business interests, unique institutions and pride by placing blame on other regions, economic classes and industries. Before the direct attack on Southern economic structures and poverty by Harding and Goldberger in 1921, many Southerners accepted the existence of pellagra, because it was believed that pellagra was not caused by malnourishment but rather by spoiled corn imported from the Midwest. The South grew insufficient amounts of corn (because of cotton monoculture) and relied on Midwestern imports in order to sustain itself.²² In these circumstances, it was expedient for New South business strategists to explicate the dangers of pellagra, as corn was “the principal crop of the country and big money was involved.”²³ Thus, Southern politicians in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Texas wished to stimulate their own economies and dominate the U.S. corn market by advocating for corn inspection laws and referring to pellagra, as one Georgia health official did in 1911, as “the murder of Georgia citizens and the slaughter of the state’s horses by sale of corn unfit for consumption,” or even by limiting the importation of Midwestern corn by instituting

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 24.

19 Ibid., 21–22.

20 “John Leard” by Frank Massimino and Quay Corn. North Carolina, 1939. Manuscript/Mixed Material. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

21 Kraut, *Goldberger’s War*, 98.

22 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 20.

23 Ibid., 20.

market controls, as South Carolina did.²⁴ The acceptance of pellagra was expedient for the elite of the “New South” at this time because it opened up the possibility of monopolizing corn production by harming another region, the Midwest. It was also expedient, in this case, to violate the New South principle of laissez-faire capitalism by instituting market controls.²⁵ Thus, the opportunistic acceptance of pellagra by Southern public health officials, politicians, and businessmen was contingent on the expediency of the acceptance. When pellagra indicted the Midwest rather than the South, it was only proper for the political, business and medical triumvirate to accept pellagra in order to further develop industry and agriculture in the New South. For the same reason, after 1921, this Southern elite triumvirate would deny the existence of pellagra and impoverished conditions when it was expedient for the New South to do so.

The Southern elite also often blamed the federal government and the North in a manner typical of that of the Old Order by claiming Southern superiority. Ironically, however, in order for the New South to defend itself from its “prevailing inferiority,” as Woodward states, “this idealizing of the past proceeded from the mouths of the most active propagandists for the New Order.”²⁶ Thus, this old Lost Cause-style argument – that the North was continuing to attack the South with indictments of its way of life by pointing to diseases like pellagra or hookworm – was expedient for those who wished to defend and bolster Southern industry and agriculture. Some Southerners thereby argued that pellagra was a conspiracy by Northerners to “inflict further injury on a besieged land,” while others thought the Harding administration, in 1921, “[had] it in for the South” because Harding was a “damyankee, who has probably spent the major portion of his active life devising ways and means of afflicting the South.”²⁷ These arguments are grounded in one of the fundamental components of the New South’s rhetoric: a “very righteous and holy anger” in defense of Southern ways of life combined with the promotion of Southern industrial and agricultural development.²⁸

Intertwined with a fundamental Southern pride – rejecting any criticism that painted the South as insufficient and impoverished because of pellagra – was a defense of business practices new and old against the “carpetbagger” federal government and Northern businesses. Senator S.B. Dial from South Carolina, for example, stated, “all would be well in Dixie were it not for the unjust cotton-futures contract law and the unjust railroad rates, a kind of thievery that has the protection of Congress.”²⁹ Senator Dial attributed

24 Ibid., 24.

25 Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 148.

26 Ibid., 157.

27 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 13; *Greensboro Daily News*, July 31, 1921.

28 Blanshard, *Labor in Southern Cotton Mills* (New York, New Republic Inc., 1927), 6–7.

29 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 153.

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“all” economic tribulations of the South to the “thievery” of the federal government and thus reframed pellagra not as an indictment of Southern economic practices, but rather as an indictment of the federal economic policy that continued a “thievery” reminiscent of that executed by “carpetbaggers.” Meanwhile, cotton growers and manufacturers blamed high cotton prices and, thus, pellagra on the Federal Reserve Board because of the lack of liberal credit.³⁰ Therefore, economic hardships in the South were blamed on federal protectionism and a failure to embrace true laissez-faire capitalism, which was supposedly a keystone of New South ideology. Notice, however, that protectionism was assailed only when it was supposedly against the interests of the Southern states after 1921, while it was embraced prior to 1921, when pellagra was supposed to be caused by rancid Midwestern corn.

Other Southern politicians and public health officers berated the federal government for its supposed commercial and material promotion of another region at the expense of the South. Governor Thomas Kilby of Alabama believed that the Washington pellagra and famine report was merely “slander” against the Southern states and that this “slander” was possibly part of “a campaign of propaganda *for some other section*.”³¹ Dr. S. Welch, an Alabama state health officer, also suggested that other sections of the country were “exploiting [the South] in flamboyant style” in order to “profit in a material way by circulating false reports against the best and most desirable section of the best country in the world.”³² Both Governor Kilby and Dr. Welch, recalling sectionalist affinities and defenses, ran campaigns on the assumption that there existed a conspiracy against the South which aimed to commercially benefit another region of the country. Dr. Welch’s claim that the South is “the most desirable section” reveals a combination of sentimental Southern jingoism and modern commercial interests used to defend Southern industry and advertise to investors.

The Southern elite, even when it did accept pellagra, blamed the disease not on the impoverishment of its own people due to insufficient mills and monoculture, but rather on the impoverished pellagrins themselves. Dr. Seale Harris, for example, admitted in the 1940s that Goldberger was correct in hypothesizing that pellagra was caused by a nutrient deficiency. However, Harris, a diehard New South proponent who idealized New South founding fathers Benjamin Hill and Henry W. Grady, refused to accept Goldberger’s assertion that pellagra was tied to “class distinctions” and socioeconomics.³³ Instead, Harris insinuated that pellagra was a result of the intransigence and ignorance

30 Ibid., 154.

31 Clark Howell, “Pellagra Probe to Go Forward,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, July 30, 1921.

32 Ibid.

33 Michael A. Flannery, “‘Frauds,’ ‘Filth Parties,’ ‘Yeast Fads,’ and ‘Black Boxes’: Pellagra and Southern Pride, 1906–2003,” *Southern Quarterly* 53 (Spring, 2016): 114–140, 236.

of the poor – their filthy living, bad habits, personal hygiene, and moral ineptitude – and suggested moral education programs rather than an economic revolution to prevent pellagra.³⁴ *The Spartanburg Journal* preached to its readers in 1930 that there is no reason to “reduce cotton acreage, that is futile.” Rather, the farmer “should be informed how to grow more cotton at reduced cost per pound.”³⁵ This line of logic shifted the blame for pellagra from the dominance of cotton monoculture, which Dr. Goldberger suggested should be reduced, to the individual farmer’s ignorance and lack of frugality. Dr. Hall, vital statistician of the Mississippi State Health Board, declared too that the contracting of the disease “is largely due to ignorance” and that even the “poorer classes” could afford to “vary the cheaper foodstuffs.”³⁶ Similarly, *The Atlanta Constitution*, while accepting Goldberger’s recommendation that everyone should have a “cow and garden,” noted – in contrast to Goldberger’s theory that economic restructuring was more essential than education – that the key to solving the pellagra epidemic was not economic restructuring but rather just education. *The Atlanta Constitution* claimed that

the remedy is education... every-day, *horse sense*, and knowledge as to how to live and what to eat!... no thought or attention is given (by these black and white “one-horse” cotton croppers) to raising a garden!... it should be a *stigma* on any housewife who does not feed her family... there is *no possible reason* why any family should not produce any ample variety of vegetables, and of milk... *The South is not suffering from poverty... the cause [of pellagra] is not poverty, but ignorance.*³⁷

This article showed the defense of Southern economic proceedings most clearly by blaming the “one-horse cotton croppers” for their own lack of “horse sense” (something so obvious that an animal should know – i.e., how to eat right). The article insinuated that pellagra was a “stigma” not on the New South, but on the individual. According to the article, there was “no possible reason” why every individual should not have a garden and a cow. Thus, it was assumed that pellagra or any nutritional paucity was due to the carelessness and stupidity of the individual, not the unsustainability of the new economic order. The article goes so far as to suggest that poverty in the South did not even exist. The denial of the relation between New South socioeconomics and pellagra, as well as the blame placed on the pellagrins for their own illness, reveals the sustained hope in the New South elite by shifting blame to the individual.

34 *Ibid.*, 114–140, 236.

35 *Spartanburg Journal*, July 8, 9, September 6, 1930.

36 “South Resents Federal Alarm Over Pellagra,” *The Atlanta Constitution*.

37 “Cow and Garden,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, August 28, 1921.

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While some Southerners began to accept Goldberger's suggestion that pellagra was the result of a nutrient deficiency, many others suggested that Goldberger's reports were exaggerated or continued to vehemently deny the existence of Southern realities. The continued denial of pellagra by many Southern elites was in response to the accusations by Goldberger and Surgeon-General Cumming that pellagra was due to "the failure to diversify crops" resulting from "the custom of one-crop farming."³⁸ Dr. Seale Harris, in *The Courier-Journal* of Louisville, Kentucky, offered a "vigorous denial" of all these accusations and said the "pellagra scare, which was not justified by facts, does the South a gross injustice" and "misrepresents" the realities of the South.³⁹ In 1921, Harris also accused Dr. Goldberger of lacking experience with the disease and stated that "the majority of physicians who have had experience with pellagra do not accept Goldberger's theory... most of us feel that the cause of pellagra is an infection of some kind."⁴⁰ In order to deny that pellagra was endemic to the South, Harris resorted to the McFadden-Thompson Infection theory. The McFadden-Thompson Commission supposedly proved in 1914 that pellagra "is due to an infection" and "*is not essentially a Southern Disease... it is found in other parts of the country.*"⁴¹ This infection theory of pellagra became a fallback for proponents of the New South when their region was specifically attacked for its occurrences, as they instead emphasized the declaration by the McFadden-Thompson Commission's Dr. J.S. Siler that pellagra was not a "Southern Disease." Even into the late 1920s, some newspapers, such as *The Austin American* in 1928, posted ads unequivocally stating, "Pellagra is not a disease of malnutrition... it arises from an infection in the stomach."⁴² The attribution of the disease to infection instead of malnutrition made it appear as if the disease could and did occur in any other region of the country as well and thus was not a harbinger of New South impoverishment. Statements such as these reveal the way that some New South proponents vehemently denied even the cause of pellagra by malnutrition by referencing earlier public health reports; they therefore also reveal that, when it came to this issue, public health was not objective or one-sided – pellagra was a political issue that often used "scientific study" to justify political stances.

Some other members of the New South elite denied the existence of poverty and conditions of hunger in the South altogether. Dr. W.S. Leathers, secretary and executive

38 "Pellagra Report Sent to Harding," *The Atlanta Constitution*, August 16, 1921.

39 Seale Harris, "The Pellagra Scare," *The Courier-Journal*, July 28, 1921.

40 Ibid.

41 J.F. Siler, P.E. Garrison, and W.J. MacNeal, "Pellagra: A Summary of the First Progress Report of the Thompson-McFadden Pellagra Commission," *JAMA* LXII(1) (1914): 8-12, accessed on December 9, 2016. doi:10.1001/jama.1914.02560260016004; "Pellagra Isn't Very Dangerous," *The Nashville Tennessean*, January 3, 1914.

42 "Display Ad 99," *The Austin American*, August 26, 1928.

officer of the Mississippi State Board of Health, declared, “I know of no famine in any place in Mississippi...of course there are some isolated cases...but that is also found in New York City.”⁴³ Dr. Leathers went on to claim, “no pinch of poverty is being felt...”⁴⁴ This utter denial of the existence of poverty or its peculiarity to the South is striking, especially coming from a medical doctor, yet it is not surprising, as a rural Arkansas teacher suggested; she stated that the richer folk denied conditions of poverty because “they had not been out into the country to see the true condition...times just as hard as the President had said.”⁴⁵ Thus, it appears that either the New South elite were so out of touch with reality, as Paul Gaston stated, that they could not understand or did not perceive the reality of impoverishment and resultant illness, or they chose to ignore reality in order to uphold their narrative of Southern prosperity, which to the elite – who were indeed profiting from cheap Southern labor and industry – must have been real.⁴⁶ Therefore, the inaction of Southern boards of health, according to Gaston, was not due to their unwillingness to aid the pellagrins, but was rather due to their complete embrace of an illusory world of New South prosperity that had been extolled since the end of Reconstruction, as well as their lack of interaction with the actual working folks of the South, who did not benefit from the New South like they did.

Others, while not denying the existence of pellagra or its connection to malnutrition or poverty, firmly believed that the reports by President Harding and Dr. Goldberger were exaggerated in an attempt to harm the South. Senator Byrne of South Carolina contended that “claims that pellagra is widespread and that starvation conditions are in existence” represent an “utter absurdity,” while Representative W.C. Wright of Georgia ridiculed the idea that “the people of Georgia were starving.”⁴⁷ These reports take issue with the idea that their state was deficient in any manner. The Georgia Senate even passed a resolution denouncing the President’s report of a pellagra epidemic as “damning,” and the Georgia State Board of Health declared that no increase of the disease was found in Georgia, Florida, or Tennessee.⁴⁸ The use of the word “damning” is ambiguous, but possibly indicates the rejection of the reports of pellagra because they would “damn” Southern culture and Southern business. Thus, for Southern politicians to deny Harding’s report as exaggerated was for Southern governments to defend the New South’s cultural adequacy and its economic sustainability.

Deniers of pellagra even went so far as to suggest that monoculture did not exist.

43 “The South Resents Federal Alarm,” *New York Times*.

44 Ibid.

45 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 157.

46 Paul Gaston, *The New South Creed*, (Montgomery, NewSouth Book, 1970), 190.

47 “Pellagra Probe to Go Forward,” *The Atlanta Constitution*.

48 “No Alarm in the South Over Pellagra,” *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 17, 1921.

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Governor Thomas McRae of Arkansas suggested, as *The New York Times* reports, that “bankers and commercial organizations have been conducting diversified farming campaigns which have met with splendid results, and the State no longer is in the ‘one-crop class.’”⁴⁹ The most telling statement by a Southern politician was that of W.C. Wright of Georgia, who claimed that farmers had diversified with cows, peaches, and watermelons, while simultaneously proclaiming, “Cotton will once more be enthroned as King and the fair southland will again come into her own....”⁵⁰ This counterintuitive speech highlights a few of the paradoxes of the New South – emphasizing both diversification and the monolithic greatness of cotton culture; claiming the South as the “greatest” section and wanting to “out yankee the yankee” and join in one faith with him; heralding the greatness of the antebellum and Confederate South and simultaneously proclaiming that the South must industrialize and modernize. Pellagra simply unveiled the paradox inherent in coupling a longing nostalgia for the Old South with an industrial vision of a “New South.” It revealed the devolution and collapse of the “New South” fantasy before the world as New South elite scrambled to defend their southland and economic interests against this public health crisis.

To deny the existence or spread of pellagra was to deny the deterioration in the region’s claim to prosperity – it was thus near impossible for those steeped in the dogma of the New South to do anything else. As historian Elizabeth Etheridge suggests, “it was easier to deny pellagra existed than to confront the harsh realities dealing with it,” as the resurgence of pellagra coincided with the extensive campaign of Southern industrialists to lure more investment to the South by advertising its cheap, healthy labor force. Harding undercut the effectiveness of this campaign and thereby, in the view of the Southern elite, attacked the South directly.⁵¹ The New South elite defended the South against pellagra accusations both as a “natural reaction” of an investor to “anyone who attacks his income” and as a result of deep-rooted Southern hostility to Northern criticism of Southern society.⁵²

Etheridge argues that one reason for the defensive behavior of Southern politicians was simply a historical characteristic of Southerners. Southerners, in Etheridge’s view, took no criticism for their “peculiar institution” during the antebellum years.⁵³ Thus, to distract from any “peculiar” socioeconomic situation or illness, the South re-

49 “South Resents Federal Alarm Over Pellagra,” *New York Times*.

50 “Pellagra Probe to Go Forward,” *The Atlanta Constitution*.

51 Elizabeth W. Etheridge, “Pellagra an Unappreciated Reminder of Southern Distinctiveness,” in *Disease and Distinctiveness in the American South*, ed. Tom L. Savitt and James Harvey Young (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 111.

52 Blanshard, *Labor in Southern Cotton Mills* (New York, New Republic Inc., 1927), 6–7.

53 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 151.

verted back to its antebellum declarations that the South was “the best and most desirable section of the best country in the world,” as Dr. Welch of Alabama stated.⁵⁴ Thomas Hamilton similarly claimed that the “South is the greatest country on earth” with the “greatest climate” and the “proudest people” who are “confident of their future and unashamed of their past.” Tom Watson of Georgia likewise framed the defense against pellagra as a situation in which the South must “defend the honor of the Homeland.”⁵⁵ This sort of jingoism, founded in past pride and future confidence, was part of the deep root of Southern sensitivity.⁵⁶

But, in addition to the above sentimentalist, Lost Cause romanticism of some Southern politicians, the Southern elite also became defensive because their dream and advertising campaign of a New South were threatened. Seale Harris, while denouncing pellagra, said that everyone from the North would “move their families to the South where cheap lands, fertile soil, and balmy climates offer the greatest advantage for the farmer...if these facts were known in New England the cotton mills would come to the cotton fields...”⁵⁷ This does not appear to be a proper statement from a doctor, but rather seems to be one of a businessman. This denunciation of pellagra evolved into an ad campaign for New South industry and investment, extolling the “cheapness” of the land and labor, the advantage to the farmer, the convenience of having cotton mills and cotton fields in the same region, and the great amount of “mineral and industrial resources” in need of more investment for development. Other reports, such as one in the *Nashville Tennessean*, blatantly framed the “pellagra scare” as “unfavorable advertising” and thereby rejected charity on the grounds that it would make the South appear less than self-sufficient.⁵⁸

Most importantly, pellagra uncovered the falsity of the New South “flight of fantasy” and thus needed to be defended against. Mills, once harbingers of the New South, now represented despair and sickness. Fields of snowy cotton, once emblematic of Dixie tradition, not only starved the soil of essential nutrients but also starved the croppers that raised it.⁵⁹ The New South ran on a series of assumptions and fantasies, and pellagra simply unearthed the contradictions in those fantasies. For example, it was assumed that the South had cheap, obedient, healthy and un-unionized farm tenants who were being “forced out of the unprofitable single-crop farming of cotton into the doors of the cotton

54 “Pellagra Probe Goes Further,” *The Atlanta Constitution*.

55 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 153.

56 *Ibid.*, 151.

57 “The Pellagra Scare,” *The Courier-Journal*.

58 “Goldberger’s Theory Combated,” *The Nashville Tennessean*.

59 Etheridge, “Southern Distinctiveness,” 100.

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mills.”⁶⁰ It was assumed, as the Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce claimed, that “there [was] no poverty” in the cotton mill villages and that they “[kept] going, even at a loss” to the benefit of the community; thus, any case of pellagra must be due to ignorance, because the paternalist, benevolent mill village – where 87 percent of workers lived – provided all.⁶¹ The rejection of Red Cross and federal aid by every Southern state also suggests that if these states had accepted aid from the federal government, they would have been, first, capitulating to the detested federal government and surrendering the South to the will of the North; second, accepting incidences of pellagra and thus Goldberger’s theory that pellagra was caused by Southern poverty; and third, accepting that the “New South” model and advertising of cheap labor and industry was unsustainable because it led to “plague and famine.” Thus, when Dr. Leathers of Mississippi “emphatically” denied aid from the Red Cross, he was upholding the sustained dream and investment of the Southern elite in the project of the New South.⁶² The reality was that, while Southern mill labor was cheap – as earlier proved by the fact that over half of workers’ incomes were below a “fair standard” of compensation – the insufficiency of wages for buying food, the squalid conditions, and the prevalence of hookworm and pellagra revealed that this system was unsustainable.⁶³

Pellagra, like many public health issues, was not simply an issue of public health. Rather, it was an indictment of the faulty culture, economy, social order, and dream of the Southern Redeemers of the New South, who were every bit as venal as the “carpetbaggers.”⁶⁴ The poor of the South knew that they needed to eat better; the fact was that they simply could not afford the food they needed – even the independent farmer lived on a conditional basis with regards to proper nutrition. John Leard of North Carolina stated in 1939 that he would see his children get milk, eggs, and vegetables only “*when* the cow is doin’ right well...the chickens are laying” and “*when* the garden is in...”⁶⁵ Although it is true that some of the poorer folks did not eat properly because they “[liked] fat-back” too much or were ignorant of the causes of pellagra, thinking that “it runs in our family,” the majority of the poor, when informed of its causes, continued to eat poorly because, as Mary Hicks stated, “we couldn’t afford nothing else” or “the landlord” didn’t wish for us “to use the land for vegetables.”⁶⁶ Therefore, Goldberger was

60 Blanshard, *Labor in the Southern Cotton Mills*, 5.

61 E.B. Walker “Pellagra in the South: To the Editor of the New York Times,” *New York Times*, August 14, 1921.

62 “South Resents Federal Alarm Over Pellagra,” *New York Times*.

63 Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 420.

64 Sheldon Hackney, “Origins of the New South in Retrospect,” *Journal of Southern History* 38 (1972), 191.

65 “John Leard,” Frank Massimino and Quay Corn.

66 Kirby, *Rural World Lost*, 189–190.

correct in his assessment that fundamental economic transformations were most vital to the end of pellagra in the South. *The American Federationist* put it clearly in saying “even education cannot make bread out of a stone.”⁶⁷

Thenceforth, the Southern elite, not the common folk, denied the existence of pellagra in the South. Unfortunately, the leading doctors of the South, such as Seale Harris, as well as many state politicians and Boards of Health, supported this delusion. Hence, drastic social reorganization, as Dr. Goldberger suggested, was necessary for pellagra to be extinguished, because the elites’ ideology was so entrenched and unmovable. The continued spread of the boll weevil, an insect which decimates cotton crops, led to the end of Southern monoculture and thus the ability to diversify crops. The New Deal brought electrification, and thus refrigeration, allowing the preservation of meats other than salt-pork; it also ushered in the Farm Security Association, which provided farmers with packets of vegetable seeds and educated farmers on proper diet.⁶⁸ In other words, more drastic changes needed to take place to eliminate pellagra. Although Goldberger revealed a fundamental problem of the South and contributed much scholarship to the etiology of pellagra, it was not enough; neither Goldberger nor his disciples eradicated pellagra. The hopes, rhetoric and entrenched power of the proponents of the New South were just too strong, and, for them, to accept aid was to accept defeat. This study shows that public health agents cannot solve all public health issues, because some public health crises simply reveal too much. As Jack Temple Kirby stated, “such diseases tend to subside or disappear when economic systems change and ways of life are altered fundamentally.”⁶⁹

67 Etheridge, *The Butterfly Caste*, 194.

68 *Ibid.*, 204–205.

69 Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost*, 187.

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TITLE IMAGE

An elderly pellagra sufferer in North Carolina, 1939. Photo by Marion Post Wolcott, courtesy of the Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2017754518/>.



AN INTERVIEW WITH GLENDA GILMORE PETER V. AND C. VANN WOODWARD PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

About a year ago, the election of Donald Trump revealed to us the distressing geopolitical divide in our nation. The inaccuracies of election predictions and Trump's surprising victory testified to our ignorance of America's demographics. Still, rather than proper historical inquiry, antiquated stereotypes often mold our understanding of the South, rendering it impossible to reconcile our diverging visions of what America stands for. Yale Historical Review Editor Serena Cho, MC '21, sat down with renowned Southern and African American History Professor Glenda Gilmore to talk about her work, the role of activism on and off campus, and the lessons we can draw from the Civil Rights Movement, particularly in relation to the current political turmoil.

Interview by Serena Cho, MC '21
Photo by Michael Marsland

Yale Historical Review: Let's start with your education and youth. What drove your interest in African-American history and Southern history? In what ways did growing up in North Carolina shape your interest?

Glenda Gilmore: I was born in 1949, when the Jim Crow South was in full swing. I attended a white school and was brought up in a family of white supremacists to be a white supremacist. In the mid-60s, when I was in high school, there came a time when everybody in my age had to choose which side they were on. I chose to reject white supremacy. This was a common experience of many people my age, and it caused a lot of ruptures in families.

YHR: What made you choose to reject white supremacy? Growing up in such an environment, it might have been difficult to take such a "radical" stance.

GG: Obviously, that was a really long journey. I grew up in Greensboro, North Carolina, where the first sit-ins were, and I saw them every day on the nightly news. I realized that the black college students were acting with dignity and that the white people were really being thugs and tyrants to them. I realized that those mannerisms and terrorist actions were things I've been taught not to have or commit. I immediately had cognitive dissonance about which side I was on. It's a process when you change your mind about something you've been taught all your life to be true. I am also really lucky that my family moved near a Quaker community, and so a lot of the people I went to high school with came from very different traditions. Many people in my high school were tolerant and pro-integration. My friends helped me think through this. Also, I read a lot in high school. I read writings by Frederick Douglass and a book called *Black Like Me*, about a white guy who was terribly abused when he deliberately took a drug that turned his skin black. I began to decide that everything I had been told before was a lie.

YHR: When did you decide that you wanted to study history, particularly Southern and African American history? Given how deeply race influenced your upbringing, did you always know that you wanted to be a historian?

GG: I went to Wake Forest University and majored in psychology. At the time, there was absolutely no African American history being taught. My great grandmothers were born during Reconstruction, so I had heard so many stories from them, but in the mid-60s, there wasn't any such thing as social history. The most popular professor at my college taught a Glory Days civil war course on the Old South. Most historians neglected to dis-

cuss the experiences of the people and simply glorified the Confederacy.

Later, I found myself in Beaufort, South Carolina teaching high school history, and I began to realize that I knew absolutely nothing about African American history. It was at a school in its first year of integration. My students spoke a dialect called Gullah and lived in the islands off of Beaufort. Obviously, teaching them about the grandeur of Jefferson Davis was not going to work. So, I began to learn from my students.

After teaching high school, I spent 15 years as a corporate human resources executive, because I wanted to participate in the historic application of the Civil Rights Act, which opened up employment to women and people of color. Then, I thought that we were really succeeding; we were really hiring a diverse group of people. Then, when Supreme Court turned around laws mandating that executives pay attention to desegregating the workforce, executives lost interest in the issue. Maybe for the first time in my life, when I was about 32, I learned that progress isn't linear – that things aren't going to get better. So, I started taking some courses at night at a local university and began to find out that while I had been out of school, history had changed. It was now social and political history, and there was a whole body of African American history which I was entirely unaware. I began reading and writing again, and that's when I really committed to working with people studying at the cutting edge of the new African American history.

YHR: You mentioned how witnessing the sit-ins at Greensboro influenced your views on race and history. Could you talk about being a Southern historian living in the Northeast? Do you think it's important to live at the place you are studying?

GG: Obviously, growing up in the Jim Crow South has guided my research interests dramatically. It's been an investigative journey to find out all the things that were happening in a place I thought I knew, but didn't actually know at all. So that's exciting and interesting. I don't think, however, that scholarship depends on living in the place that you're studying. I do think it depends on going there and speaking the language, for example, if you are studying French history, but I don't think that you have to be a Southerner or live in the South to write Southern history. Nor do I think that you have to be British to write British history. I travel back often, obviously, but in many ways, living outside the South has really helped me get perspective on the place where I grew up: how the system works, endures and still supports virulent white supremacy. Had I never left the South, there are so many things I would never have known. I've been living on and off in Ireland over the past 10 years, and that has been really helpful for me to gain perspectives on American history, too.

YHR: What is it like to study Southern history at Yale, specifically? What do you love or not love about teaching here?

GG: I love my students, undergraduate to graduate. I've learned so much from my students and continue to. Yale has enormous resources, and that helps both my own research and my students'. Yale students are able to go out into the world to do primary research often at a very early stage in their lives. Of course, because we are an international university, if you're interested in something like white supremacy, colonialism or agrarian studies, you are going to meet people from all over the world who work on similar ideas, focusing on different regions. Yale's also a wonderful place for interdisciplinary studies, which has really shaped the way I work. I'm also active in American Studies and in African American Studies. It's marvelous because you are working with literature experts, anthropologists and sociologists at the same time, and your students are too.

Regarding Southern history at Yale, we've had someone who focuses on regional history of the South for a whole century. For example, we had U.B. Phillips, who, in the beginning, was an apologist for slavery, arguing that slavery is a relatively benign institution. C. Vann Woodward was, of course, the most famous historian for his criticism regarding segregation and arguing against inevitability. Yale had a commitment to cover regional American history, because Yale saw itself as a national university, just as it now sees itself as an international university.

YHR: How has your work influenced the south politically and socially?

GG: I published an op-ed in the *New York Times* today [November 20, 2017] called "Colin Kaepernick and the Myth of the 'Good' Protest." In the article, I argue that Kaepernick and other NFL players who knelt are following a long history of planned protests. I was able to bring a lot of things I teach in Southern history to that op-ed and apply them to the present moment. I've written lots of op-eds, and I think my writing has had influence on the South. Several exhibitions have come out based on my works, and I also consult for films. I sometimes will talk to other university officials on naming practices and memorialization.

YHR: Has the rise of Donald Trump influenced your study in any way? In what ways has our country's current geopolitical divide changed the way you look at Southern history?

GG: I think Southern history is more important now than at any other time I've been

teaching it. From the late 80s, when I was teaching in the South, to the age of Barack Obama, people were interested in Southern history, but they were working on different topics. Now, the topic at hand is addressing how we ended up with a majority of white women and roughly 38 percent of the nation thinking that Trump's policies are the best for our nation. I saw many of the tropes that I studied in the archives gain a new life in the current political discourse in the right. I see Richard Spencer, whose grandfather owned cotton plantations, who grew up in Dallas and went to Duke, start a Nazi-like movement. If anything, I underestimated how much progress we, as a nation, had made and how hard we had to fight to keep decency, civil rights, and a sense of opportunity for everyone. I guess that the decision that I made in the 80s, that progress isn't linear, has just been repeated and relived today.

YHR: You've already touched upon my next question a little bit, but what kind of research are you currently doing in Ireland, and what kind of insights has living abroad given you on American history, Southern history or African American history?

GG: I broadened my work to international research while working on my second book *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights*, to put the American civil rights movement in context. Now, I'm working on a grant proposal, sponsored by Trinity College Dublin, to compare the African American and Irish freedom struggles from the end of the Civil War in 1865 to the present. It's not necessarily that African Americans and Irish people were best buddies, but seeing what we can learn from the ways they compared their plights to one another. I'm looking at the quantitative data that talks about sharecropping and tenancy in both places and comparing the greatest migrations of African Americans and the Irish diaspora. I'm also looking at how they theorized freedom and independence. Ultimately, in the struggle in Northern Ireland—in what they call the Troubles—the U.S. African American civil rights movement was a great inspiration. Really, I'm studying how examples of civil rights in one place become embodied in another place, if I get the grant. If not, I'll still write a book.

YHR: I see that you are also very active in advocating for women's rights. How has serving as the president of the Southern Association for Women Historians influenced your research? Could you talk about the intersection between gender and the struggle for civil rights?

GG: I learned that the hard way, about incorporating the gender. Gender is central to everything in Southern history, even if women are not present in discourse. I wrote my

master's thesis on a period of time when white people took the right to vote away from black people, from 1898 to 1900. I had never had a women's history course, and I wrote the entire thesis without thinking about gender or mentioning gender. Then, when I wrote my first book, *Gender and Jim Crow*, I recast the entire episode as being about how gender works in relation to political and racial oppression and how women – totally unmentioned before that time – participated in or tried to end the system of white supremacy. There was a moment in Southern history in the 80s, 90s and even the beginning of 21st century when history was sitting there without women or gender analysis. It was really a wonderful moment for historians – and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it – who began to reinterpret what we knew. It was a profound moment to write history, but that's not to say that that was when I first became a feminist. I became a feminist in the late 60s and joined the National Organization for Women in 1970. There was a vibrant feminist community in Charlotte, North Carolina then. Right now, there's more need than ever to think through American history by thinking about gender, which doesn't really just mean women's behavior, but how men behave and why they behave that way in relation to women.

YHR: In your book *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights*, you discuss the forgotten black and white activists who helped lay a foundation for the later civil rights movement. What do you think is the role of radicalization in activism, and how effective do you think radical movements are in bringing social change?

GG: It's important to realize that when social change occurs, there's a full spectrum of reasons that made it come about. It's also important to recognize that the radicals I write about also span a spectrum of radicalism. Some are Black Bolsheviks who go to the Soviet Union and come back to overthrow the racist government in America, and some are like Pauli Murray, who tried to integrate the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1938. The most important thing to remember is that the definition of "radical" changes over time. Someone today who defies segregation is not considered a radical. Yet, at that time, Murray would've been considered a radical. The NAACP was also considered radical and was banned in many places. I do think that the presence of real radicals, for example black communists, gave people who were formerly considered radical more ground to stand on. The NAACP launched a campaign in the South that said, "We are the people you white people want to support, not those Black Bolsheviks; the NAACP is going to work with you." So, writing *Defying Dixie* gave me a real appreciation for radicals that I didn't have in the past. I've never been a radical. I've always been a person who is probably on the left side of the liberal, after my civil rights epiphany. Still, I came to

appreciate the role that radicalism plays in putting ideas that can't be spoken out there and assisting other people with what they believe in, by providing a comparison to their radical position. I do think that it moves things forward. I don't think that the civil rights movement would have ever succeeded if it was a communist movement; the number of Black Bolsheviks and their white sympathizers never became big enough to call it a social movement, really. But their ideas propelled the discussions in the 20s, 30s, and 40s.

YHR: You are currently working on a book entitled *A Homeland of His Imagination: Romare Bearden's Southern Odyssey in Time and Space*. Could you tell us what this book explores?

GG: Romare Bearden is the most famous African American artist of the 20th century, but no one knows much about his family. I am writing a generational history of the Beardens, using traditional archives – which are few – and his art. Late in his life, Bearden returned to the South to paint, do collage, and work on his art; he saw this as a mystical experience. I'm writing a book about family history and art, and interpreting the art with what I now know about his family. I'm trying to talk about how Bearden's creative process is imbedded in his family stories, and what Bearden may have been telling us in his work that he really wasn't even conscious of. I know more about his family now than he did. It's really interesting; it's psychological, dealing with trauma. It's really about art, which I didn't know much about but was privileged to explore through African American Studies. I will be giving lectures at Harvard in the spring and publishing with University of North Carolina Press probably next year.

YHR: That sounds great. Shifting gears, I want to discuss your activism on campus. Last year, you strongly advocated for changing the name of Calhoun college, publishing articles in *The New York Times* and the *Yale Daily News*. In one of your YDN articles, you stated, "Yale students taught us that we're not slaves to our history." To what extent do you think it is possible to address the legacy of slavery implicated with Calhoun, while not changing the name of the college? In general, how do we reconcile the celebration of tradition with the changing conception of what is considered "just"?

GG: There's a long history with changing the name of Calhoun, about half of which I witnessed. I was at Yale for 20 years before the recent controversy, and many people believed for a very long time – many good people, including black masters of Calhoun and famous graduates – that the name should not be changed, but the programming, commemorative events and memorials should address who Calhoun was. We talked about

this for 20 years – that’s a pretty long time – but nothing happened. There was Calhoun, and there was the stained-glass window of slaves picking cotton. Even if we had ever succeeded in commemorating him properly, in the end, we couldn’t ever override that; we couldn’t override the fact that descendants of slaves went to eat every day at Calhoun, sitting under a stained-glass window of enslaved people picking cotton. We couldn’t override the fact that Calhoun was mainly known for two things: one, his doctrine that the United States government should not interfere with states’ rights, and, two, his unequivocal call for the South to betray the Constitution. Now, I don’t think it’s possible, at this point, to continue to honor people who were only known for their endorsement of slavery and treason to the Constitution. I think it was a mistake to name the college after him. Yale didn’t do so until the 20th century. Yale was in a phase at the time; a good example of that phase is that they hired U.B. Phillips as the Southern historian. We only hired him after he got more and more racist, when he visited Africa and began talking about how un-evolved all Africans were. Yale was riding the eugenicist wave in the 20s and 30s, and I don’t think we have a responsibility to honor something that was such a big mistake by perpetuating it. I used to believe, even 20 years ago, that you shouldn’t change history but just interpret it, but that was before I thought about what it would be like to be a student of color or a white ally and have to associate with Calhoun. Ultimately, I began thinking, around eight years ago – my son is African American – how I could ever support not actively changing the name if he were to be in Calhoun. I decided that that would be impossible for me as a mom, and if it was impossible for me as a mom, it had to be impossible for me as a professor.

YHR: In 2010, you published “Am I a Screwball, or Am I a Pioneer?”: Pauli Murray’s Civil Rights Movement. As a Southern historian, what are your thoughts on naming one of the new residential colleges after Murray? Also, before Calhoun was renamed, what was the significance of having both Calhoun and Pauli Murray colleges coexist on campus?

GG: Pauli Murray is a major figure in *Defying Dixie* as well. I’ve just spent a lot of time with her. Let me illustrate how important it is that this college is named after her by telling you something that she did. All she had ever wanted to do was to go to the University of North Carolina for a graduate degree. She was turned down in 1938, and in the 1970s, the University of North Carolina was involved in a decade-long desegregation lawsuit with the Department of Health Education and Welfare. At the time, UNC offered her an honorary degree, and she was so thrilled – you can see it on her papers. And then, she found out that UNC was not cooperating with the desegregation lawsuit, and

declined to take the degree, which must have broken her heart. But Pauli Murray always stood up for what she believed in. She loved Yale, she loved her time in Yale Law School, and she is such an inspiration to all of our students. I cried when President Salovey told me what was going to happen. At the same time, as soon as there was a Pauli Murray college, she wouldn't let Calhoun within a hundred miles of her. So I was sure that Calhoun's name would be changed.

YHR: In this interview, you frequently referred back to your realization that progress sometimes is not linear. In the moments when it feels like we're backtracking, what can we do to recognize that and prevent it?

GG: Everyone should major in history. Seriously, though, it's too important not to avail yourselves of what Yale has to offer. I can't imagine being a young person facing the world without understanding how freedom, discrimination, and opportunity have worked in the American history, particularly in the 20th century and beyond. So, I think that the first thing you could do to prepare yourself for anything is to be educated about that past. But I also don't think our students need any advice from me. It's been one of the great joys of the last few years to teach students who are so far ahead of me in understanding the difference that activism makes. I've taught many generations of Yale students who would have never protested. I've taught thousands of lawyers who probably would have been activists if they hadn't gone to school in the 90s or the early 2000s, when many thought we had fixed the world's problems. Nobody thought that we had a structure in America that was going to fail the nation's highest ideals. Students, starting about seven years ago, came in with a different attitude. Feminists expected to hold the university accountable, African Americans expected to be full citizens, and international and immigrant students expected to have their contributions recognized. When that didn't always happen, they figured out how to make it happen. So that's really been the great joy of teaching for as long as I have.

YHR: Is there an issue on campus you would like to be more involved in?

GG: You know, I'm feeling pretty satisfied about the vibrant community we have at Yale, about the discussions that we have and about how invested students are in Yale and not in their mythical future careers. So, I will follow where they lead.



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