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The Rise of Educational Consciousness:
Racial and Class Politics of the Detroit Public Schools, 1943-1974

By

Bianca A. Suárez

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Daniel H. Perlstein, Chair
Professor Michael Dumas
Professor Carlos Muñoz Jr.

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Abstract

The Rise of Educational Consciousness:
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This study examines the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit, 1943-1974. This study draws on precepts of critical social theory to analyze archival data, memoir and biography, personal archival collections, extant oral history interviews, and 16 original oral history interviews conducted in Detroit. Utilizing a relational historical ethnography research design, this study asserts the emergence of radical educational consciousness was informed by a critique of capitalist relations of production and experiential knowledge of a geography of spatial racism. This radical analysis directly challenged racialized administrative control over the school system. In Detroit, a radical conception of community control of schools was articulated as a rejection of both racial liberalism and bourgeois cultural nationalism. By the late 1960s, radical educational consciousness conceptualized educational struggle as a front of broader liberation struggle.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother Maria Blanca Angelica. She walked in dignity despite the daily humiliations racial capitalism imposed on her and the family. I hope I have honored her life, just a bit, in my attempt to excavate that our oppression is not of our own doing. And to the memory of my Uncle Juan and Uncle Julio, may your suffering transcend in the hereafter to joy and light.

To my family, that has been a constant source of poor people humor and honest grounding throughout my academic journey. To my mother, Blanca Angelica, thank you for having me and for doing what needed to be done to ensure our survival. I thank you mom for being my own militant educational advocate, for taking us to every community meeting in our hood, for teaching me, radically, not democratically, what is what in this life. To my brother, Zuriel, who has demonstrated to me both the power and the limits of the grip of racial capitalism, I thank you. To my sister, Brianna Julissa, you were my first student and are now my best friend, I thank you for all the ways that you have forced me to live beyond the immediate and look ahead to what might be possible. A heartfelt thank you to my extended family, most importantly to my Uncle Rodolfo, who is the reason I have a Detroit story. And to my familia on the other side of this man-made border, I think of you each day and am immediately grounded in grace of purpose. To my nephew and godson Zuriel Jr. and nephew Zavier, thank you for teaching this Detroit family how to love on one another. A warm embrace to my Tia Juany and my cousins Mirna, Almiin, Indira, and Chacho, and many hugs to my nieces and nephews Aranza, Monserrath, Maximiliano, Herman, and Emiliano.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Motivation

June 2016, the State of Michigan Legislature ushered in a series of education reform bills that created the Detroit Public Schools Community District[1]. This new district replaced the former Detroit Public Schools. The reform bills were designed to "…resolve the debt of Detroit Public Schools (DPS), provide funding for transition to a new community school district and return the school district to a locally elected school board"[2]. The reform legislation partitioned the district into two fiscal entities in order to facilitate the old district's ability to pay off accumulated debt and to support the establishment of a new district. In conjunction with state emergency management laws, by June 2016, the Detroit Public Schools was under the fiscal authority of an emergency manager. The state-imposed Emergency Manager Judge Steven Rhodes served as transitional manager of the new district. The new Detroit Public Schools Community District opened Tuesday September 6, 2016, operating 97 schools with approximately 45,000 students enrolled, a fraction of the schools and students originally under the authority of the Detroit Public Schools.

The establishment of the Detroit Public Schools Community District occurred in a policy context in which the predominantly Black city of Detroit was under the authority of a regional and state political apparatus dominated by white liberals and white conservatives. The road to the establishment of the new district had been a contentious and violent one. The new district mandated a return to an elected, fully vested with authority, district Board of Education. This key democratic aspect of educational practice and policy setting had been usurped through the previous imposition of state Emergency Management Laws in the education sphere. As a result, the predominantly racialized citizens of Detroit, had been locked in a context of educational disenfranchisement as a condition of their residency in the city and enrollment in the original district. More recent educational literature has examined how the interaction of state education reform legislation has perpetuated a neoliberal logic in education through techniques whereby citizens are disenfranchised as a condition of reform. Importantly, this literature has examined how such reforms are outcomes of particular political economic and geographical intersections, creating a policy milieu in which the interests of corporate and political elites recognize the role of schools as interstitial in the social reproduction of American society.

This literature has argued that such reforms, steeped in neoliberal idealism, exacerbate pre-existing forms of racialized inequality. Analysis of the distinctive policy milieu in cities such as New Orleans, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Detroit, has demonstrated the relationality between local educational reforms and the global realignment of capital and power[3]. Moreover, this

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1. Roz Edwards, "Detroit Public Schools Community District opens new Regional Enrollment Centers", Michigan Chronicle Online, August 18, 2016. Accessed April 15, 2018. https://michronicleonline.com/2016/08/18/detroit-public-schools-community-district-opens-new-regional-enrollment-centers/
2. "Senate passes legislation for Detroit Public Schools," Website of Michigan Senate Majority Leader Arlan Meekhof, Senate Majority Leader Arlan Mekhof, June 9, 2016. Accessed April 15, 2018. http://www.senatorarlanmeekhof.com/senate-passes-legislation-for-detroit-public-schools/
3. See the following, Harvey Kantor. "Accountability, Democracy, and the Political Economy of Education," *Teachers College Record* 117, no. 6 (2005): 1-10. Pauline Lipman, *The New Political Economy of Urban Education: Neoliberalism, Race, and the Right to the City* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011). Kristen Buras, "Race, Charter Schools, and Conscious Capitalism: On the Spatial Politics of Whiteness as Property (and the

literature has argued that imposition of neoliberal educational reforms – constituted through legitimization of school choice policies, expert driven authoritative school governance models, hyper emphasis on standardized modes of achievement outcomes, and dissolution of direct citizen participation in school planning – has led to the transformation of what is meant and imagined as democracy in education. A key aspect of this literature cites the historical processes by which regional and state governments have amassed the political economic power to enact reform legislation in districts where schools served predominantly poor, racialized populations. This claim suggests a relationship between racialized historical processes and the current educational policy landscape.

Through both popular media reporting and political economic branding, the city of Detroit has been firmly established as a 'comeback' city. Framed, partially, as a forgotten industrial town, Detroit has been heralded as a city on the rise. This line of argumentation pivots on an explicit, if implicitly communicated, narrative of Detroit as a poverty-ridden Black space. Because of the saliency of this narrative, power elites are able to perpetuate a 'comeback' narrative in contrasting depiction to Detroit as a former ghetto. In this social reimaging of Detroit, white corporate and power elites are positioned as benevolent kingsmen, doing the work that the 'native' poor Black community could not do for themselves. Less discussed, on a national scale, are the racial politics of this comeback process. Moreover, how Detroit evolved from a settler colonial frontier town, to an industrial power, to a forgotten ghetto, is less understood. The interaction of this history and the development and dissolution of the Detroit Public Schools has been acutely omitted in the educational policy landscape. However, understanding the development of the Detroit Public Schools, the city's political economic structures, and the geography of the city's social landscape, provides inroads to discerning the road to the establishment of a new district in Detroit.

To fully explore each aspect heretofore suggested, is beyond the scope of a dissertation study. This contemporary history, being lived in real time, does however serve as a motivation informing my work. In order to contribute to the historical understanding of the evolution of urban educational institutions, I examine the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit from 1943-1974. Understanding the development of radical educational consciousness requires analysis of the nexus of forces that have shaped the Detroit Public Schools. Understanding the formation of this nexus of social forces helps us better understand how race and class are mutually constitutive social relationships that operate as a system. Understanding the relationship between schools and this broader social relationship can inform how we imagine and actively develop non-oppressive forms of educational practice.

Problem statement and research questions

Detroit has been imagined as both a bastion of liberal progressivism and militant social activism. In the 1940s, Detroit represented the 'arsenal of democracy', a key site of industrial power fueling the fight for freedom and democracy abroad. However, in Detroit, race relations reached a fever pitch with the bloody 1943 race riot. The city's response to the race riot was

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Unconscionable Assault on Black New Orleans)," *Harvard Educational Review* 81, no. 2, (2011): 269-330. Maia Cucchiara, "Re-Branding Urban Schools: Urban Revitalization, Social Status, and Marketing Public Schools to the Upper Middle Class," *Journal of Educational Policy* 23, no. 2 (2008): 165-179. Thomas C. Pedroni, "Urban Shrinkage as a Performance of Whiteness: Neoliberal Urban Restructuring, Education, and Racial Containment in the Post-Industrial Global Niche City," *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 23, no. 2 (2011): 203-215.

marked by an approach to race relations informed by a conception of racism imagined as an attitudinal dilemma. This racial logic became hegemonic across the Detroit social policy landscape, including in the educational sphere. However, militant grassroots groups emphasized the role of educational policy setting in the construction of a racialized dual school system and the implications of this system in the reproduction of an oppressive social order. By the 1960s, the emergence of Black labor radicalism offered an analysis of race relations grounded in critique of American capitalism. Informed by this analysis, an alliance of radical educational actors produced a critique of the Detroit Public Schools as a key agent in the reproduction of racial capitalism. In this study, my core research question asks:

> How did radical actors in Detroit imagine the role of educational struggle as interstitial to broader freedom struggle, and how did they come to this analysis?

In order to examine this question in the context of Detroit educational and social history, I situate my research design within a body literature that examines the interaction of schooling and the state, civil society, and political economy.

Literature review

This study draws from a robust body of scholarship examining the interaction of interlocking systems of oppression in U.S. society and schools as relational to an oppressive social order. The first area of this literature consists of works that focus on how reproductive education has come to occupy the minds of the oppressed. These works examine the role of hegemonic ideas embedded in curricula and educational practices that shape and delimit critical consciousness. These works demonstrate that hegemonic educational practices serve to dehumanize students and legitimize oppressive societal structures. The second area of this literature review includes scholarship that examines counterhegemonic educational ideas and practices that center the interaction of race and class oppression. Examples of educational radicalism that center the transformation of conditions that foster oppression demonstrate how schools can serve as sites of liberatory praxis.

The first strand of literature draws from scholarship examining the educational processes by which people come to internalize and accept their status within a stratified society highlights the ideological function of education and the extent to which actors become complicit in their own alienation. The liminal and physical spaces where education occurs have been theorized as the sites through which the work of social reproduction is internalized and reproduced. These works points to the myriad ways that ideological processes in schools produce docility, conformity and how the oppressed come to internalize and become complicit in the perpetuation of their own oppression. School curriculum reflects ideas that legitimize the broader political economic landscape. For students who come from non-dominant social classes, a key goal of schooling entails the inculcation of a particular kind of knowledge that reifies the inherent inequality present in society and prepares differential social classes to assume their segmented role in the political economic sphere.

The second strand of literature draws from scholarship examining the the social processes through which counterhegemonic conceptions of education have been cultivated and enacted. Despite the pervasive reproductive nature of traditional school systems, throughout history people rejected formal schooling and sought to craft divergent and subversive approaches. This

has been particularly true for oppressed classes who have recognized the deficiency of traditional schools to the task of liberation. But nonetheless these classes have identified educational strategy as central to the prospect of freedom. Particularly useful in the germination of this study are educational conceptions that emphasize the radical potential of experiential knowledge as a site of knowledge and societal transformation. Alongside scholarly critique of public education, grassroots actors have disavowed the hegemonic function of schooling. These actors have linked the transmission of selective knowledge to racial and economic oppression. At the same time that urban educational systems ascended alongside the logic of social efficiency and capitalist interests, militant and radical educational actors have openly repudiated the system and sought to build alternative educational practices and institutions.

Drawing on this body of scholarship, my study examines the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit. Key to analyzing this development is attention to the nexus of social forces that have enabled the development of an oppressive educational architecture. Each Chapter in this study provides an incremental analysis of both the development and fortification of an oppressive educational architecture that pivots on the containment of Black students. This work suggests that educational relationships are interstitial to the racial politics of capitalist relations of production in U.S. society. The social context of urban educational practice and educational experience are relational to the perpetuation of racial capitalism. In order to challenge this oppressive relationship, this study offers an example of how radical social analysis can inform educational protest thought and action.

Dissertation outline

Chapter 2 establishes my chosen methodology and analytical framework. Each empirical chapter provides an overview of the specific interpretive framework utilized therein. Chapter 3 is my first empirical chapter which covers the period of 1943-1953, examining the ascendance of racial liberal idealism in educational practice and policy. Chapter 4 is my second empirical chapter, which covers the period of 1954-1965, examining competing perspectives on inequality of educational opportunity in the Detroit Public Schools and the rise of militant educational activism. Chapter 5 is the final empirical chapter which covers the period of 1966-1974 and examines the emergence of the influence of radical social analysis in the context of educational struggle. Chapter 6 is my conclusion chapter and provides an overview of the major arguments advanced in each empirical chapter and presents overall study findings.

Chapter 2

Literature review and methodology:
A relational framework for conducting historical ethnography

I come to this work as a graduate of the 2002 class of the Detroit Public Schools (DPS). My experiences as a student activist in the district has shaped my subsequent life experiences and academic research interests. Though traditional educational research methods have emphasized neutralizing personal bias in research design in order to achieve an imagined objective viewpoint, this dissertation has been intentionally developed in relation to my experiences in the city and its schools. Further, this relation afforded me numerous opportunities that advanced this work that otherwise would not have been possible. Rather than represent a limitation of this study, recent scholarship highlights how mutually constitutive relationships in research contexts might be imagined as generative and integral. In this chapter I present an overview of how my reflexive relationship informed the development of a relational framework for data collection and analysis.

This chapter is organized into four sections. The first section examines literature exploring how research design, implementation, and outcomes have interacted with the aims and intentions of settler colonial structures. The second section continues this review of key literature and considers how criticisms of normative research protocols can inform disruptive and answerable research practice. The third section applies the tensions, lessons, and ethical protocols emanating from the latter literature to my own research design through a discussion of what I term a relational historical ethnography framework. The fourth and final section presents an overview of how my methodological framework informed selection of a conceptual framework for data analysis.

1. Academic research as a mechanism of epistemic reproduction in settler colonial contexts

I begin by engaging in ongoing scholarly debate concerning the aims and underlying ideological dynamics that inform normative approaches to research. Numerous works, particularly methodological texts and criticisms written by Latinx, Indigenous, and Black scholars assert an awareness of how research has been utilized to perpetuate racial stereotypes informed by white supremacy and culture of poverty theories. Historian Robin Kelley argues that urban sociologists employed theoretical frameworks animated by deficit-based racial theories producing a body of scholarship he terms “ghetto ethnography”[4]. Such works, according to Kelley, failed to indict the structural dynamics underlying the terms of racialized peoples’ engagement in social life. This failure led to a body of work that posited poor racialized people as stagnant reflections of their social conditions, obscuring both the structural determinants of their lives and the agency through which oppressed people actively sought to transform these realities.

Moreover, Kelley’s contention links the racial ideologies underlying ghetto ethnography to core ideas emanating from the infamous 1965 Moynihan Report, published formally as *The*

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4. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997).

Negro Family: The Case For National Action[5]. The Moynihan Report federalized debased racial ideologies and legitimized their use in scholarly activity, a practice that continues in contemporary policy and research contexts, as Kelley argues. This report authored by a research team headed by Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan was commissioned by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Moynihan's analysis of race relations in U.S. society centered on the underdevelopment of the Black family. More pointedly the report states, "The fundamental problem, in which this is most clearly the case, is that of family structure…So long as this situation persists, the cycle of poverty and disadvantage will continue to repeat itself"[6]. Legitimized by federal authority, this report perpetuated an idea that transforming societal inequity began with the Black family structure.

Ultimately the Moynihan Report indicted single Black mothers for the demise of the family structure, imagined as leading to the underdevelopment of Black communities and moreover the debasement of Black men. This is the not the first time this idea of Black womanhood as a determinant of Black social conditions, morals, and values has been communicated in and across society. Black feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins examines how controlling images of Black womanhood have been constructed, communicated, and imposed for specific ideological and material aims[7]. As Collins argues, "The dominant ideology of the slave era fostered the creation of several interrelated, socially constructed controlling images of Black womanhood, each reflecting the dominant group's interests in maintaining Black women's subordination"[8]. These images aimed to control and determine Black maternal behavior in an effort to influence the ideas and behaviors instilled through Black mothers to their children[9]. The effectives of these controlling images, Collins notes, worked to perpetuate gender-based violence constitutive to systemic oppression.

Moreover, Moynihan's interpretation of statistical data documenting differential rates in employment and education along racial lines is relegated to a secondary concern. Moynihan instead produces a theory termed "tangle of pathology"[10] that links economic and education data to rates of single motherhood. In this way, instead of treating structural determinants of social life as the cause of social inequity, he instead continues to center the family structure as the key determinant. "Nevertheless", the report argues, "at the center of the tangle of pathology is the weakness of the family structure"[11]. Moynihan reduces all other structural determinant evidences, which are underdeveloped in his analysis, to secondary concerns positing family structure as the most critical factor shaping Black futures.

The Moynihan thesis squarely positions repressive and oppressive conditions as the outcome of Black womanhood. Collins demonstrates that such analysis "…diverts attention from political and economic inequalities…"[12], an analysis that would offer a more perceptive explanation for enduring inequalities. Reproduction of Moynihan Report ideas in contemporary research performs more a symbolic function that ultimately fortifies the dominant ideology and

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5. Office of Policy Planning and Research, T*he Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Labor, 1965).
6. Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, introduction.
7. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment,* 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2000).
8. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 72.
9. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 72.
10. Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, 29.
11. Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, 30.
12. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 76.

social order of society. As Kelley notes, the legacy of the Moynihan report in urban ethnographic research are the suppressed accounts and analyses of the complexity through which Black people, and other nonhegemonic people, enact agency in all aspects of social life. Put another way, behaviors, attitudes, and ideas among the nonhegemonic class are animated by dynamic forces obscured or rendered reactionary in research practice.

Failure to see vitality and creativity in the mundane or amid oppressive conditions, denies the fact of historical actors operating within an oppressive social milieu enacting creativity and complexity beyond hegemonic determinism. Further, the outcomes of research approaches, either steeped in these controlling symbolic images/ideas or approaches that fail to consider how such ideas are constitutive to dominant social ideology, are deeply imbricated in broader questions of epistemology. The question of epistemology is deeply related to research design and constitutive to overall methodology and interpretive framework decisions, as is the case in my study.

Critical scholars have noted that academic research is steeped in a history constitutive with the reproduction of a settler colonial nation state[13]. Education researchers are not exempt in this systemic reproduction. This is not to say that all forms of traditional research design are problematic, but all forms of research design are ideological, and therefore bracketed by political economic decisions. Eve Tuck explains "Considering educational research's role in the perpetuation of settler-slave-Indigenous relationships, those of us employed as educational researchers are answerable to these deep trajectories"[14]. Tuck calls on researchers to engage in practices that seek to dismantle the very structures that have allowed the production of research akin to what Kelley describes as ghetto ethnography, a practice that fortifies a settler colonial knowledge system. Further, Tuck and Yang signal that the "…the academy as an apparatus of settler colonial knowledge already domesticates, denies, and dominates other forms of knowing"[15]. It is within this broader settler colonial context, in which the politics of knowledge production function, that research design must be considered.

Settler colonialism has been analyzed as a "…structure, a set of relations and conditions…"[16]. Rather than a singular event of conquest, settler colonialism is an ongoing project. Katie McCoy, Eve Tuck, and Marcia McKenzie emphasize that in settler colonial contexts the structural impulse is to disappear Indigenous people from the land to make it available for settlement[17] explaining that "…settler colonial societies 'cover' the 'tracks' of settler colonialism by narrating colonization as temporarily located elsewhere, not here and now"[18]. The implications of settler colonialism for research methodologies have also been expounded upon by Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith[19]. In relation to the ideas put forward by McCoy, Tuck,

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13. Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York: Cassell, 1998).
14. Eve Tuck, Preface, in Leigh Patel, *Decolonizing Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability* (New York: Routledge, 2016), xx.
15. Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang, "R –Words: Refusing Research," in *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities,* ed. Django Paris and Maisha T. Win (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013), 235.
16. Katie McCoy, Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie, *Land Education: Rethinking Pedagogies of Place from Indigenous, Postcolonial, Decolonizing Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 13. See also Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*.
17. Katie McCoy, Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie, *Land Education*, 7.
18. McCoy, Tuck and McKenzie, 7.
19. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd edition (London and New York: Zed Books, 2012).

and McKenzie, Smith interrogates "…the context in which research problems are conceptualized and designed, and…the implications of research for its participants and their communities"[20]. Smith documents how Western knowledge systems are constitutive to a broader project of imperialism achieved in part through erasure of Indigenous people, history, and research. In this way "research" is a dirty word, inasmuch as it has operated as an imperialist project. Smith and Tuck have explained the incommensurable location of Indigenous people in contrast with racialized groups. Notwithstanding this real incommensurability, the methodological critique and thought from this body of praxis offers a practical set of techniques that refuse perpetuation of a settler knowledge system and therefore encourage disruption and refusal in settler knowledge reproduction.

2. Strategies to disrupt settler knowledge systems

In the second half of Smith's book, a set of critical research practices emanating from Indigenous social movement approaches to research are explored that I believe should be read by all researchers, particularly racialized research practitioners. Issues discussed include how research might serve to engage the priorities of Indigenous peoples, in contrast to the individualist and self-serving priorities of researchers and their institutions. A key principle of what Smith describes as a tool to set a new research agenda prioritizing Indigenous people, is the practice of respect. Similarly, Tuck and Yang have discussed how a "desire-based framework"[21] might be employed. Such a framework moves beyond the collection of pain narratives, a reductionist approach, which has constituted the over-researched status of Indigenous communities as well as other racialized communities.

Tuck and Yang describes this framework as "… working inside a more complex and dynamic understanding of what one, or a community, comes to know in (a) lived life"[22]. Smith documents how post-1960s Indigenous radicalism spurred the formation of social movements analyzing the settler colonial structure. Out of these deliberations and international movements Smith theorizes, and later cites, how movement thought and action can inform the setting of a new research agenda. With self-determination as an explicit goal, Smith conceptualizes "…a set of approaches that are situated within the decolonization politic of indigenous people's movement"[23]. The implications of this for research design and ethical protocols pivot on a conceptualization of respect grounded in this broader decolonization politic, and notably is at odds with Western research protocols. In this way the term "respect" is imbued with new meaning, a meaning that "…underscores the significance of our relationships and humanity"[24].

As Smith explains, "Respect is [a] reciprocal, shared, constantly interchanging principle which is expressed through all aspects of social conduct" [25]. Taking Kelley seriously and considering his documentation of how research has functioned as a key factor in reproducing ghetto conditions through scholarship that has "…contributed to the ghetto as a reservoir of pathologies and bad cultural value"[26], novice researchers must consider how our role in a settler colonial society informs our relation to sites of study. This relationship, grounded in respect for

20. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, ix.
21. Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang, "R –Words: Refusing Research," 231.
22. Tuck and Yang, 231.
23. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples,* 120.
24. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies,* 125.
25. Smith, 125.
26. Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America*, 16.

the people who live in these places and the stories of time before/history of the conquest and ongoing colonization, must then inform research design, implementation, and outcomes.

Kelley invites us to engage a set of critical questions concerning the function of [academic] research in society. In this line of methodological thought, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang[27] have focused on one facet of this work in their article, "R Words", which conceptualizes a practice of research refusal, a theoretical and material intervention informed by the reflexive decolonial work of Indigenous scholar Audra Simpson[28]. A key aspect of this practice are its implications for researchers. This reflexive conceptualization situates researchers within an academic complex complicit in a settler knowledge system that erases bodies and cannibalizes/commodifies humanity. "Refusal, and stances of refusal in research, are attempts to place limits on conquest and the colonization of knowledge by marking what is off limits, what is not up for grabs or discussion, what is sacred, and what can't be known"[29], Tuck and Yang explain.

3. Toward a respectful relational historical ethnography framework

3.1 Oral history as methodology

This research study specifically focuses on the city of Detroit and its' schools necessarily engaging in a practice of critical place inquiry. This study emphasizes the social and environmental relationships which constitute Detroit. I believe it is an important conscientious decision to engage in a critical awareness of the "where" of research"[30] or what Tuck and McKenzie might describe as an attempt to engage in a form of critical place inquiry that prioritizes a commitment to Indigenous social and political theory. Drawing on the scholarship and interventions of Sandra Grande, Tuck and McKenzie elucidate that "Settler societies are designed to not consider place-to do so would require consideration of genocide"[31]. Taking settler colonial analysis seriously then must inform methodological and analytical schema.

In this study I do not attempt to anonymize the place of research. These decisions are shaped by engagement with settler colonial analysis in research design and implementation. Two tenets of critical place inquiry demonstrate how accountability and commitment to Indigenous social and political theory manifest herein. The first tenet advocates that research address "…spatialized and place-based processes of colonization and settler colonialism, and works against their forgone-ness or naturalization through social science research…" and the second tenant argues that research should aim "…to further generative and critical politics of places…via a relational ethics of accountability to people and place"[32]. Relational validity

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27. Tuck and Yang, "R –Words: Refusing Research," 231.
28. Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across The Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014). See also, Audra Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice', and Colonial Citizenship" *Junctures*, 9, (2007): 67-80.
29. Tuck and Yang, "R –Words: Refusing Research," 225.
30. Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie, "Relational Validity and the "Where" of Inquiry: Place and Land in Qualitative Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 1, no.6 (2015): 1-6.
31. Tuck and McKenzie, "Relational Validity and the "Where" of Inquiry," 3.
32. Tuck and McKenzie, 3. In the context of my study, I have employed a precept of settler colonial analysis by problematizing the geography of spatial racism in Detroit and highlighting how allocation of space to the oppressed through housing vouchers or new schools intended to foster racial segregation has occurred as interstitial to a city-wide approach to housing along racial lines in order to meet capitalist interests, a broader national project, the perpetuates the structure of settler colonialism.

recognizes that we are constituted by the relationships we hold and enact, and in this way research outcomes generate action in small and large ways. This declaration brings into fruition an ethic of research practice that ascribes to a periodization beyond the individualist goals of doctoral credentialing process and many of the courses that lead to degree attainment. Necessarily, relational validity and reflexive/meaningful engagement with place in this study has had multiple impacts on this study, as I will outline in the reminder of this chapter.

Canonical works fail to uplift the history of nonhegemonic people and have further failed to examine thoughtfully what the people analyzed in research might desire of research. However, one-way counterhegemonic history has been preserved and transmitted is through the practice of storytelling. The exchange of information through storytelling has, particularly for the oppressed, served to pass the cultural and therefore political economic knowledge necessary to ensure survival. Some of this history is written, but knowledge has also been passed on through oral based storytelling. Intergenerational story telling holds the possibility of serving as a method to disrupt normative approaches to knowledge preservation and knowledge production.

My relational historical ethnographic approach to research is grounded in existing literature that examines the interaction of interlocking systems of oppression in U.S. society. This literature has posited schools as both relational and formative to reproduction of an oppressive social order. One strand of this scholarship examines how reproductive education has come to occupy the minds of the oppressed[33]. These works examine the role of hegemonic ideas embedded in curricula and educational practices that shape and delimit critical consciousness. Such research demonstrates that hegemonic educational practices serve to dehumanize students and legitimize oppressive societal structures. Another strand of this literature focuses on the development of counterhegemonic educational ideas and practices that center the analysis of race and class oppression in U.S. society[34].

This literature has helped clarify how educational structures have been legitimized in the political economic sphere yet also challenged by those who have suffered most from their existence. In the Detroit context, preexisting literature has not sufficiently engaged with the latter point. To both explore the formative era of Detroit's educational history as it relates to challenges to educational disenfranchisement, consulting archival sources would be an incomplete approach. Oral history source material provides a method to exhume experience, action, and meaning-making processes that would provide an entrance into the rich social milieu which gave rise to contentious educational policies, practices, and protest.

There is a tradition of utilizing oral history as a method to critically analyze life history data as a source in knowledge production. Oral historians have brought critical paradigms to bear on life history narrative data to excavate the historical formations that shape experiential knowledge[35]. As a result, oral history analysis has been particularly useful in illuminating the material and ideological forces that shape the contours of oppression. Patricia Leavy explains

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33. Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977). William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* (New York, NY: Teacher's College Press, 2001). Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1999). Michael Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
34. Carlos Muñoz Jr., *Youth, Power, Identity: The Chicano Movement* (New York: Verso Press, 2007). Martha Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014).
35. See for example, Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991). Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (New York: Vintage Book, 2010).

that a compelling use of oral history is its ability to access subjugated knowledge[36]. This method had been useful in excavating how actors experience and make sense of the objective conditions that inform their realities, and their contributions to shaping alternative realities.

One aspect of this study examines experiences with educational institutions. This will inform our understanding of how social, political and economic forces shape educational visions and how these visions inform and/or were informed by broader societal struggle. Leavy posits that oral history research focus on historical processes, not particular events, in order to illuminate "holistic understanding of life experiences"[37] and the linkages between "micro-level experiences and macro-level environments"[38]. In this study, I engage a critical reading of the local while mindful of the national and global political economic developments that shaped situated contexts.

I recognize that an oral history account does not equate truth. Rather as oral history practitioner Alessandro Portelli argues, a distinctive feature of this methodology is its focus on meaning. "Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did"[39], Portelli explains. Further, Portelli contends "The first thing that makes oral history different, therefore, is that it tells us less about events than their meaning"[40]. In this study, narrative data provides an avenue to examine how people make meaning of their educational experiences, draw connections to social life experiences and broader socio-historical process, and for some this may illuminate their conceptions of the function of schools and their decisions to engage in educational protest and activism. Oral history serves to texture and orient a lived understanding of these dynamics.

Oral history is constituted by two outcomes, both the interview exchange/relationship and the transcript. Factors that can affect the oral history transcript included the editing process during which narrators were invited to review their interviews for clarity and to omit communicated memory that they might not want to reveal in academic publications. Narrators were offered the option of participating under the use of a pseudonym, all but one narrator declined anonymization. Oral history interviews are often not anonymized, a practice that reflects the underlying theory of the method. The method centers the meaning people ascribe to lived experiences which illuminates formative aspects of historical processes, as opposed to details of specific events. In this study, I utilize oral history in this way and engage in archival research and theory-driven analysis of all forms of data.

3.2 A note on archival and secondary source material

In the field of educational research, the standing authoritative text on the history of the Detroit Public Schools is education historian Jeffrey Mirel's T*he Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit, 1907-1981*, originally published in 1993. Mirel's text provided singular fodder in my original pursuit of this topic. Coupled with my readings in the field of Ethnic Studies and African American Studies, I read the text several times and began to note the array of silences that masked the rich history of social activism I gleaned from conversations with peers in Detroit and the burgeoning Detroit social movement literature. Juxtaposing these at

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36. Patricia Leavy, *Oral History: Understanding Qualitative Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
37. Leavy, *Oral History: Understanding Qualitative Research*, 6.
38. Leavy, 17.
39. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, 50.
40. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories*, 50.

times contrastive historical narratives of Detroit, I came to identify a dominant historical trope that broadly understood Black radicalism as little more than spectacle and a deterrent to progressive educational reforms. In these renderings, Black radicalism had been situated as an impediment to the advancement of the imagined academic ideal. Social movement literature, however, provided a history of the racial and class dynamics that shaped the industrialization of the city, a process foundational to the construction of a social-civic landscape mediated by racial capitalism.

Two key texts offer contributions toward understanding the rise of Black radicalism in Detroit which shaped the genesis of this study[41]. In 1968 Detroit labor activist and intellectual James Boggs published *The American revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook*, which centers the historical conditions which gave rise to the emergence of Black labor radicalism, offering also an experiential dimension to analysis. In 1975, academic researchers Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin, published *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying,* which profiled what Manning Marable contextualized as the most significant expression of Black radicalism of the 1960s, the formation of Detroit's League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW). These texts were particularly useful in beginning the process of discerning the movement actors, alliances, and ideas that have come to animate this dissertation.

Together, these texts and Mirel's expansive chronology of Detroit educational events and underlying dynamics, led to an understanding of both the utility of Mirel's work and supported recognition of the silences which movement history sought to uplift. Mirel's analysis provides an extensive overview of the social process by which political struggle over school finance, at all levels of governance, came to the shape Detroit school discourse, a vital history. Yet social movement history provided a challenge to both the emphasis Mirel placed on the determinative role of school finance in shaping Detroit educational processes, and the omission of the social process that gave rise to the emergence of Black radicalism.

As an authoritative academic work, Mirel's text provides an impressive use of archival records. However, through critical archival and oral history scholarship, I gleaned a set of analytical precepts that helped me to reorient my engagement with archival research. This scholarship raised complicated and necessary questions concerning the role of archives in legitimizing the actions of power elites and determining the version of historical process aligned with power-elite interests. For nonhegemonic actors and movements, the archives perform a formative role in producing historical silences. Conscious of these dynamics, I was motivated to identify historical silences in extant Detroit educational research.

Of the works I consulted, few provided analysis on how Detroit as a site of Indigenous genocide, conquest, colonization, and creation into a front of early capitalist development, shaped the construction of power in the region. Of the available texts, David Katzman's *Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century* was particularly helpful in understanding the interaction of these foundational oppressive systems and the development of the Detroit school system. A more recent work, *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits* by African American Studies scholar Tiya Miles, situates the conquest and colonization of Detroit squarely within a critical reading of anti-black violence and settler colonialism. Miles reconstructs how the theft of both bodies and land were central interactive

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41. James Boggs, *The American revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook* (New York: The Monthly Review Press, 1968). Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 3rd edition (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012).

processes in Detroit's founding and expansion. As Katzman and Miles are working within a set of analytical precepts, both works offer a more expansive rendering of how nonhegemonic actors experienced social life during these early periods and sought to construct alternative terms of their humanity. I have advanced these ideas in my work to excavate an educational history that attends to the role of nonhegemonic actors and collectivities.

Archival data was primarily mined from collections held at the archives of the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs located in Detroit, the Bentley Historical Collection at the University of Michigan, and the Burton Historical Collection at the Main Branch of the Detroit Public Library. Archival research fieldwork was guided by engagement with interview data and secondary source material. Historical research undoubtedly relies upon archival records to reconstruct past events. However, what exactly is the archive? In order to support my research praxis, I engage a set of ideas emanating from archival studies examining the function of archives amidst colonial contexts.

South African archivist Verne Harris argues, archives "…at once express and are instruments of prevailing relations of power"[42]. Working within the context of the role of South African national archives during apartheid and the subsequent transition to democracy, Harris examines the contested and symbiotic relationship between "archival sliver" and social memory in South Africa's transition to democracy. Harris challenges the conception of archive as a mirror-like reflection of reality through a notion of archive as a "sliver of a window" into the past. In this sense, if a reality exists, it is unknowable, irrecoverable, with archives offering but a "sliver" of historical events and processes. The South African context is however, not unique. Apartheid is inseparable from the vestiges of colonial rule concomitant with "Enlightenment", which have together, through brute force, shaped the contours of dominant knowledge production and remembrance practices.

Harris charges that apartheid archival systems engaged in selective documentation practices aligned with hegemonic rule. Thus, these repositories intend to approximate a vision of the historical record that supports the dominant power structure. Far from being mirror like reflections of historical events, repositories offer an "archival sliver". Further, Harris' contextualization of the archive as an instrument of power draws attention to the relationship between archival records and the construction/legitimization of historical process and social memory. Through control of the historical record, power elite effectively preserve a social memory aligned with their conception of society, a privileged, biased conception.

Schwartz and Cook contend that archival discourse has pivoted on a false conception of the archive as a neutral resource. To quote Schwartz and Cook, "Yet archives are established by the powerful to protect or enhance their position in society. Through archives, the past is controlled. Certain stories are privileged and others are marginalized"[43]. The implications of archival manipulation are noted in at least two realms. As Schwartz and Cook contend, the coercive privilege to manipulate archival records, to preserve and advance power, shapes memory and by extension, identity. In this way, "Archives, then, are not passive storehouses of old stuff, but active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, confirmed"[44]. More broadly, the power to control the historical record, is a core mechanism in the maintenance of

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42. Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa," *Archival Science* 2, (2002): 63.
43. Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 1-19.
44. Schwartz and Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," 1.

settler colonialism, a structure that requires the ongoing disappearance of Indigenous ways of knowing and remembering.

The epistemological function of the archive cannot be under-analyzed, despite a tendency to treat archives as neutral structures. The relationship between archives and historical writing operates within an expansive politic of knowledge production. Smith has noted the broader power dynamics that constitute the production, preservation, and legitimization of knowledge in Western contexts [45]. For Indigenous communities and scholars, the archive can represent an ongoing colonizing project that actively participates in a settler system of knowledge production. There are noted instances in which non-Indigenous scholars have participated in archival projects or established archival collections constituted by artifacts, and the bodily remains of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous communities and scholars have maintained attention on the forced containment of Indigenous ways of being and knowing within Western archives and articulated a demand for transformation in archival policies. For example, Jane Anderson describes the "…crises of access, control and ownership of Indigenous cultural material, the relationship of these issues to intellectual property law, and how to begin thinking through what these issues mean and how to navigate a pathway through them"[46]. Further, Anderson describes how power relations are central to the construction of the very idea of the archive and further considers the implication of the archive on society.

Drawing on previous research, Anderson draws attention to the social implication of archives with particular emphasis on how archive management regimes control how the public remembers past historical conditions and events. Even how different communities and actors are positioned as agents of history or maligned as passive historical objects, are processes mediated by archive management regimes. Anderson decries the use of the archives as "…an intrinsic instrument in helping to render readings of social life and social conditions…"[47] inasmuch as such information was then used to "…to inform the way in which the subject could be managed through targeted governmental and bureaucratic programs"[48]. Archival institutions must be understood as political entities, which implicates any research conducted using its collections in this broader process of control and social reproduction. Still as Smith explains, "…indigenous groups have argued that history is important for understanding the present and that reclaiming history is a critical and essential aspect of decolonization"[49].

Understanding how power operates in the construction of history further illuminates the complexity and reflexivity required while conducting historical research. Anthropologist Michel Rolph Trouillot's analysis of the historical treatment of the Haitian Revolution, outside of Haiti, emphasizes two tropes that demonstrate how power shapes historical writing[50]. Trouillot terms these tropes formulas of erasure and formulas of banalization. The former characterizes direct erasure of the Haitian Revolution while the latter depoliticizes the revolutionary character of the Revolution. In describing how historians have participated in these tropes, Trouillot asserts, "What we are observing here is archival power at its strongest, the power to define what is and

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45. For a fuller discussion see Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*.
46. Jane Anderson, "Indigenous Knowledge, Intellectual Property, Libraries and Archives: Crises of Access, Control and Future Utility," *Australian Indigenous Knowledge and Libraries* 36, no.2, (2005): 85 - 97.
47. Anderson, "Indigenous Knowledge, Intellectual Property, Libraries and Archives," 88.
48. Anderson, 88.
49. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 31.
50. Michel Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 96.

what is not a serious object of research and, therefore, of mention"[51]. Both tropes perpetuate a silencing within the historical record – which functions as an effective tool of the archive. Further, Trouillot explains that when historical events are viewed through these tropes, certain forms of activity risk silencing. These silenced activities, events, social process, and even individuals, represent a challenge to the hegemony of the power elites that have shaped the historical record. In this way, consideration of archival and historical silences helps both to excavate these silences and draw attention to architects/architecture of these silences.

In my approach to archival research, oral history interviews provided a point of departure through which to consider the silences in extant historical research and the archival collections I utilized to construct the dissertation narrative. Conducting a set of rapport meetings and interviews produced a set of orienting themes, which informed archival consultation. The interplay of interviews and archival research helped me to focus upon experience and memory as social processes. This methodological procedure informed both selection of archival documents and the construction of the historical narrative that constitutes the body of this dissertation. This strategy was utilized in all chapters, with some variation. Chapter 3 makes least references to original oral history interviews. In chapter 3, original interviews conducted which discuss Detroit experiential history from the 1950s to 1970s were used to construct my approach to archival consultation. In this way, informed by the experiences of segregated life in 1950s Detroit, I asked of the archive, how civic and educational policies of the 1940s shaped 1950s Detroit.

3.3 Methodological process

In this study, I engaged in oral history interviews with 16 stakeholders in Detroit. In this snowball approach to participant selection, I strove to engage with an array of actors that offered different perspectives ranging from vivid memory of their education experience to those who had not thought much about their educational experiences. Interviews were held in coffee shops, at the narrator's residence, community centers, and Detroit restaurants. The location of the interview was entirely left to the narrator's preference. The decision was normally made to meet somewhere of convenience to their schedules. Transcriptions of interviews were made available to the narrator and subject to editing if necessary. Narrators were able to provide additions or deletions of information to the transcript, for clarification purposes, as consistent with oral history practice.

I endeavored to create an interview dynamic that encouraged the narrator to direct the flow of the interview. Each interview began with an overview of my interest in the study, most often a continuation of an initial rapport meeting. This provided a time to be clear about my motives and commitment to Detroit's educational life and future but also to claim my own biases. Sometimes this allowed the narrator and myself to exchange thoughts about my research ideas. Ultimately, I began interviews with questions regarding their earliest memories of growing up in Detroit. This helped me to gain some background information on their geographical, racial, and economic history in a way that was more befitting how they located themselves.

Following a life history interview protocol, we would advance toward greater details of their memory of educational experiences and how/if it intersected with broader civic and social life. This line of questioning allowed me to add questions that focused on neighborhood cohesion, cultural life, ancestry, economic opportunities, and schooling. Once the interview was conducted I began to make fieldnotes per interview, this helped me to develop an outline of the

51. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History*, 99.

major themes gleaned from interview data. These themes directed my consultation of archival sources and supported development of temporal/narrative construction of each chapter[52].

3.4 Reflexivity and the politics of knowledge production

Throughout the course of this study, I was repeatedly challenged by the current dynamics animating life and struggle in the city. As a graduate of the Detroit Public Schools I started my academic journey fielding questions from academic colleagues on all things Detroit. Quickly I learned about the debased ideas and abstractions many held of the city. Few critics had ever spent any significant time in the city, constructing their perception of the city based in a reductive master narratives. Much of the criticism I endured was based in deeply racialized, anti-black, anti-poor perspectives. Rarely was there mention of how racialized economic discrimination had created a local social system dependent on externally controlled jobs, or the effects of racial capitalism. No one talked about the interlocking systems of power and profit that held grassroots residents in a chokehold for generations.

Detroit is now hailed as America's comeback city. This status measured by the first significant increase in white residents, the migration of new white settlers from other locales seeking cheap raw materials to churn their own American dreams. In addition, the state mandated restructuring of the local economy disenfranchised what little autonomy the city had and in came a new cohort of economic brokers laying claim and siege to the city. At the grassroots level, the reality of Detroit's racialized economic subjugation has been expressed through both the dissolution of the Detroit Public Schools as a district and systematic water shut-offs under punitive emergency management state laws[53]. This latter development has captured the attention of international human rights observers leading the United Nations to mark the shut-offs as a human rights violation[54]. Political economic elite have painted Detroit as a blank canvass and it is in this moment that we must work to document the historical formations on which such racist assertions of historical authority have emerged.

Core to the development of my analysis has been continuous consultation of themes emanating from interviews and archival sources. I have found this an important step to assess the direction and construction of my analytical approach as a student and community member. Since the study's inception I have benefitted from involvement as a participant in grassroots Detroit spaces challenging the 'black canvass' standpoint. During data collection, I lived and worked in the city as a lecturer at a local college. In addition, through participation in everyday life I became involved in two interdependent social movements, the Detroit Independent Freedom Schools Movement and We The People of Detroit Research Collective. Through dialogue and participation, I have exchanged ideas with community members, taught educational history to local youth, and recruited narrators. These interactions and dialogue formatively shaped archival approaches and narrative construction.

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52. Construction of Chapter 3 was driven by themes generated through consultation of archived pre-existing oral histories, a critical reading of the period through oral history interviews detailing experiences in later periods, archival research, secondary source material, and my analytical framework.
53. For a detailed analysis of the impact of racialized governance structure see, Detroiters Resisting Emergency Management, *Detroit 2016: Linking Struggles for Racial and Economic Justice* (Detroit: 2016), http://www.d-rem.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Detroit-2016-FINAL-spread.pdf
54. For a detailed analysis of the water shut-offs crisis in Detroit, see We The People of Detroit Research Collective. *Mapping the Water Crisis: The Dismantling of African-American Neighborhoods in Detroit* (Detroit: Conklin Printing, 2016).

4. From methodology to conceptualizing analysis

In this section I provide an overview of my process of examining data sources. As discussed, the interplay of interview and archival research presented an opportunity to utilize interview data as a method for organizing consultation of archival materials. In this section I detail how my theoretical framework and relational historical ethnographic methodology supported data analysis.

4.1 Interpretive framework - Critical social theory as conceptual framework

As discussed, memory communicates meaning-making processes and can inform accession of a body of knowledge that has been heretofore suppressed within archival and academic accounts. Yet, Robin D.G. Kelley's caution against the use of memory alone to interrogate the structural determinants of lived reality is a welcome intervention. While oral history comprises the backbone of this study, I employ conceptual devices to conduct analysis. This section provides an overview of the major frameworks utilized and why they were selected. Broadly speaking, this study draws from diverse theoretical frameworks that are constitutive of what has been identified as critical social theory in educational research.

Critical social theory in education research emerges from Marxian analysis of the social order. Early writings in this tradition posit schooling as reflective of and corresponding to the class divisions present in society. Educational theorist Leonardo posits that as a theoretical framework, critical social theory has "…the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge"[55]. In considering the function and aim of theory, Leonardo further asserts that "CST does not promote theory for theory's sake…but encourages the production and application of theory as part of the overall search for transformative knowledge"[56]. Leonardo contextualizes critical social theory as a form of criticism, in hopes of highlighting "…its power to change pedagogical process from one of knowledge transmission to knowledge transformation"[57].

Helpful here is an overview of the major theoretical assumptions underlying critical social theory. In an overview of the underlying theoretical precepts of critical social theory, Agger lays out some of the basic features that make a theory a critical social theory, noting that not all associated theorems are identical[58]. Critical social theory's critique of positivism is its central and most enduring feature[59]. Additionally, Agger notes that critical social theory "…distinguishes between the past and present, largely characterized by domination, exploitation, and oppression, and a possible future rid of these phenomena…"[60], and further, CST "…argues that domination is structural"[61] and seeks to illuminate these structures so as to illuminate the contours of oppression. As a set of precepts, critical social theory aims to challenge false

55. Zeus Leonardo, "Critical Social Theory and Transformative Knowledge: The Functions of Criticism in Quality Education," *Educational Researcher* 33, no. 6, (2004): 11-18.
56. Leonardo, "Critical Social Theory and Transformative Knowledge," 11.
57. Leonardo, 11.
58. Ben Agger, *Critical Social Theories: An Introduction* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2006).
59. Agger, *Critical Social Theories: An Introduction*, 4.
60. Agger, 4.
61. Agger, 4

consciousness and hegemonic practices/ideas[62] and aims to penetrate "…this false consciousness by insisting on the power of agency, both personal and collective, to transform society"[63]. In contrast, positivism places intellectual authority on scientific and technical modes of reasoning, which can serve to mask the structural and ideological relations that constitute oppressive dynamics.

Critical social theory advocates a rejection of positivism. For critical social theorists, theory "…must develop the capacity of a meta-theory. That is, it must acknowledge the normative interests it represents and be able to reflect critically on both the historical development and genesis of such interests and the limitations they may present within certain historical and social contexts"[64]. The world is not static or pre-determined, it is however an outcome of the dynamism of different historical conditions. Further, "The Frankfurt School believed that the critical spirit of theory should be represented in its unmasking function"[65]. This unmasking function is enacted through a reflexive practice of questioning and critique whereby the world as it seems is exposed as a world that has been conditioned/reproduced into existence by concrete decisions and social processes. As an active process of critique, critical social theory moves toward uncovering values that often appear falsely as natural and automatic.

In this study, each chapter engages conceptual devices that broadly align with aspects of the political project of critical social theory. These frameworks include Black feminist epistemology; Gramscian theory of organic intellectuals and Fanonian theory of consciousness; and internal colonial theory. Patricia Hill Collins emphasizes the centrality of dialogue and lived experience in assessing knowledge claims[66]. Collins' theory of Black Feminist Epistemology has consistently served as a pillar in how I frame and articulate this study and functions as an interpretive framework in chapter 3. Although Collins is writing in specificity to the Black feminist subject position, the paradigm asserts that Black Feminist Thought is a form of critical social theory. As part of this assertion and theorem development, Collins explains the nuances of Black Feminist Thought as a subjugated knowledge created through the actions and ideas of Black women to construct a consciousness relational to their "differential subjugation"[67]. Collins' analysis elucidates how subordinated groups have developed and maintained divergent methods of producing and evaluating knowledge claims[68]. In this way Collins defines epistemology as an overarching theory of knowledge which includes these divergent methods of producing, communicating, and assessing knowledge claims[69]. As Collins further explains, Black Feminist Epistemology is a manifestation of an experiential material base rooted in historical conditions of lived reality and the relational production of a historical and interactional consciousness[70]. I further employ and develop this framework in Chapter 3 to interpret source material.

Chapter 4 draws from the social thought and analysis of Gramsci and Fanon to examine narrative data and engage in analysis of structural determinates of social life in Detroit. Emphasis on ideological struggle emanates out of Gramsci's rejection of economic determinism within

62. Agger, 4-5.
63. Agger, 5.
64. Henry Giroux, *Pedagogy and The Politics of Hope* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 42.
65. Giroux, *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope*, 42.
66. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*.
67. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 252.
68. Hill Collins, 252.
69. Hill Collins, 252.
70. Hill Collins, 256.

Marxism and his analysis of the specific historical conditions and different levels of articulation that produce hegemony over society. The state sanctioned institution of education is a key site in the maintenance of hegemony, thus analysis of ideological struggle on this particular terrain has the potential to contribute to broader protracted struggle and reveals the socio-psychological and intellectual processes which facilitate nonhegemonic actors' disavowal of hegemonic ideas. Gramsci's conception of organic intellectuals describes the counterhegemonic intellectual strata that carry out this function. As an interpretive framework, Gramsci and Fanon provide a conceptual language to analyze the life histories of counterhegemonic intellectuals through which I will analyze how narrators come to internalize the objective conditions that structure their own oppression, the contours of this internalization process as it operated at the individual and social level, and the historical formations that shape their counterhegemonic praxis.

While Gramsci did not speak to the specifics of racism or the relationship between race and class, Hall provides a synthesis of Gramsci's core contributions as they relate to the potential applicability to simultaneous race and class analysis[71]. Hall asserts that Gramsci's refinements and applications of Marxism to specific socio-historical formations demonstrates the different economic, political and ideological articulations through which the very individuals subjected to exploitative practices internalize the ideologies on which these practices are predicated. This is both an individual and collective process that leads Gramsci to argue for the centrality of counterhegemonic ideological struggle.

In addition, I draw from Fanonian scientific analysis of the colonial condition, a condition that also functions as internalized disease structured through economic and ideological oppression[72]. Although Fanon was writing about the colonial condition as it appeared in Algeria, his focus on the consequences of the colonial structure on the colonized mind can be applied, with some adjustments made, to other conditions that characterize a relation of domination. Specifically, his focus on the consciousness of the colonized as it appears under colonialism is particularly striking. Fanon explains that the colonized have been conditioned through structural and ideological violence to accept their status in society which manifests in particular colonial behaviors. Thus, Fanon also expresses the centrality of ideological struggle to confront colonial mentality.

Chapter 5 employs conceptual devices from internal colonial theory to excavate the counterhegemonic praxis of educational stakeholders during the area of community control of schools movement. The concept of internal colonialism, in part, evolved out of the social thought and activism of 1960s Black and Third World thinkers and activists. The convergence of the inadequacy of the civil rights framework for the task of redistributive justice and the emergence of Third World anticolonial struggle gave way to the ascendance of "internal colonialism" or the "semi-colony thesis" as an analytic of racialized economic relations[73]. The concept of internal colonialism illuminated this dimension of the domestic colonial condition as well as the racialized economic structure constituting the terms of U.S. racial minorities' incorporation.

Writing in 1967, Ture[74] and Hamilton argued that African Americans exist in a "colonial relationship to the larger society, a relationship characterized by institutional racism"[75]. Ture and

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71. Stuart Hall, "Gramsci's relevance for the study of race and ethnicity," *Communication Inquiry* 10, no. 5 (1986): 5-27.
72. Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004).
73. The semi-colony thesis also gained traction in academic discourse and was termed interchangeably as the internal colonial model.
74. Ture was formerly known as Stokley Carmichael, member of SNCC and later a Black Panther Party member.
75. Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1992), 6.

Hamilton explain that a hegemonic white power structure defines the terms of African American incorporation into the democratic and capitalist social system, a differential process based on racial ideology. This assertion, referred to as the semi-colony thesis, is distinct from the classic colonial relationship. Emphasis is however on the enduring structural and ideological relation of domination, the colonial relationship. Each chapter will engage more thoroughly with the specific conceptual devices guiding analysis alongside the relational historical ethnographic research design.

4.2 Ethnographic writing, and historical research

In working with oral history and archival data I adapted the ethnographic analysis schema of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw[76] to develop the dissertation narrative. Emerson et., al explain that ethnographers are tasked with re-creating "...moments from selected details and sequences"[77], through the writing process, researchers "…highlight certain actors and statements more than others in order to portray their own scene of an experience"[78]. In this study re-creation of moments were derived from both narrative and archival sources, supplemented of course with the support of richly constructed secondary source materials. The authors note that "...ethnographers create scenes on a page through highly selective and partial recountings of observed and re-evolved details"[79]. Informed by this methodological perspective, I sought to recreate scenes and events based on an integration of the above stated data sources.

My aim was to "…portray a social world and it's people" [80]. This is particularly the case for my approach to Chapter 3 wherein I draw on previously conducted oral histories to create a social portrait of Detroit as examined through a critical social theory analytic. The advantages of this approach included the consultation of additional archival sources, and secondary sources, to further support narrative claims. This strategy had an added effect of guiding the development of the primary research themes that came to guide the development of chapter structures and arguments. As much as possible, I based archival research fieldwork and the construction of chapter arguments on analysis of interview data. In this way, I developed an iterative approach to the methodologies that supported fieldwork. This has a had determinative effect on this study as whole, serving as a foundation for the entire dissertation. Thorough examination of the social worlds narrators inhabited, the political economic and cultural architecture of these worlds further directed the claims which end each chapter.

Rich descriptions in this study includes the offering of specific details and sensory imagery that together work to create an immediacy for the reader. The notion of immediacy was quite important in my research. In relation to oral history methods, my engagement with rich description sought to not only describe a scene or historical moment, but strove to convey meaning for those incurring the experience. Emerson, et., al add that it is important to describe in great detail the ambience of a research setting in order to foreground future events and actions. In Chapter 3, I utilized this strategy to depict a social portrait of Detroit marked by tenuous dynamics, despite secondary research claims of Detroit as 'arsenal democracy", or 'melting pot'

76. Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
77. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 46.
78. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 46.
79. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 46.
80. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 57.

land of opportunity. In this way, my task was to develop a Detroit geographical commonsense that reflects the deep entrenchment of structural racialization.

This racialized geography is a central point of departure in Chapter 3, and in Chapter 5 where I analyze the constitutional case regarding desegregation in 1970s Detroit. Not only was I tasked to convey this geographical reality but in addition I sought to describe the social and power relations that constitute this geography. As Emerson, et., al advise, a researcher should always aim to use greater descriptive language rather than resort to a categorical label[81]. In my work, this was acutely decisive when considering how to refer to, and expound upon, social processes and formations. For example, throughout this study I make a major claim of educational disenfranchisement as a stalwart artifact of an essential and pre-existing colonial relationship that has been maintain, sustained, and reproduced by schools. In order to convey this reality in descriptive terms, I sought to describe in greater detail evidences that are corroborated by secondary literature and narrative sources that must stand on their own as historical accounts. Lastly, Emerson et., al contend that rich sensory descriptions help highlight a specific actor or event which supported identification of historical events and social processes key to the production of the educational policy landscape in Detroit. For example, in Chapter 5 I discuss a student walkout through narrative detail and social world description as these details help amplify the action being taken which also serves as a method of examining the actor (s) agency in their social worlds. In contrast to Emerson et., al I depart from their assertion that a character acts within a situation in a routinized manner or in reaction to a set of conditions[82]. In opposition to this precept, I argue that actors were also engaging in highly creative and innovative social practices that were neither wholly determined by social conditions nor entirely reactionary. I discuss this in further detail in Chapter 5. Moving on, the second strategy I employed with greater frequency was the use of dialogue.

There are particular sections where I relied upon use of dialogue to re-create scenes and convey meaning. The use of narrative data is often presented in exchange form where I am interspersing narrative with archival and secondary sources. Emerson et. al, advise the use of indirect and direct quotations as well as paraphrasing so as to ensure the preservation of an event that occurred and to include the experience of that which happened[83]. Applying this method to oral history is an imperfect task and required some adaptation which included the use of paraphrase to signal a meaning making reflection and/or memory for the narrative. The ethnographic method of dialogue presentation aligns constructively in this area as Emerson et., al content "...presentation of dialogue furthers sensitivity to the interactional processes through which people construct meanings and local social worlds in routine exchanges"[84]. This is a critical mechanism to illuminate the relation between the political economic constructions of nonhegemonic actors' social worlds and their educational experiences and aspirations. Lastly, a few thoughts concerning characterization in my analysis and the selection of narrative voices. Emerson et, al define characterization as a strategy employed to describe the people researchers encounter[85]. For the authors, theoretical frames and research questions may guide this process. In addition, I myself was present in much of the research as an interlocutor for narrators. From this foundational base, and consultation of existing oral histories, I then made decisions of archival

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81. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 61.
82. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 62.
83. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 64.
84. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 66.
85. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 69.

collections to visit and ultimately my encounters with oral history interview data directed the questions I asked of these collections.

4.3 Silences and the unknowable

As discussed, the methodological approach employed in this study is informed by broader questions concerning the role of academic research amid oppressive contexts. Ongoing in Detroit is a grassroot struggle to engage in varying forms of community-based research concerning contemporary oppressive social conditions. These forms of organic organizing have happened before within the Detroit social landscape. Perhaps that is why archival research alone is particularly limiting. Within the process of collecting data I was also able to recognize particular archival silences and seek out interview participants that helped illuminate a specific social process and event. In this way, the hegemonic incompleteness of the archive can encourage identification of historical silences that academic researchers can help to excavate. However, there are many more silences that remain unknowable in academic writing.

There are histories of struggle and resistance that exist outside of academic commodification. In the process of conducting fieldwork, there were several lines of inquiry that from a research perspective were appealing. I considered how particular impulses within the academy would encourage the tracking down of particular narrators in order to increase the "status" of my study and how that might support my own career trajectory. I humbly considered these realities and tempered my research design accounting for my limitations as an unfunded graduate student, working full or part-time throughout the fieldwork process. Developing a relationship driven approach provided a sound structure through which to focus on nurturing reciprocity and care in research mediated relationships that extended beyond the parameters of IRB protocols. I have endeavored to offer a contribution toward understanding how historical processes shaped by racial capitalism constituted the educational policy landscape in Detroit. This is not an exhaustive history but a perspective that will hopefully help in enlivening the record as its stands, and personally provide a catalyst for my own future of community-driven research. In doing this work, I have become increasingly attentive to the seductive impulse to perform research complicit in settler colonial knowledge reproduction. I hope to contribute to an ongoing challenge of these knowledge production and preservation practices.

Chapter 3

Reconstructing Race and City: The Racial and Class Contexts of Educational Politics in Postwar Detroit, 1943-1953

Introduction

Constitutive to Detroit's formation is the introduction of chattel slavery and land colonization, two practices of domination foundational to the construction of the U.S. nation state[86]. These formative interlocking structures were organizing processes in the construction of the local Detroit power structure. Yet central to the founding mythology of U.S. society has been the "…denial of the historical legacies of racism and empire…"[87]. In the 1940s, Detroit's political economic elite continued a process of fashioning a built environment[88] reflective of the racial and class dynamics that characterized the 'city's' colonization and settlement patterns[89]. Detroit's 1943 race riot expressed the tenuous social practices that helped to perpetuate what Lipsitz terms 'racialization of space, spatialization of race'[90]. Lipsitz argues that "…the national spatial imaginary is racially marked, and that segregation serves as crucible for created emphasis on exclusion…"[91]. In Detroit, this spatial imaginary was an organizing factor in how racial capitalism[92] employed social policy actors in the construction of a geography marked by logics of racial exclusion.

The Detroit Public Schools played a central and decisive role in mediating, expanding, and legitimizing this ongoing process. The 1940s represents an important period in understanding how the Detroit schools were utilized to normalize racial logics of exclusion and containment. By the 1970s, the system was brought under federal scrutiny as parents, students, and other concerned actors alleged decades of policy decisions had produced a racialized system[93]. Moreover, Detroit's economic history, as a center of industry and therefore political

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86. Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation", *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 1, no.1 (2015); 52-72. For a fuller discussion on the interaction of chattel slavery and Indigenous genocide and settler colonialism see Tiffany Jeannette King, "In the Clearing: Black Female Bodies, Space and Settler Colonial Landscapes" (Ph.D. Diss, University of Maryland, 2013).
87. Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 137.
88. The 'built environment' can be understood as a referential category to the man-made physical structures of a geographical area which are always mediated through organizing racial logics; in this way the built environment is understood as reflective of power, power struggles, and exclusionary policies. For a fuller discussion of the nexus of forces that contribute to conceptualization of a built environment see Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York, NY: Verso, 2006).
89. Alicia Tiya Miles, *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits* (New York: The New Press, 2017).
90. George Lipsitz, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape," *Landscape Journal*, 26, (2007):10-23.
91 Lipsitz, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race," 10.
92. Cedric Robinson's analysis of racial capitalism foregrounds how European racialism and racism were constitutive formative features of nascent capitalism. Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983).
93. In the 1970s, the Detroit branch of the NAACP brought suit against the state of Michigan alleging a historical practice of segregative policies and Black student containment. See Chapter 5.

power, provides a unique case study of the relationship between racial capitalism, schools, and society. In this chapter, drawing on extant oral history data and archival data sources, I begin my examination of the Detroit schools by contextualizing the system as a mechanism of a broader racialized power structure.

A guiding theoretical conceptualization of this study emphasizes that race is constitutive to capitalism in that capitalism is inherently a racialized system. In *Black Marxism*, Cedric Robinson argues that nationalism and racism are constitutive formative features of European capitalism[94]. In this way, capitalism is simultaneously racialized. Robinson elaborates asserting that "Capitalism and racism, in other words did not break from the old order but rather evolved from it to produce a modern world system of 'racial capitalism' dependent on slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide"[95]. This conception of racial capitalism forms the historical point of departure in order to delineate how 1940s Detroit crafted and implemented policy decisions complicit in the perpetuation of racial capitalism.

Alongside the war effort of the 1940s, Detroit political economic elite sought to perpetuate the spatial racism central to the local geography. However, a set of interrelated progressive reforms seemingly sought to perform a responsive function to the crisis of race relations during war-time. These reforms seemingly sought to employ the national school system as a key mechanism in establishing how race and racism would be understood and managed. In this way, these reforms would be formative and instructive in organizing how local school systems might engage in race work through control over educational policy and classroom practices. In Detroit, the rise of intercultural and citizenship education programs have a contentious history. Archival sources offer a compelling portrait of the reform efforts yet also suggest dismal effects. While the Detroit reforms were connected to the national intercultural reform movement, a 1943 race riot activated the Detroit schools to assume an important position within the emergence of a mayoral interracial civic agenda. In this way, the archival record is comprised of seemingly warring positions concerning the intercultural and citizenship education reforms.

While these policies purportedly sought to promote tolerance and patriotism during the height of the WWII era[96], how these reforms interacted with extant local historical dynamics is an important component in understanding Detroit educational history. Further, the extent to which the underlying ideological perspectives of these programs became enshrined in the Detroit education policy landscape, and/or extended beyond schooling to broader aspects of the civic structure, is vital to assess. In order to discern the effects of these social processes on educational policies, practices, and experiences during this formative era, this chapter engages guiding precepts from critical social theory.

This chapter argues that intercultural and citizenship education functioned as state sanctioned racial projects[97] seeking to reconstruct how race and race relations would be

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94. Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983).
95. Robin D.G. Kelley, Preface, Cedric Robinson *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*.
96. Detroit Public Schools. Dept. of Language Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools (Detroit, 1944).
97. Omi and Winant define a racial project in the following manner: "A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines. Racial projects connect what race means in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially organized, based upon that

interpreted across the social policy landscape and city governance structures. These projects were relational to national shifts in interpreting race relations in social policy, a response to a global crisis of American hegemony. This chapter explores how education policy was mobilized by the dominant power structure to (re)create conceptions of race and city alongside national governance strategies to reposition the U.S. as the global political and moral authority[98].

Conceptual and interpretive framework

This chapter is informed by literature that from educational history and African American history examining the historical practice of political manipulation of schooling. Analyses excavates how state and civic actors develop and disseminate racial logics aligned to political economic interests. The orienting research questions guiding this chapter is,

(1) How did the intercultural and interracial movement take shape in Detroit and how did the movement shape conceptions of race and democracy in schools?

Education policy as a function of racialized state power

W.E.B. Du Bois argues that the fundamental contradiction of American society, and thus greatest threat to the prospect of freedom and democracy globally, is the color line [99]. His efforts to document both the function and state sponsored manipulation of the color line across social, political economic, and educational loci serve as a powerful analytic through which to consider attempts to ameliorate ubiquitous racial subjugation. From this standpoint, consideration of his debates with contemporaries, such as Booker T. Washington[100], can be understood as an effort to discern the function of specialized, state sponsored educational racial projects. Of these racial projects, the state sponsored control and use of public educational systems for specific ends is a main focus of analysis[101]. Scholars argue that the effectives of the American education system serve a determinative function in the maintenance of a fundamentally racialized oppressive social order[102]. Recognition of this reproductive function has produced a body of literature examining schooling architecture along structural and ideological analyses[103]. In this section I draw upon extant literature examining the history of the structural and ideological relation between schools and the dominant social order to conceptually situate the Detroit educational landscape during

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meaning", 56. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, (New York: Routledge, 1994, Second Ed).
98. This theme/title is inspired by Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).
99. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015). Originally published 1903.
100. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*.
101. For a fuller discussion on this point see Ronald E. Butchart, "'Outthinking and Outflanking the Owners of the World': A Historiography of the African American Struggle for Education," History of Education Quarterly 28, no. 3 (1998): 336-366.
102. See the following sources for analysis of the relationship between schooling and the production of a docile, pliable workforce, Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1934). Carter Woodson, C.G., *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2010).
103. Samuel Bowles and Herbet Gintis, *Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (New York NY: Basic Books, 1976). Michael Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004).

the era of intercultural education and citizenship education experimentation.

The function of schooling in racialized capitalist America cannot be understood without critical review of the emergence of public education as a fundamental demand and political economic project of Black people during Reconstruction. W.E.B Du Bois underscores this analysis in, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*[104]. Du Bois chronicles how Black people sought to use the struggle for equal education as a strategy to secure their social, economic, and political freedoms. This strategy also served as further rebellion against the Southern slave states by demanding public taxes be used to fund Black educational institutions. However, an alliance of Southern white political and economic elite, manipulated state legislative systems to effectively bring the development of Black education under the purview of white political actors. External control of Black educational institutions functioned as a hegemonic apparatus[105], pivoting on a convergence of interests allied to a dominant white power structure.

In *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935* historian James Anderson further examines this process of Black educational struggle excavating the social processes which gave rise to a convergence of interests seeking to undermine the counterhegemonic uses of education. A central thesis in Anderson's work explains how the emergence of a 'state sponsored system of education' amid a new southern regime with established links to northern philanthropists and industrialists, was constitutive to a broader oppressive apparatus designed to ensure Black economic and social subjugation. This leads Anderson to assert that this convergence of interests, legitimized by state governance mechanisms, sanctioned the underdevelopment and delimited the autonomy of independent Black educational institutions. Despite the genesis of Black educational institutions of higher learning and vocational education, Anderson finds that these institutions were supplanted and directed by an overarching ideology complicit in the perpetuation of Black disenfranchisement[106].

In *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* William H. Watkins demonstrates the function of white economic elites in the development of hegemonic control over Black educational institutions and curricular practice [107]. Watkins excavates biographical information on early benefactors of southern Black educational institutions evidencing that these actors espoused ideas that were reflective of their interests and desires as members of the Northern philanthropic industrial class and allied spheres of influence. Watkins charts how these white actors established the foundational institutions that came to have a profoundly delimitative effect on the autonomy of Black education. This resulted in a practice of state sponsored control over Black educational institutions.

These texts emphasize the confluence of racialized political economic interests in shaping the function of education in American society. Further, this scholarship demonstrates the racial contexts of the interplay of political economy and schools. The ideological function of schools was found to be reflective of the dominant power structure, as a method to perpetuate a relation

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104. W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (Cleveland, OH: Third World Publishing Company, 1968). See also Chapter 5 for a discussion of this textual source as it pertains to my study.
105. William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America*, 1865-1954 (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001).
106. James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860-1935*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).
107. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954*.

of domination. The educational subjugation of Black America, was utilized to reproduce and legitimize a racialized social order. In this next section I employ these texts to make visible the racial and class contexts of the development of the Detroit Public Schools.

The founding of the Detroit Public Schools as a function of racialized state power

In Detroit, the development of the Detroit Public Schools, illuminates how racial and class contexts of oppression forged an inherently segregated system. Early history of the development of the city excavates how settler Detroit elite continued to perpetuate chattel slavery despite the 1787 Northwest Ordinance establishing the prohibition of slavery in the new territory. Despite this, "Detroit came to be a center of agitation for the abolition of slavery"[108], as the city functioned as an important underground railroad stop, known under the codename Midnight. These warring positions were reflected in the development of common schools in the city. Educational analysis of the city's founding period documents the establishment of a segregated common school system as coinciding with the 1827 legislative act establishing Detroit as a township[109].

In 1833 white Kentucky officials claimed two Black Detroiters, Mr. and Mrs. Thornton Blackburn were fugitive slaves. African American History scholar Herb Boyd explains, "The trial would be a case test for how free African American really actually were in the territory. A supportive black community filled the court room. Key to the case was the extent to which the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 would be applied"[110]. The local adjudication system ordered the Blackburns be turned over to the Kentucky officials. However, as the Blackburns sat inside a jail, other Detroit African Americans rallied outside to demand their freedom. Through the valient efforts of the Detroit Black community, the Blackburns were able to escape to Canada. The social context of the 1833 Blackburn Riot demonstrated that Detroit would comply with Southern race codes and enslavement practices.

The Detroit common schools were superseded by the founding of the Detroit Public Schools in 1842. The new district engaged in a practice of school based racial segregation with the establishment of Colored School No.1[111]. Non-white students were relegated to attend schools only found in the newly established eighth district, which meant that African American youth living in other districts would have to travel whatever distance applicable to attend school or forgo education. District racialized education policies coupled with parents citing accessible education facilities as inferior led to the founding of independent schools facilitated in African American churches. Many Detroit African American families chose to enroll their children in a private school maintained by the Second Baptist Church[112]. In response to the public pressures and persistent demands of Black community members[113], a second public school, Colored School No. 2, was established in 1865 in the city's seventh ward[114]. However, the teaching staff remained exclusively white.

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108. William Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869," *Negro History Bulletin* 26, no. 1 (1962): 26.
109. Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869".
110. Herb Boyd, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination* (New York: Amistad, 2017), 29.
111. Linda G Wiiliams, "Fannie Richards and Gladys Roscoe: Repertoires of practice of two early African American teachers in Detroit," in *African America Women Educators: A Critical Examination of their Pedagogies, Educational Ideas, and Activism from the Nineteenth Century to the Mid-Twentieth Century*, ed. Karen A. Johnson, Abul Pitre, and Kenneth L. Johnson (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Education, 2014), 32.
112. Williams, "Fannie Richards and Gladys Roscoe," 32.
113. Williams, 34.
114. David M. Katzman, *Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 85.

This changed only when Fannie Richards, who ran a private in-home school, became employed as the first black instructor of Colored School No. 2 in 1868. Subsequently, Richards went on to lead efforts to protest the practice of segregated schools[115]. The Detroit Board of Education (BOE) maintained its practice of segregated schools until 1869[116], a practice maintained by a founding 1842 school policy that held "Scholars must as a general rule attend the school located in the district or part of the city where they reside"[117]. The formal end of Detroit education segregation was ushered in through an amendment to the state's school law in 1867. The 1867 amendment declared that all students be granted admission to schools throughout the district, effectively an open school policy[118]. In response to this legislation Black parents began "…to petition the Board of Education for their children's admission in their districts"[119] of residence.

However, Detroit school leadership did not initially embrace the new policy. The Detroit Board of Education's Committee on Schools had "urged the full board to defy state law, insisting that the great majority of residents believed the 'distinctive feature' of separate schools ought to be retained"[120]. The system refused to comply with the law until a lawsuit forced the legislation into practice. In 1868 Joseph Workman, an African American parent who wished to enroll his child in Duffield Union School was denied admission and brought suit, eventually being heard before the Michigan Supreme Court. Workman was represented by African American Detroit elites, William Lambert and Fannie Richard's[121] brother, John D. Richards[122]. The 1868 case of Joseph Workman, *The People ex re. Joseph Workman v The Board of Education of Detroit*, brought the issue of segregation into full view. The Workman lawsuit perhaps became the first legal remedy provided to suggest the mandate of equality of educational opportunity in Detroit. The case emerged in the context of standing state law that supported African American educational access and the fact that African Americans paid into the public system at the same rate as their white counterparts[123].

Archival analysis of the case documents that African Americans in Michigan had cast access to education a top priority, denouncing segregated education at a Black convention in 1865[124]. After the case was decided in 1869 in favor of Workman, local periodical clippings reveal the ideological ideas underlying Board resistance and the general sentiment of Detroit's settler population. One news article explained the sentiments of white Detroiters stating "It is well known that the feelings and prejudices of our citizens generally are against bringing the

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115. Katzman, *Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century*, 85.
116. Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869," 25.
117. Stephensen, quoted on 25.
118. Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869," 27. See also Hugh Davis, *"We Will Be Satisfied With Nothing Less": The African American Struggle for Equal Rights in the North during Reconstruction* (Cornell University Press, 2011), 91.
119. Davis, *"We Will Be Satisfied With Nothing Less,"* 91.
120. Davis, 92.
121. Williams suggests that Fannie may have served as a case consultant regarding systemic educational practices in the Detroit schools and it is estimated that her involvement resulted in her transfer, along with several of her students, to the newly integrated Everett School. See Williams, "Fannie Richards and Gladys Roscoe: Repertoires of Practice of Two Early African American Teachers in Detroit".
122. Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869," 27. And, Williams, "Fannie Richards and Gladys Roscoe: Repertoires of Practice of Two Early African American Teachers in Detroit," 23-53.
123. Davis, *"We Will Be Satisfied With Nothing Less,"*91.
124. Davis, 91.

white and colored children together"[125]. The article couched subsequent legislative educational acts as interventionist efforts to circumvent this popular opinion on schooling. The clippings editorialize a spirit of retribution against these interventions and attribute Black discontent as an outcome of political meddling.

By the 1915 retirement of Fannie Richards, only three out of approximately 3,000 school teachers were African American. Awareness that district hiring practices were racialized was a reality faced by emerging Black educators. Detroit teacher Gladys Roscoe, who began her teaching career in 1914 upon graduation from Detroit Teacher's College, expressed her lament over her race-based career limitations. Beyond the roles of teaching staff, Black school employees were excluded from further advancement in the district with the first Black female principal not initiated until the 1940s[126]. Hiring and promotion policies reflected the racial logics permeating the city's structural founding. Understanding the ideologies animating these ideas and policy practices illuminates the underlying dynamics of racial capitalism afoot in Detroit. Drawing on archival sources and secondary sources materials informed by extant and original oral history interviews, I employ theoretical devices from critical social theory to examine how an alliance of city-state-school architects managed race in the city and its schools. Given the historical silences apparent in archival collections, I utilize the following theoretical devices to organize and analyze data sources.

Analytic Framework and Methodology

Two key theoretical devices anchor chapter analysis. These devices are informed by critical precepts of Black Feminist Thought. First, this chapter engages a critical analysis of extant oral history interview data to operationalize the production of differential knowledge. Differential knowledge is described in the work of preeminent Black feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins as a historical effect of subjugation, wherein oppressed actors develop a system of knowledge through their actions and ideas shaped by intersecting oppressions[127]. The second theoretical device utilized to analyze data is Collins' elucidation of the use of differential knowledge in evaluating knowledge claims[128]. Within oppressive contexts, Collins describes the existence and maintenance of an epistemology, as an overarching theory of knowledge, which entails methods of producing, communicating, and assessing knowledge claims. In this knowledge validation process, differential knowledge functions as a criterion through which to evaluate knowledge claims[129]. I draw on these theoretical devices to excavate the differential knowledges within oral history interview data. These devices provide an epistemological referent through which to evaluate the social construction of the city and knowledge claims made by nonhegemonic actors concerning educational practice and policy. Employing these devices in historical ethnographic analysis of archival and oral history data informs analysis of the contours of lived oppression. I further employ and develop this framework throughout data analysis.

Saidiya Hartman's calibrated caution provides particular insight as it regards confrontation of archival silences and the violence archives perform/preserve and writing this

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125. Stephensen, "Integration of Detroit Public Schools: 1839-1869," 27.
126. Williams, "Fannie Richards and Gladys Roscoe," 47.
127. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 252.
128. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 252.
129. Hill Collins, 252.

chapter[130]. Hartman describes the limitations of archival based analysis noting, "The libidinal investment is violence is everywhere apparent in the documents, statements and institutions that decides our knowledge of the past"[131]. In conducting archival research of Detroit's social history, the archived silences and archived violence exhibited against the freedom demands of residents were reoccurring incidents. Thinking through oral history and archival research theory, I ventured to create a social portrait of this formative period in Detroit's history by advancing a series of speculative, critical readings of archival and oral history sources[132].

One of the methodological decisions informing data analysis most central to this chapter is captured when Hartman explains, "By playing with and rearranging the basic elements of the story, by re-presenting the sequence of events in divergent stories and from contested points of view, I have attempted to jeopardize the status of the event, to displace the received or authorized account, and to imagine what might have happened or might have been said or might have been done"[133]. Thinking through Hartman, and in critical engagement with source material, the following analysis is subject to conditions of archival power and silences alongside use of oral history data informing analysis.

Data analysis

1. Social construction of the city

1a. Spatialization of race and the construction of Detroit

The rhetoric of intercultural education programs centered on the notion of teaching democratic and patriotic values alongside cultural tolerance[134]. This mission was legitimized at the highest level by the federal government, a decision constitutive to the need to maintain American moral and political authority abroad and at home. In Detroit, racial dynamics shaped all aspects of social life. For Black Detroiters, residential segregation, labor discrimination, and specific patterns of educational attainment were common features of everyday living. Despite the propensity of representative elite organizations to align their agendas with those of the political economic elite, a cross section of the Black community challenged these established patterns of civic engagement[135].

Two of the more established organizations, the Detroit Urban League and local branch of the NAACP, actively engaged in tokenized relationships with political actors and employers[136].

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130. Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe* 12, no. 2 (2008): 1-14.
131. Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," 5.
132. Hartman, 11.
133. Hartman, 11.
134. For a review of Detroit's intercultural education program examined as a generative approach, see Anne-Lise Halvorsen and Jeffery E. Mirel, "Intercultural Education in Detroit, 1943-1954," *Pedagogica Historica* 49, no. 3, (2013). 361-381.
135. See, Beth T. Bates, "'Double v for Victory' Mobilizes Black Detroit, 1941-1946," in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* eds. Jeanne F. Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 17–40. See also Karen R. Miller. *Managing Inequality: Northern Racial Liberalism in Interwar Detroit* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).
136. Raskin describes the internal community dynamics and contradictions within Detroit's Black community, particular describing the Detroit Urban League's tendency to engage in tokenized relationships with employers. See Jack Raskin, Oral History Transcript, Blacks in the Labor Movement Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

As a strategy, this created a pattern of economic and political paternalism where loyalty could be redeemed for individual redress from segregative policies. However, a nexus of four social forces, operated along racial and class lines, effectively creating and maintaining a segregated social system. These social forces included police violence, housing segregation, racialized educational segregation, and labor discrimination[137]. Notwithstanding these realities, the Great Migration from the South toward Northern and Western city centers rapidly challenged the absolute power of Detroit white settlers[138]. In 1910 Detroit was home to some fifty-seven hundred Black people, but by 1925 Black residents leaped to eighty-one thousand[139]. Historian Kevin Boyle emphasized, "American cities didn't simply sparkle in the summer of 1925. They simmered with hatred, deeply divided as always"[140]. This shift resulted in a marked increase in racial violence. White actors at all levels of society engaged in practices abetting the racialization of space in the late 1910s and early 1920s[141]. Segregation was rampant in the city, particularly in the labor market, as Black people were increasingly hired into the plants, but seldom into skilled positions.

Challenges to residential segregation reached new tenuous heights in 1925 when Dr. Ossian Sweet, a physician with a practice operating in Black Bottom, decided to move into a white neighborhood. During this early era, most Black residents lived in the Black Bottom area. In the 1910s, Black Bottom was not a predominantly Black residential area, in fact "…Negroes lived alongside recently arrived Russian Jews, refugees from the czar's pogroms. On the neighborhood fringes, blacks shared streets with Italians, Greeks, and Syrians, refugees from grinding poverty"[142]. A major section of the migrants were people seeking better social conditions, most migrants "…were working people, sharecroppers, lumber-camp hands, and maids"[143]. It was in this community that Dr. Sweet first lived when he arrived in Detroit. Dr. Sweet was originally from central Florida where he had worked alongside his parents toiling in agricultural work. Dr. Sweet was encouraged by his parents to leave Florida to seek education that would afford a future beyond the precarity and violence of fieldwork. He succeeded in this effort earning his bachelor's degree in science at Wilberforce University in Ohio before continuing his studies in medicine at Howard University in Washington D.C.[144].

Amid Dr. Sweet's attempts to take residence in an exclusively white eastside neighborhood on Garland Avenue, amid the gathering of a white mob outside his home self-defense shots were fired. These events led to a historic case symbolizing the pervasive racism that became dominant in the social psyche of the city. Dr. Sweet was arrested. Through his networks in the Black middle class professional community, he acquired legal representation by way of the local NAACP chapter. Eventually, the national headquarters of the NAACP intervened to offer legal support and expertise. This case was both a local matter but reflective of the national racialized spatial imaginary. At stake in Detroit was the fanning of racial tensions

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137. The Detroit Branch of the NAACP regularly kept records of citizen complaints reflecting these social conditions, policy brutality was a the most recorded complaint as gleaned from the records available in archival collections.
138. For a fuller narrative history of the Great Migration see, Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2010).
139. Boyle, Kevin, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age* (New York: Picador, 2004), 3-4.
140. Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, 6.
141. Boyle, 10.
142. Boyle, 105.
143. Boyle, 106.
144. Boyle, 21.

amid a surge in the Klan's organizational presence. The question sharply became, was segregation to be a policy that was treated as a civil good and therefore maintained by legal action, and/or what would come of the future of the city if these standing policies were openly challenged.

Dr. Sweet's individual case expressed how race and class operates as a mutually constitutive determinant of social life. Economic mobility was contained within the boundaries of the logic of racial capitalism. Detroit's social landscape was dramatically reshaped as new migrants and immigrants to the city reshaped its political economic and cultural infrastructure. The effects of industrialization and Henry Ford's $5 work day had brought forth a wave of new workers, "In 1900, when Ford was organizing his company, Detroit had 85,000 people living within its city limits. By 1925, it had 285,000 people living within its city limits"[145], Boyle explains.

As Black residents moved further away from the inner core, a new political perspective was in the process of development. As this new process unfolded, white supremacist interests took note, leading to increased racial hostility[146]. Prior to the Great Migration, Black residents were a relatively small segment of the city demographic. However, new migrants brought new perspectives which in turn received increased anti- Black sentiment, "There was no such thing as resistance to blacks until that surge of blacks coming up during World War I. That's when attitudes began to change and resistance set in"[147]. In the 1920s white supremacy operated visibly in the city, with the KKK recruiting members as early as 1921[148]. A Klan member ran for mayoral office in 1924 and boastful rumors that Detroit's Klan membership rivaled all other cities[149]. The Klan candidate was unsuccessful but summer organizing of the "Invisible Order" aimed for success in the November general election. On an evening in July 1925, a "…thousand white-robed knights gathered in a field on Detroit's west side, their rally brilliantly illuminated by the blinding light of a burning cross"[150]

Responsive to such displays of racial terror, early civic policy confined African Americans to residency on the Lower East Side, a neighborhood that came to be known as Black Bottom. African American social/civic organizations assisted the migrants making their way to the city, and in some cases joining family members in Detroit. The school district reflected this geography of spatialized racism. Black teachers comprised a minor segment of the workforce and were routinely limited to teaching appointments at predominantly Black pupil schools[151]. Student experiences of the district also demonstrate how Black students living near all white schools were directed away toward school districts in nearby municipalities to preserve all-white

145. Boyle, 14.
146. James E. Cummings, "James E. Cummings," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An Oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press), 33-36.
147. See, Cummings, "James E. Cummings", 33-26. See also, Boyle. *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, 23.
148. Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, 24.
149. Boyle, 24.
150. Boyle, 24. See also, Jackson Kenneth, *The Klu Klux Klan in the Cities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 140.
151. "If you want a job, where you gonna get a job? And they weren't really hiring too many blacks in the schools, as a matter of fact, because we didn't have but maybe two black teachers at that time anyway...If you didn't get A's and B's, then there was nothing for you", William St. Clair Billups and Earlie M. Poole, "Discussion of Education William St. Billups and Earlie M. Poole," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An Oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press), 101.

schools.

In the 1920s one family living near Eight Mile Road, an area in Detroit bordering the City of Ferndale, recalls being sent to a Ferndale school where Black students were subjected to racial hostility. Alice E.M. Cain Newman cites school based violence as the primary mechanism by which her grades and morale were stunted. Recalling this experience, Cain explains:

> I went to Jefferson School first. They really didn't want us...My grades were terrible. At home and in my community I was so well-loved and respected; and at school, where I was spending so many hours a day, I was treated like dirt[152]

Alice E.M. Cain Newman left Jefferson to attend a newly opened school in the Eight Mile neighborhood. Grant School, which was an all-Black school, was imagined as stemming from segregationist principles directing the Board of Education's new school policies[153]. Even with the structural and ideological motivations behind the Grant School opening, Cain Newman recalls the positive effects of being remanded to the segregated Grant School:

> …the more I think about it, the happier I am that it happened, because I was doing so poorly before then. When the Black school finally got up there, they brought in young black teachers who were college graduates...I'm going to tell you that difference in my grades was remarkable[154]

In the 1920s, residential patterns not only shaped school demographics but also impacted school social activities and curricula offerings[155]. As neighborhoods, formerly exclusively white, began experiencing waves of new movement into white feeder school constellations, schools responded through the application of racialized in-school policy. Attending Northwestern High School in the late 1930s, Kermit G. Bailer recalls how social activities were racially segregated. Bailer explains:

> ...because of race we were not permitted to participate in many sports; we were not permitted to come to the school dances; we were not permitted to belong to many of the academic clubs; nor were we permitted to be on the student council or participate in high school plays. Other than the fact we could go to school with whites, we were as rigidly segregated as were blacks in the South [156].

Differentiated curricula played a formative role in reflecting in-school mechanism to mark segregated education. As a Black student attending Northwestern High School Earlie M Poole remembers this impact vividly offering that,

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152. Alice E.M. Cain Newman, "Alice E.M. Cain Newman," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press), 73.
153. Alice E.M. Cain Newman, "Alice E.M. Cain Newman," 73.
154. Alice E.M. Cain Newman, "Alice E.M. Cain Newman," 73.
155. William St. Clair Billups and Earlie M. Poole, "Discussion of Education William St. Billups and Earlie M. Poole," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 101-102.
156. Kermit G. Bailer, "Kermit G. Bailer," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 176.

> The more blacks got into schools, and they began to offer different curriculums. Instead of wanting us to take a college preparatory course, which they called it, they wanted us to take sewing and cooking, which was valuable; but it wasn't which would allow us to go to college. They didn't give us the background to go to college, so very few of the people were really prepared to go. They did say - where would we get a job? Who would hire us as typists? I remember that very well[157].

The narratives of Detroit school students Kermit Bailer and Alice Newman expressed a core tension central to the school debate surrounding integration. Du Bois raised this concern himself and asked, "Does the Negro need Separate Schools?"[158], to which DuBois responded that while integrated contexts presumably would ensure better facilities, equitable treatment could not be assured. Attention to the power of racial logics in shaping African American educational experience in white controlled institutions, challenged the integrated education. Bailer and Newman express an educational experience reflective of the reality of treatment in white controlled schools. The reality of racialized educational experience would continue to play a central dynamic in educational struggle in Detroit.

White control over African American everyday lives and imagined futures was not confined to school contexts. In fact, racialized education discrimination was relational to a broader practice of racial discrimination in the city. The Detroit labor force was constituted by racially discriminatory policies. When Black workers were hired, they were normally hired in lower rung positions, working under the authority of white supervisors. Hodges E. Mason characterizes the precarious nature of work at the intersection of race and class in 1936 while working at the Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corporation. Black workers consistently were paid ten to thirty cents less than their white counterparts, which eventually became a rallying point for Black labor unionization:

> You could make as much as five dollars and two cents working piecework, but you could only make forty-five cents an hour on an hourly rate. The blacks made forty-five cents and the whites made fifty-five, sixty-five, and seventy-five cents for the same job. All the Negroes were in the knockout department, the band saws and stationary grinding and chipping[159]

In addition to wage suppression and racialized confinement to specific and arduous jobs, Black laborers were subjected to inspection whims of white foremen:

> They would have the castings stacked up on the platform. The foreman would go to the extreme end of the plant; then he'd take the metal guys; then all various departments. He would call them castings scrap. They weren't scrap. Then he would dock every one of them, which meant somebody had goofed on them, maybe...There may have been a few

157. William St. Clair Billups and Earlie M. Poole, "Discussion of Education William St. Billups and Earlie M. Poole," 101.
158. W.E.B. DuBois, "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools?," *Journal of Negro Education* 4 (1935): 328–35.
159. Hildred J. Drew Dale and Gwendolyn Ruth Edwards, Hodges E. Mason, Stanley Nowak, and John J. 'Jack White'. "Discussion on the Labor Movement: Hildred J. Drew Dale, Gwendolyn Ruth Edwards, Hodges E. Mason, Stanley Nowak, and John J. 'Jack White'," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 131.

> bad ones, but eighty-five percent of those castings were good, but almost four departments had been docked[160]

Finally, the corporate mobilization of police force protected and ensured the perpetuation of labor discrimination.

The entanglement of business interests extended beyond use of police force. As United Auto Worker (UAW) historians and Black labor scholars have contextualized, Henry Ford's Detroit was maintained, in part, with the alliance of Black institutions. Henry Ford believed relationships among African American ministers and the Ford Company could provide an avenue to secure a docile Black workforce[161]. This created a specific form of "paternalistic philanthropy"[162] that advocated equality of opportunity but maintained the "…desirability of racial segregation"[163]. Dominant social-civic organizations, the Detroit Urban League and local NAACP chapter, generally engaged in reflective paternalistic practices[164]. The effect was to create a schism of power that extended beyond Henry Ford, and other anti-union actors, to all facets of Black social life[165]. This occurred despite the fact that in the 1920s Ford was among the first to hire Black workers, these workers were relegated to lower positions while retaining native-born white workers in the skilled jobs[166]. Black workers were still underrepresented in the workforce[167], and when hired were relegated to the most dangerous[168].

The 1940 Census documented that the city population had reached 1.6 million residents, with African Americans accounting for 9.2% (149,119) of the total population[169]. Population shifts demanded expanded housing options and educational access, yet race and class dynamics mitigated this process. By the early 1940s not much had changed with regard to the role of race in shaping social dynamics in the city. The social construction of the city had produced entrenched patterns of racial segregation/discrimination along social axes of police violence, housing, education, and labor. As historian Richard Thomas explains, "What we do know is that between 1915 and 1943, race relations in Detroit sped steadily and disastrously downhill, characterized by more and more volatile skirmishes, which accumulated and exploded in the hate

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160. Hildred J. Drew Dale and Gwendolyn Ruth Edwards, Hodges E. Mason, Stanley Nowak, and John J. 'Jack White' "Discussion on the Labor Movement: Hildred J. Drew Dale, Gwendolyn Ruth Edwards, Hodges E. Mason, Stanley Nowak, and John J. 'Jack White'," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 132.
161. Walter Rosser, "Walter Rosser," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 139.
162. August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 11.
163. Meier and Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW*, 11.
164. Meier and Rudwick, 17-20.
165. Rosser, "Walter Rosser," 140.
166. Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, 107.
167. John White, "Discussion on the Labor Movement: Hildred J. Drew Dale, Gwendolyn Ruth Edwards, Hodges E. Mason, Stanley Nowak, and John J. 'Jack White'," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 260. White explains of the 12,000 workers on the line at GM pre-war, only 3 were African American, 260.
168. James Boggs, "James Boggs," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918 – 1967*, ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 151.
169. 1940 census data is used to compile this analysis, the census used the category of 'Negro' in their classification scheme. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools. Division of Instruction, Department of Language Education. (Detroit: Board of Education, 1944), 11.

filled bloody race riot of 1943. As a result, blacks became increasingly race conscious, realizing that their progress depended upon their functioning as a community"[170]. Together these dynamics created a climate which reached a fever pitch summer 1943. A riot erupted Sunday June 20, 1943 on the city owned and operated recreation park, Belle Isle. The park was a major source of public recreation, and on this day populated by white and Black defense workers[171]. A rumor of an alleged rape of a white woman by a Black man sparked a racialized riot, anti-Black white mob violence intensified the existing racial tensions in the city.

In the next section I examine the confluence of mayoral and school district responses to the 1943 race riot. Understanding the relationship between civic and school district responses excavates the underlying racial ideologies that animated these responses. The function of these underlying racial logics amid district experimentation with intercultural and citizenship education, provide an important context through which to illuminate the effects of these educational experiments on broader district policy and practice.

1b. Crafting a mayoral agenda in interracial relations

Beulah Whitby was uniquely positioned to understand how the racial dynamics of the city were fashioning an increasingly segregated social-spatial arrangement[172]. Active in the community as the Executive Secretary of Emergency Welfare of the Office of Civil Defense, Whitby had carried out the urgent and necessary work of greeting Black migrants fleeing racial violence, or perhaps simply seeking a better wage and housing conditions as they arrived at Detroit's central train station in the Southwest area of the city. Whitby regularly frequented the train station providing information to newcomers on where they could seek work and lodging[173]. Effectively, Whitby served as an informational guide providing an overview of race relations in the city – no doubt an increasingly important service in a city that had its own staunch history of Klan activity. Whitby was present at a grassroots meeting convened in the immediate days following the infamous 1943 race riot. Bringing together the most visible leaders in the Black community, the meeting led to the founding of the Mayor's Interracial Committee.

City government leaders accustomed to repressive approaches to managing racial unrest were challenged by a coalition of leaders that simply would not be discarded [174]. In response to the demands of Black civil rights leaders, in the days immediately following the June 23, 1943 race riot Mayor Edward Jefferies convened an Interracial Peace Committee. Among the membership on the first temporary committee were Walter Hardin, Director of race relations for the UAW-CIO, Pastor Charles Hill of Hartford Avenue Baptist Church, President of the Detroit

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170. Thomas, *Life for Us is what We Make it*, 125.
171. Report of Thurgood Marshall special counsel for the national association for the advancement of colored people concerning activities of Detroit police during the riots June 21 and 22, 1943. NAACP Detroit Branch Records, Box 1. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
172. See Ms. Whitby's transcript for a fuller understanding of her narrative and perspective on the Detroit situation. My use of the transcript herein is to identify and corroborate events, dates, and involvement of organizations/leaders. Buelah Whitby, Oral history transcript, 1969. Blacks in the Labor Movement Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
173. For a broader discussion of the role, lives, and ideas of African American women in Detroit during this period see, Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit*, 1st edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).
174. "Prior to the 1943 riot, no effective machinery of interracial cooperation existed in local government", see Tyrone Tillery, *The Conscience of a City: A Commemorative History of the Detroit Human Rights Department, 1943-1983* (Detroit: Human Rights Department, 1983).

Urban League Gene Chaffer, and Executives Secretary of Emergency Welfare of the Office of Civil Defense Beulah Whitby[175]. The Interracial Peace Committee appointed on June 25, 1943 convened from June 28 through October 1943[176] to "…study the causes of this riot and to make recommendations to him for appropriate action"[177]. The riot had resulted in 34 deaths, 25 of which were Black people[178]. The riot, lasting more than a week, had signaled that racism was a violence, and would be met with violence if necessary[179].

Examining the social conditions underlying the riot, the Detroit NAACP issued a series of recommendations before the Interracial Peace Committee. These social conditions were outlined and delivered as a statement of recommendations on June 29, 1943. The statement urged Mayor Jeffries to engage in serious study of the core conditions fostering rebellion in the city[180]. The statement outlined how housing, labor, and police violence laid a foundation of interlocking forces reproducing Black social and political exclusion in the city. The statement signaled that such factors evidenced a material basis underlying the riot and required investigation. Significantly, the statement called for the collection of evidences that would illuminate the conditions being called into question. Such an approach suggested that city departments were also culpable actors in fostering dismal conditions in the city. Police violence figured prominently into the statements proposed topics of study:

> We recommend an immediate grand jury investigation of the Police Department to determine its failure during the past crisis; that all persons within the departments found to have affiliations or sympathy with the Ku Klux Klan, National Workers League, or any other such organization; especially those that are guilty of non-feasance, mis-feasance, or mal-feasance while on duty, be dismissed[181]

Police violence was one of the more pressing insidious forces shaping Black life. Detroit Police Commissioner John Witherspoon appeared before the temporary Mayor's Committee on Wednesday June 30, 1943, reporting that the city charter proved an impediment to the hiring of Black officers. Police Commissioner Whitherspoon pointed to the use of "competitive merit

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175. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, see footnote on p.1, Box 15, Folder 43, Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. Additional members include Chairman of the Children's Fund of Michigan William J. Norton, Ebenezer AME Church's Rev. Wilbur Baber, Westminster Presbyterian Church's Rev. Benjamin J. Bush, Attorney Fred K. Butzel, Attorney Charles Mahoney, Editor of the Michigan Chronicle Louis Martin, and Adele Starrett of the Detroit Welfare Commission.
176. See also, Meier and Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW,* 195. Meier and Rudwick explain that the first committee established, "…proved to be impotent, though well-meaning…", 195.
177. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.1, Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
178. Report of Thurgood Marshall special counsel for the national association for the advancement of colored people concerning activities of Detroit police during the riots June 21 and 22, 1943. NAACP Detroit Branch Records, Box 1. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
179. Tyrone Tillery, *The Conscience of a City: A Commemorative History of the Detroit Human Rights Department, 1943-1983*.
180. Statements and Recommendations to the Mayor's Committee, Detroit NAAC, 1943. Box 1. NAACP Detroit Branch Records. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
181. Statements and Recommendations to the Mayor's Committee, Detroit NAAC, 1943. Box 1. NAACP Detroit Branch Records. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

examinations" as mechanisms shaping the police force hiring[182]. Thurgood Marshall acting on behalf of the national headquarters of the NAACP traveled to Detroit in the immediacy of the riot to conduct an independent analysis of riot events and outcomes[183]. Marshall's analysis illuminated the structural racism saturating the Detroit police department noting that the department only had a roster of 43 Black officers. Marshall's report revealed the pernicious forces underlying police response to the riot area, of the 25 Black people murdered, 17 were at the hands of the police. Further, the report drew on first person testimony and several signed affidavits alleging police rerouted Black drivers to main streets that were later found to be the targets of white arson. Added to this were further accounts of police indiscriminately targeting Black passersby. In this way, the Marshall report reflected the lived experience of a geography of spatial racism in the Detroit Black community[184].

The report condemned the inaction of Mayor Jeffries to redress the issue of police violence. However, in response to criticism Mayor Jefferies had sided sympathetically with the police and publicly suggested that police critics spend more time "…educating their own people to their responsibilities as citizens"[185]. Thus, while the mayor had taken steps to establish a civic infrastructure for the monitoring of race relations, it remained unclear if the committee would produce effective changes in city departments. Additionally, the statement of recommendations outlined a series of directives pursuant to educational segregation in the Detroit schools. Part criticism and part progressive attempt to induce system reform, the statement called on the Detroit Board of Education to consider its role in the broader racial climate in the city. Notably, the educational recommendations focused on increased hiring of Black teachers to be assigned to schools on an integrated basis throughout the district, the addition of a Black member to the Board of Education's membership, and curriculum reform to include "…study units on the subject of racial amity".

January 16, 1944 Mayor Jeffries continued the work of the temporary committee and established the City of Detroit Interracial Committee, also known as the Mayor's Interracial Committee[186]. The establishment of the Mayor's Interracial Committee marked a new approach to interracial conflict[187]. The Committee celebrated itself, asserting that "Detroit was the first city in the nation to establish an official agency to work on race relations, with a budget and provision for a professional staff"[188]. Committee membership retained several individuals from

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182. "City Charter Obstacle to Hiring of Negro Police", The Detroit Free Press, Thursday July 1, 1943, p.4.
183. See also the Thurgood Marshall/NAACP research report on the race riot. (1943). Report of Thurgood Marshall special counsel for the national association for the advancement of colored people concerning activities of Detroit police during the riots June 21 and 22, 1943. NAACP Detroit Branch Records, Box 1. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
184. Report of Thurgood Marshall special counsel for the national association for the advancement of colored people concerning activities of Detroit police during the riots June 21 and 22, 1943, p. 6. Box 1. NAACP Detroit Branch Records. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
185. Tillery, *The Conscience of a City: A Commemorative History of the Detroit Human Rights Department, 1943-1983*.
186. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.1. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
187. Tillery, *The Conscience of a City: A Commemorative History of the Detroit Human Rights Department, 1943-1983*. See also "Detroit Making Progress with Racial Problem", The Detroit Free Press, Saturday August 6, 1944, p.1.
188. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, as quoted on p.23. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. See

the original temporary committee comprising its eleven members, adding Superintendent of Public Schools Warren E. Bow and multiple heads of city departments[189]. The Mayor's Committee addressed itself to two primary objectives. The first regarded undertaking a comprehensive review of city departments to "…determine whether their services were rendered in such ways as to relieve tensions and to promote harmony and democratic practices" and the second objective was to "…cultivate better attitudes among the people of the community"[190].

Detroit Public Schools Superintendent Bow participated in efforts to advance the mayoral agenda in the district. Late March 1944, Superintendent Bow joined by Paul T. Rankin, assistant superintendent presided over the opening workshop at an intercultural conference in the city with more than 75 sponsoring organizations and 1,500 individuals participating[191]. Hosted by the Intercultural Council of Southeastern Michigan, the conference was joined by such notable figures as Alain Locke of Howard University and National Urban League executive secretary Lester B. Granger[192]. By June 1944 the establishment of the DPS Committee on Inter-racial Understanding in the Schools brought forth a recommendation to adopt the Inter-Racial Code of the Council of Social Agencies[193] and to develop an intercultural curriculum[194].

The Council of Social Agencies had embraced an Interracial Code that sought to address both the dynamics involved in programming as well as the internal structures of member agencies. Through the Interracial Code, the Council of Social Agencies petitioned member agencies to evaluate their own practices and further outlined how board member selection should be representative of the communities served[195]. The Board of Education adoption of the Council of Social Agencies' Interracial Code providing a basis through which to codifying the aims of intercultural education in administrative matters. Importantly, the school district's willingness was reflective of the mounting social pressure led by Black organizations demanding inclusion in all aspects of the school system, as noted in the NAACP statement of recommendations.

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also, Schermer, George. "Information Concerning the Mayor's Interracial Committee and its Operations," (July 2, 1951), 3.

189. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.2. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. Committee membership retained William Norton of the General Fund as Chairman, and added John O'Brien, Attorney Edward A. Simmons, Attorney Cecil L. Rowlette, Walter T. Hardin, General Supt. of the Department of Public Welfare Daniel J. Ryan, General Supt. of the Department of Parks and Recreation John J. Considine, Board of Health Commission Bruce H. Douglass, Director of the Housing Commission Charles F. Edgecomb, and Police Commissioner John F. Ballenger.

190. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.1. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

191. "Social Parlay Opens Friday: 1,500 Expected", Friday March 31, 1944, The Detroit Free Press, p.8.

192. "Intercultural Conference: 75 Agencies to Sponsor Talks on Social Problems", The Detroit Free Press, Monday March 20, 1944, p. 9. J.D. Callaghen, "Racial Talks Draw 1,500: 3 Authorities Open Intercultural Session", Saturday April 1, 1944, p. 9.

193. James Gamble, "Interracial Code of the Council of Social Agencies of Metropolitan Detroit", T*he Journal of Negro Education* 13, no. 4, (1944): 564-564.

194. Regular Meeting, Monday June 13, 1944, p 605. Box 25, Folder 1. Board of Education: Proceedings, 1943-44, Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

195. Gamble, "Interracial Code of the Council of Social Agencies of Metropolitan Detroit," 565.

Section Summary

In this section I have situated the development of Detroit's intercultural education program in the context of civic responses to the 1943 race riot. The race riot, an effect of the social construction of Detroit, was shaped by the ongoing pernicious interactive forces of racial capitalism. These forces were expressed in the racial segregation, constitutive to economic dynamics, foundational to the city's urbanization history. Housing segregation, though a formidable force, was not the sole social factor spurring the spatialization of racism in the city, key civic institutions including the mayor's office, police department, economic order, and schools were mobilized in this process.

Understanding educational experiences in Detroit's pre-war history, offers a portrait of how race and class shaped schooling. Moreover, oral history data offers a glimpse into how broader social conditions in the city where further entrenched through school-based experiences and practices. Experiences of police brutality and/or housing segregation were at moments acutely sensed during school-based activities. Narratives offer a rendering of a differential knowledge of the city's evolution, highlighting the effects of racism across all facets of social life and work. It is this differential knowledge that functions as a criterion through which to evaluate the merits and effects of intercultural education and citizenship education in Detroit. In this next section, I continue my analysis of the rise of intercultural education and its accompanying program of citizenship education. The interaction of school policy and mayoral power becomes enshrined through the proliferation of particular conceptualizations of race and racism. Analysis of this interaction amid nonhegemonic challenges to educational racism highlights the mobilization of schools in efforts to reconstruct central notions of race, and democracy in the postwar era.

2. Reconstructing race through educational experimentation

2a. Translating the mayoral agenda in schools: Interracial and intercultural education in the schools

The Administrative Committee on Intercultural and Interracial Education "…stressed the need to meet intercultural problems in four major areas-racial, religious, nationality, and socio-economic. Its intent is to integrate consideration of the racial problems in these other intercultural areas"[196]. Founded November 2, 1943, this bi-weekly committee was charged with developing programmatic and policy recommendations for the promotion of intergroup relations to the district[197]. By March 1944, this committee had supported 180 schools in the establishment of school level committees to "…study and improve the intercultural education program in the individual schools and to make recommendations for the system as a whole"[198]. The committee's

196. Intercultural and Interracial Education in the Detroit Public Schools, p.2. Box 17, Folder 7. The City of Detroit Commission on Community Relations Collection, Series I, Interracial Committee General Office Files 1943-52. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
197. Progress Report on Intercultural Education in the Detroit Public Schools 1944-1945, Box 3, Folder 9. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
198. Intercultural and Interracial Education in the Detroit Public Schools, p.2. Box 17, Folder 7. The City of Detroit Commission on Community Relations Collection. Series I, Interracial Committee General Office Files 1943-52. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

focus on interracial education was reflective of the broader national a focus on intercultural education. This agenda was implemented in Detroit through efforts in four key areas, "…curriculum, the continued education of teachers, organization and administration, and school-community relations"[199].

At the national level, the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education continued to provide an organizational base and leadership for the Detroit program [200]. At this national scale, the Bureau emphasized the parallel missions of securing democracy and good citizenship abroad, ideals of WWII. The Bureau concerned itself with developing a domestic educational program that emphasized "…human similarities among the racial, religious and national elements which compose our population, while permitting no contribution to go unnoticed"[201]. The Bureau, though reflective of wartime interests and priorities, emerged out of a teacher's intervention in classroom racial prejudice and an alliance of like-minded educators[202]. The experimental pedagogical interventions of this New Jersey Quaker teacher, Rachel Davis-DuBois led to the founding of the Service Bureau for Human Relations, which in 1939 became reorganized and granted charter in New York. Davis-DuBois served in the capacity of educational secretary. The Bureau conceived of its work as "…one of the most important facing American democracy"[203]. Several major cities were identified as prime sites through which to implement aggressive intercultural educational programs. Detroit was such a city[204].

Established as a metropolitan wide alliance of actors, the Union for Democratic Understanding, formed the Committee for Improvement of Inter-Racial Understanding in the Public Schools[205]. Speaking before this on Thursday December 16, 1943, Rachel Davis Du Bois offered a general overview of intercultural education. She emphasized to committee members, including representatives from the Mayor's Interracial Committee and Board of Education members, that teachers could be taught how to engage with non-white racial and cultural groups.

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199. Intercultural and Interracial Education in the Detroit Public Schools, p.2. Box 17, Folder 7. The City of Detroit Commission on Community Relations Collection. Series I, Interracial Committee General Office Files 1943-52. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
200. "Out of many – one: A plan for intercultural education". Box 15, Folder "Intercultural Education Pubs, 1940s". Detroit Committee on Community/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
201. "Out of many – one: A plan for intercultural education". Box 15, Folder "Intercultural Education Pubs, 1940s". Detroit Committee on Community/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
202. "Out of many – one: A plan for intercultural education". Box 15, Folder "Intercultural Education Pubs, 1940s". Detroit Committee on Community/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
203. "Out of many – one: A plan for intercultural education". Box 15, Folder "Intercultural Education Pubs, 1940s". Detroit Committee on Community/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. See also Batur-VanderLippe, P., & Feagin, J. "Racial and ethnic inequality and struggle from the colonial era to the present: The drawing global line," in *The Global Line: Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Struggle from a Global Perspective* Vol. 6: 3-24, (Stamford: JAI Press, 1999). And, Zoe Burkholder. *Color in the Classroom: How American Schools Taught Race, 1900-1954*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011).
204. For a fuller discussion of the development of the Bureau of Intercultural Education see Daniel H. Perlstein. "American Dilemmas: Education, Social Science, and the Limits of Liberalism", in *The Global Color Line: Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Struggle from a Global Perspective*, ed. Pinar Batur-Vanderlippe and Joe Feagin (Stamford, CN: JAI Press, 1999), 257-377.
205. Union for Democratic Action Coalition Committee for Improvement of Inter-Racial Understanding in the Public Schools, Statement of Objectives, p.3. Box 3, Folder 3-9 Race Relations, Public Schools, 1943-1945. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

Davis Du Bois added that the entire school community would need to be engaged in efforts and efforts should center the existing non-white groups in the school area[206].

In Detroit, efforts to respond to the national call to action were outlined in the pamphlet *Building One Nation – Indivisible*[207]. Published June 1944, the pamphlet explained the philosophy underlying the purposes of the district's approach to interracial and intercultural education[208], Backed by the State Committee on Intercultural Understanding, the report was the outcome of two key committees and multiple collaborators representing a synthesis of dominant educational ideas. The report provided an overview of imagined tensions arising out of interracial and intercultural issues and how an intercultural education might redress these tensions. Emphasized in the report is the interplay of an increasing Black population and a marked increase in "racial disturbances". However, the previously relatively low number of racial incidents had little to do with sensibility but was more an outcome of a smaller Black population. As the population increased, so did racial violence[209]. "One Nation" sought to explain the racial dilemmas as an outcome of a cause and effect relationship breeding social conditions fostering racial discord:

> The cause and effect relationship of this cycle needs first to be understood and then to be attacked in order that those Americans who now suffer because if its operation may be released to enjoy the full privileges of citizenship in a country which has engaged itself in all-out war as a pledge to preserve equal opportunity for all men[210]

As an official publication, "One Nation" represents the ideological underpinnings guiding policy implementation. The report linked objectives underlying the aims of intercultural education to the wartime effort, citizenship education and development, and immigrant assimilation into the nation. In fact, a key aspect of the report was the premise that intercultural education could be used as an effective method of assimilation. The three primary perspectives underlying the cited goals of intercultural education included the need for a common practice of democracy to foster unity; the right to challenge anti-democratic beliefs among "individuals and minorities" so that they might be ameliorated while supporting ideas that encourage full participation in American democracy; and that religious and ethnics minorities could either disavow or be free "…to practice and perpetuate such of their group's traditional values, folk-ways and customs as do not conflict with essential democratic principles"[211]. In this way, a major tent of intercultural

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206. Union for Democratic Action Coalition Committee for Improvement of Inter-Racial Understanding in the Public Schools, Statement of Objectives, p.3. Box 3, Folder 3-9 Race Relations, Public Schools, 1943-1945. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
207. Intercultural and Interracial Education in the Detroit Public Schools, p.2. Box 17, Folder 7. The City of Detroit Commission on Community Relations Collection. Series I, Interracial Committee General Office Files 1943-52. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
208. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools. Division of Instruction, Department of Language Education. (Detroit: Board of Education, 1944).
209. Richard Walter Thomas, *Life for Us is what We Make it: Building Black Community in Detroit*, 1915-1945, (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press), 123.
210. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools. Division of Instruction, Department of Language Education. (Detroit: Board of Education, 1944).
211. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 5.

education aimed to provide supportive instruction for non-white Anglo-Saxon people to "…understand and adjust to ways of living which are different from their own"[212] .

Further, the report's pedagogical recommendations purported a shift in focus for educational inquiry. Students would become the focus of educational enterprise. Additionally, the pamphlet encouraged teachers to be mindful of their composure and attitude in the classroom encouraging citizenship instruction centering, for example, an explanation of the Pledge of Allegiance[213]. Students were to be encouraged to recognize societal discrimination as "…evidences of lack of complete equality"[214]. Student exchanges of cultural knowledge specific to their ethnic history were imagined to "…acquaint one group with the desirable features existing in the other culture and…the group making the presentation is brought to a realization of its own valuable contribution to the American scene as a whole"[215]. At least this is what was imagined to transpire.

The publications' engagement with non-white populations demonstrates one consequence of the inherent limitation of this curricular project. Recommendations for how Social Studies might engage in examining immigration offered little in the realm of Indigenous First Nations, stating simply "Examine our treatment of the Indian minority critically…"[216]. Black people's contributions to American society was identified in the report as a primary strategy to promote intercultural education. Section three of the report, "A Unit on the Contributions of the Negro to American life"[217]. Teachers were encouraged to integrate Black contributions to American society, the publication projects a curricular portrait of Black history before enslavement as unknowable. Citing the role of African people as actors in the Spanish conquest of the Americas, the bulletin negates history during enslavement only pausing to note Crispus Attucks and Fredrick Douglass, stating that "Although the history of the Negro begins in Africa, there is comparatively little that can be taught concerning his early beginnings"[218]. The pamphlet also provided sample lessons, one suggested lesson centers encouraged teachers to engage with a set of predefined issues on African American history. One issue presented asked, "Negro dialect means a lack of educational opportunity or of living in a section of the country where all the people speak a dialect" and "The Negro makes a good soldier"[219].

The report additionally outlined how evaluation of the aims of intercultural education might be assessed. Emphasis was placed on shifting of social attitudes among students and examples of metrics include opinion test to be used including the listing of common ethnic-racial tropes to test students on their perceptions post-lessons. These examples often conflated Black

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212. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 6.
213. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 16.
214. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 17.
215. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 19.
216. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 38.
217. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 44.
218. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 45.
219. Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 46.

protest activity linked to their legitimate grievances against social conditions/state inaction alongside anti-Black ideas[220].

In 1946, Marion Edmon and Laurentine B. Collins, acting on behalf of the Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education, produced a synthesis of 'promising practices' in the district[221]. This report provides a snapshot of the predominant practices, informed by the independent reports of 152 participating schools, in intercultural education. Teachers received significant professional development, attending Saturday Traveling Workshops and the Mayor's Interracial Committee's annual community meeting[222]. Backed by external funders, the Detroit NAACP and Detroit Roundtable, the Committee also supported individual teachers travel to participate in varied intercultural trainings nationally[223]. As an official document, the report conveys the underlying ideas guiding the district's conception of race relations. A quote from one participating school principal emphasizes the aims of the curricular project,

> In my school, which is one hundred per cent white, native born, Christian. I feel it most urgent that we do all we can to help prevent unfair and unpleasant relationships with people whom our pupils will meet in other places than in school[224]

Outlined and explained in the report are a representative sampling of approaches operationalized in the district. By and large, this sampling represented additive approaches to intercultural education in the schools. In the "contributions approach", the Committee's evaluation of the practice stressed that "Difference are to be encouraged and fostered when they do not interfere with basic democratic living"[225] and cautioned that school reports demonstrate "There is a decided disposition to use this approach in schools where children of the minority groups are present"[226]. Additionally, the Committee noted that "…no individual should receive credit or blame for anything but his <u>own</u> personal achievement"[227]. In this way the Committee encouraged intercultural education to reinforce an individualized mindset while teaching a culturally additive curriculum. Other approaches engaged democratic precepts drawn from U.S. foundational documents as a method to teach children "an American way of life"[228]. In this way, teaching practice was aligned with the broader operating logic underlying the Mayor's Interracial

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220 Detroit Board of Education. Building One Nation Indivisible: A Bulletin on Intercultural Education for the Detroit Public Schools, 74.
221. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit (Detroit: Detroit Public Schools, 1947).
222. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 36.
223. Progress Report on Intercultural Education in the Detroit Public Schools 1944-1945. Box 3, Folder 9. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
224. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 7.
225. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit 10.
226. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 10
227. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 10, emphasis in original.
228. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 13, see the precept approach.

Committee, “Citizen responsibility, not group responsibility, is the guiding principle in all Interracial Committee’s operation”[229]. In evaluating this approach, the Committee brought renewed attention to the objectives of the program:

> The chief motivation from a program in intercultural education comes from the moral and ethical principles which underlie democracy as a way of life and from the basic truths of the great religious faiths[230]

Further, the evaluative aspects of the report shed light on the evolution of the Committee’s ideological conception of race and democracy. The Committee asserted valuable approaches to intercultural education as “…what is required of citizens of a country which is striving to be a democracy”[231], in that intergroup education is “…primarily education for democratic living”[232]. This approach seemed to suggest a conception of democracy as an objective political system momentarily diminished through racial transgressions. Intercultural education as an interventionist, behavior modification program left intact this conception of democracy. Or moreover, perpetuated an idea of democratic American exceptionalism that could be redeemed.

Several intercultural curricular examples focused on student perspectives, allying the ideological and structural dynamics that shape these perspectives. For example, under the “study of prejudice approach”, the Committee noted “One class listed common and erroneous beliefs about Negroes, then analyzed and discussed each”[233]. This was followed by a race talk by an anthropologist and thereafter student panels were encouraged to articulate racial opinions for further group analysis[234]. Another curricular practice cites the development of a class session unit facilitated in an interracial classroom that “…discussed the economic development attained by this country thorough the labor and skill of the Negro”[235]. These highlighted examples demonstrate how promising practices worked to create a conception of democracy as objective and inclusive, while actively eliding the violence foundational American settler colonialism.

Notwithstanding the city-wide fanfare of interracial relations and intercultural education, fiscal matters and overcrowding continued to be issues impacting BOE decisions and administrative matters. However, under the cloak of school finance and burgeoning school rosters, Black students and parents laid claim to allegations of discriminatory policies. Indeed, despite ongoing DPS efforts to implement its intercultural education program at the individual school level, parents and allied community members continued their resistant to school practices fostering educational segregation. A 1947 parent led boycott at Higginbotham School, a

229. Transfer Summary from the Mayor’s Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.8. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
230. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 14.
231. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 14.
232. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 36.
233. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 18.
234. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 18.
235. Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education. Promising Practices in Intergroup Education. A Summary of Practices Reported for the Year 1945-46 from 152 Public Schools of Detroit, 22.

predominantly Black school in the 8 Mile/Wyoming demonstrated the tensions between the district's imagined "One Nation" and the systematic practices fostering two distinctive social worlds in Detroit[236].

The history of the founding of the Higginbotham School exemplifies the racialized policies of the Detroit Public Schools. This outer lying area of the city was slowly developed and one of the few areas where African Americans were provided housing vouchers by the city housing commission. As African Americans followed loose routes of city migration from Black Bottom, to the North End, the 8 Mile/Wyoming area was an opportunity to build a neighborhood reflective of communal desires and aspirations. In the early 1920s, as residential occupancy grew, 8 Mile/Wyoming students attended Birdhurst School. At this point, Birdhurst School was attended by both white and Black students. White parental concerns about integrated classrooms led to the abrupt closure of Birdhurst, which was deemed obsolete and converted into a recreation center, Black students were reassigned to a one room school house[237]. In 1925, the Detroit Public Schools began attempts to build a school to accommodate Black students.

Higginbotham School opened in 1927[238]. For 8 Mile/Wyoming neighborhood residents, the racial and class contexts of Detroit's expansion as an industrial urban power was an understood process inclusive of schools. As housing and civic officials continued to develop outer lying areas of the city, Black residents of this Northwest community founded their own organizations to combat spatial racism. Founded in 1940, the Carver Progressive Club played a formative role in contesting Federal Housing Authority (FHA) plans that would bring temporary housing to the area, which residents believed would house solely white Workers Progress Administration workers. Black residents met these plans with contempt. They had tried to secure loans to purchase homes but had been systematically denied just as "White neighborhoods now occupied areas from Greenlawn to Livernois, north and south of Pembroke"[239].

A white developer built a six-foot concrete wall, a physical representation of the racialized geography of the area. When the Carver Progressive Club set out to examine the intent of the wall, the developer claimed that the wall was to hide the dilapidated house so he could sell properties opposite the wall to whites[240]. The concrete wall, a symbol of the developer's ability to erect a symbolic marker of spatial racism as standing practice, did not deter Black residents from challenging the legitimization of racialized spatial policy in the public sphere. In 1947, the Carver Progressive Club selected local resident Burniece Avery as their advocate just as the organization charged into a direct confrontation with the city planning commission[241].

The efforts of the Carver Progressive Club eventually led to a compromise between the FHA and City Planning Commission, 300 temporary homes, and 300 permanent homes would be built in the Northwest Detroit 8 Mile area. The now established Higginbotham School was thriving, an active part of the broader community, participating in events with the Carver

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236. "Citizens Charge Discrimination At Higginbotham," September 13, 1947, *Detroit Tribune*, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
237. Burniece Avery, "The Eight Mile Road….Its Growth from 1920….1952", pp. 2-3. Box 1, Folder "Literary Works 1". Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
238. Burniece Avery, "The Eight Mile Road….Its Growth from 1920….1952", p.3. Box 1, Folder "Literary Works 1". Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
239. Avery, *Walk Quietly Though The Night And Cry Softly*, 147.
240. Avery, *Walk Quietly Though The Night And Cry Softly*, 148.
241. Situations Responsible for the Organizing of the Carver Progressive Club. Box 1, Folder "West Eight Mile Community Council, Papers 2". Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

Progressive Club[242]. Fall 1944 Higginbotham was the site of the first appointment of an African American assistant principal, Mrs. Beulah Cain Brewer[243], also a member of the Superintendent's Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education[244]. Notwithstanding this historic first, Higginbotham parents, led by the Carver Progressive Club, took offense when the BOE and Superintendent sought to expand the K-6 school to include junior high grades.

In September 1947, led by Burniece Avery and James Smith, the Carver Progressive Club charged that administrative decisions were an effort to stop the bussing of Black students to the white-majority Post Intermediate School. Avery explains, "Higginbotham had become overcrowded and had taken its 6th and 7th and 8th grades to Post intermediate school. The Puritan, Greenlawn, Midland neighborhood in which the Post school is located reacted in the same way our white neighbors did years ago when Birdhurst was closed"[245]. Standing policy followed that Higginbotham students who could not be accommodated at the school, and would instead continue on to Post Intermediate for grades 7 and 8 before moving on to high school. The BOE and Superintendent Dondineau made the decision to reopen nearby Birdhurst School and reorganize Higginbotham so that grades K-4 were at the old Birdhurst School leaving Higginbotham to accommodates grades five through eight[246]. The Carver Progressive Club charged that these policies were efforts to segregate Black students by ceasing to bus students to Post Intermediate School.

When Birdhurst reopened on Wednesday September 3, 1947, Black parents engaged in a general boycott of the new district plan[247]. Burniece Avery explains that "...when the resplendent Birdhurst and Higginbotham buildings awaited the arrival of the students — it was the parents that did the arriving, complete with placards they threw a picket line around each of the buildings and waited on the board to give us an audience according to our request prior to school opening. When the classrooms remained empty the third day, we received an invitation to come to a meeting at the School Board building"[248]. As Avery attests, Higginbotham parents engaged in a highly successful boycott of the school, keeping their children out of school, parents joined in a picket around the school[249]. Burniece Avery and James Smith petitioned for a hearing before the BOE, but their request was originally denied by Superintendent Dondineau. By Friday September 5 the Board agreed to hear from the Carver Progressive Club the following week but Higginbotham parents vowed to continue the boycott[250]. On Tuesday September 9, 1947, the Carver Progressive Club delegation made their case before the Board. The BOE decried the discrimination allegations and ordered parents, under threat of law, that the students return to

242. Newspaper clipping, 1947, Large Folder. Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
243. "Beulah Brewer Gets Detroit School Post", *Chicago Defender*, Saturday October 14, 1944, p. 14.
244. Progress Report on Intercultural Education in the Detroit Public Schools 1944-1945, p.8. Box 3, Folder 9. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
245. Burniece Avery, "The Eight Mile Road….Its Growth from 1920….1952", p.3-4. Box 1, Folder "Literary Works 1". Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
246. "Meeting Set as Strike Hits School", *Detroit Free Press*, Friday September 5, 1947, p. 17.
247. "Negro Pupils Urged to Use Two Schools", *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 10, 1947.
248. Burniece Avery, "The Eight Mile Road….Its Growth from 1920….1952", p.4. Box 1, Folder "Literary Works 1". Burniece Avery Papers, 1920-1987. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.
249. "Scenes of Birdhurst Higginbotham School Strike", *Detroit Tribune*, Saturday September 13, 1947.
250. "Meeting Set as Strike Hits School", *Detroit Free Press*, Friday September 5, 1947, p. 17. "Parents Plan to Continue School Picket", *Detroit Free Press*, Saturday September 6, 1947, p.11.

school[251].

The Board of Education further attempted to appease parents asking that they abide the policies until a committee could be formed to study populations changes in the area[252]. Superintendent Dondineau claimed overcrowding and attendance boundaries were the underlying motivations for the plan[253] and would only be a short-term remedy as a new Higginbotham addition, to accommodate grades 7 and 8, was being constructed. Higginbotham parents continued the school protests and boycott enduring until the following week. On September 12, 1947 the Board of Education agreed to meet with the school parents and thereafter established a study committee regarding discriminatory practices regarding Higginbotham at the school[254]. In this early effort to combat segregation in the schools, the local NAACP chapter proved instrumental. The Committee established to study conditions and practice in and surrounding Higginbotham included "…representatives of the City Plan Commission, the Interracial Committee, and the Board of Education…"[255] charged with additionally involving parents, allied representatives, and the NAACP, a plan mediated by Detroit NAACP Executive Secretary Edward Swan[256]. Further, Birdhurst would be used to house select special classes while Higginbotham would support half day schedules until the new school addition, accommodating grades 7 and 8, opened[257].

The Higginbotham situation suggested the power of interest groups to shape school policy, as Black parents alleged white parental interests had originally produced the Higginbotham-Birdhurst plan. Further, the involvement of the Mayor's Interracial Committee in the final resolution exemplified how mayoral power might be operationalized in educational matters that threatened the established quest for interracial and intercultural peacetime relations in the city. Much is left unsaid in this analysis of the Higginbotham school. Instead of busing students to nearby under-capacity white schools, school construction planning actively participated in expanding the capacity of a Black majority school. This signaled how the external social context might shaped school attendance boundaries and busing practices. This illuminates the contradiction of the era's curricular and civic project, a dilemma not easily resolved in the wake of steady and in some areas increasing anti-Black sentiment. One year later, the foundation laid by the Higginbotham School protests regained momentum through an alliance of 18 organizations, the Better Schools Association. The Higginbotham School PTA and Carver Progressive Club were among association members calling for the removal of Superintendent Dondineau before the Board[258], as Dondineau's Higginbotham redistricting policy served as a fundamental basis for his ouster[259].

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251. "Citizens Charge Discrimination at Higginbotham", *Detroit Tribune*, Saturday September 13, 1947.
252. "Negro Pupils Urged to Use Two Schools", *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 10, 1947.
253. "Negro Pupils Urged to Use Two Schools", *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 10, 1947.
254. "The Detroit Focus on Human Relations", p.6. Box 1, Folder 10. Donald C Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
255. "The Detroit Focus on Human Relations", p.6. Box 1, Folder 10. Donald C Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
256. Burniece Avery, "The Eight Mile Road….Its Growth from 1920….1952", p.4. Box 1, Folder "Literary Works 1". Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
257. "Strike Ends at Detroit School", *Detroit Free Press*, Saturday September 13, 1947, p.13.
258 "Dondineau Under Fire: School Groups Seek New Education Head", Detroit Tribune, Saturday April 17, 1948, p. 1-2.
259. "Group Adds to Attack on Dondineau", *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday April 22, 1948, p.21.

2b. The paradox of the citizenship education study

In the mid-1940s, as the nation returned to "peacetime", the social conditions of Detroit's Black community shifted alongside labor relations. In their 1945 evaluation of Black employment in the city, the Mayor's Interracial Committee noted a decline in post-war Black employees in non-manufacturing jobs, though the overall number of these positions had increased. Additionally, the Mayor's Committee gathered data at the neighborhood level regarding racial tensions, noting that "Resistance against the movement of Negroes into new areas to establish homes seems as strong as ever"[260]. In this second year of the Mayor's Committee, members were forced to acknowledge that not much had changed in the objective conditions of the city. This led to a general view in which equality of economic opportunity was linked to "peacetime", the Committee declared, "There can be no permanent interracial peace until there is greater equality of economic opportunity"[261].

Despite evidences of racism in labor and housing practices, including pervasive interpersonal racism in the city, the school governance actors continued its efforts to implement, evaluate, and generate best practices in interracial/intercultural education. At the January 9, 1945 Board of Education meeting Superintendent Bow presented a statement prepared by the Administrative Committee on Intercultural and Interracial Education outlining the features of the district's standing policy on intercultural education. This statement emphasized that "…because its task is education, the school has a special responsibility in intercultural, and particularly interracial, relations"[262]. The district's Administrative Committee on Intercultural Education emphasized how urban migration had necessitated the need for "…developing understanding…" and described the special role of schools in the process of developing "…the knowledge, understanding, and attitudes that make for good intergroup relations"[263]. Citizenship education became the next newly crafted experiment in race relations.

The Detroit Citizenship Education Study[264] was a collaborative project of the Detroit Public Schools and Wayne State University, the city's flagship university. The Study was conducted from 1945-1950 purportedly growing out of a "…concern on the part of many people that level of citizenship in this country could be improved"[265]. The Study committee convened with the support of Harold W. Lunhow, President of the William Volker Charities Fund Inc.[266],

260. Second Annual Report, 1945, City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.8. Box 1, Folder 1. Donald C Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
261. Second Annual Report, 1945, City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.8. Box 1, Folder 1. Donald C Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
262. Regular Meeting, January 14, 1945, p.317. Box 25, Folder 2, Board of Education; Proceedings, 1944-45. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Box 1, Folder 1. Donald C Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
263. Progress Report on Intercultural Education in the Detroit Public Schools 1944-1945, Box 3, Folder 9. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
264. Stanley E. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1953). Heretofore referred to as the Study.
265 Dimond, forward, Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens.
266. Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets Since the Depression* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 100. Volker Fund was established by William Volker, a home furnishings mogul. Volker's nephew Harold W. Luhnow took over the fund as Volker aged in the mid-1940s and began to move the fund toward free market ideals.

through a $425,000 grant to fund the five-year Study[267]. The committee convened under the leadership of Dr. David D. Henry, President of Wayne State University and included Waldo Lessenger, Dean of the College of Education at Wayne State University, who also served as committee chairman, Stanley D. Dimond, supervisor of social studies at Redford High School and director of the Study[268], Manley E. Irwin, a supervising director of instruction, and Earl C. Kelley, a professor of secondary education.

The Detroit Citizenship Study was crafted as an experiment expected to yield best practices in citizenship education. Upon announcement of the grant, Dr. David Henry explained "…that the techniques of citizenship training which have been evolving have never been evaluated and that the development of new techniques have never been sufficiently attempted"[269]. The Study committee carried out their work to examine the "effects of specific citizenship education"[270] practices in eight schools beginning September 1945. The committee set out to identify gaps in citizenship education practice and make suggestions to increase "…the interest, competence and participation of boys and girls in the activities of the good citizen"[271].

Considerable resources were invested in the Study experiment. School partners benefited from administrative support offered by Study staff members who supported curriculum development, in addition to providing material resources. Foundation grants, summer scholarships, and consultants were allotted to teachers, as were supplemental teaching materials[272]. The schools selected to take part in the Study already had a citizenship curriculum in place. In this way, the Study set out to improve programming, noting that historically "Schools have considered citizenship education as a major responsibility"[273]. Study architects argued that the selected schools were representative of regular schools in a city context. Alongside an influx of administrative and structural resources, participating schools were fashioned as representative of the district increasing the Study's legitimacy.

Participating schools began their tenure in the Study September 1945. Study staff were assigned to work with each school's leadership team. The predominant pedagogical methodology utilized was a cooperative-curriculum strategy wherein each of the eight-participating school was treated as unique[274]. Teachers were encouraged and provided structural support to meet collectively during the school day to collaborate on "citizenship problems". So as to allow for in school work-group sessions, substitute teachers were also made available. In their evaluation, Study authors employed three generalized assumptions. The first assumption held that the best place to improve citizenship education is to begin at the school level with a specific school and its present problems. The second assumption emphasized engagement of local educational leaders, specifically the school's administrators and teachers. The final assumption emphasized that all progressive efforts to improve citizenship education must align with "democratic values".

At the annual meeting of the Mayor's Interracial Committee on June 19, 1946 Study Director Dimond stated, "The greatest change in the Detroit schools has been the frank

267. "For Better Citizenship", *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 27, 1944, p.6.
268. "Citizenship Teaching Plan to Be Bettered", *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday March 4, 1954, p. 8.
269. "For Better Citizenship", *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 27, 1944, p.6.
270. Dimond, forward, Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens.
271. "For Better Citizenship", *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 27, 1944, quote from Dr. David Henry, p.6.
272. Dimond, Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 30.
273. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 9.
274. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 17-18.

recognition that there is a racial problem"[275]. Though only one year into the Study, Dr. Dimond heralded the significance of school actors recognizing the fact of a race relations dilemma in the schools. Yet, given rampant racism in the city throughout this period, it remains unclear if and how there existed equitable agreement on what "democratic values" meant in light of systemic racialized police violence, labor discrimination, and housing segregation. George Schermer, Director of the Mayor's Interracial Committee, frankly detailed how real estate practices had produced racial segregation, noting how such restrictive practices were then supported and upheld in court proceedings[276]. Schermer went further, condemning racially segregative policies adopted by the city's housing departments declaring that "As a matter of fact, the present position of the City government so strongly confirms these restrictive practices that the City itself has been rendered almost totally helpless to carry out its own program of housing, slum clearance and public improvement"[277].

A core caveat to the experiment was the lack of attention to the social context of each school and differential conceptions of democracy each teacher and student brought with them. Study authors purported that left unreconciled were the different conceptions of citizenship that Study participants brought with them to work group meetings. Study architects had themselves undertaken a review of citizenship and formulated a framework which underwrote the Study itself,

> Citizenship as it relates to school activities has a two-fold meaning. In a narrow sense citizenship includes only legal status in a country and the activities closely related to the political functions-voting, governmental organization, holding of public office, and legal rights and responsibilities. Citizenships, in addition, has also required a broad meaning almost synonymous with those desirable qualities which are displaced in human associations[278].
>
> For this Study, then, citizenship means the relations of the individual to his government and, in addition, his relations to other member and groups in a democratic society[279].

The Study proposed a conception of citizenship beyond political democracy and into the realm of human association[280]. This conception of citizenship was linked to a notion that "…there is no longer a clear demarcation between the governmental and nongovernmental activities of the citizen"[281]. By 1947, Study director Dr. Stanley Dimond suggested the new curricular practices provided students an opportunity to develop conceptions of democracy independent from their

275. Report to Detroit on The State of Race Relations Today by the City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.2. Box 3, Folder 2. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
276. Report to Detroit on The State of Race Relations Today by the City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.7. Box 3, Folder 2. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
277. Report to Detroit on The State of Race Relations Today by the City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.7. Box 3, Folder 2. Donald C. Marsh Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
278. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 36.
279. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 36.
280. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 36.
281. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 36.

parents[282]. The Study seemingly placed greatest emphasis on inscribing new sensibilities into students that could perform a transformative function. However, the incompatibility of this approach with the oppressive reality eclipsed these espoused aims.

A critical look at one participating school in the Citizenship Education Study illuminates how the focus of pedagogical strategies left unaddressed underlying structural and ideological conditions. Barbour Intermediate School located on the Near East Side, described as a neighborhood in transition by the authors of Study as an "…average Negro district with a middle-class and upper class (white) residential area. Families of Italian descent, both first and second generation, form the largest nationality group in the area with substantial representation of Polish, French, English, Irish, Scotch, and German groups"[283]. As a school participant in the Study, in 1949 Barbour produced a pamphlet to showcase their efforts carried out between the years of 1945 and 1949. The published report of improvements to Barbour's citizenship education began by examining "the values held by pupils"[284]. "The second step was to introduce and encourage the growth of democratic values in their daily lives. Class rooms became workshops in democratic living"[285]. Corresponding to "One Nation"'s espoused recommended strategies for students, considerable attention was placed on evaluating student perspectives and opinions.

From 1945-1949, Barbour intentionally implemented its curricular project by centering students[286]. One way this was accomplished was through the use of homeroom. Homeroom, was reimagined as a center of democratic activity which was lengthened in time "…to present problems, and by direct research find answers and express opinions on approved ways of being good citizens as individuals and as members of a group"[287]. Still certain issues required explanation and accorded time that extended beyond the homeroom hour. Accordingly, this curricular project also shaped the contours of democratic inquiry, or rather normalized living with uncertainty and unanswered questions. As explained by the Barbour report,

> Living democracy, we found, meant struggling with unanswered questions, and any philosophical attitude we have acquired in the result of striving with a will to understand the values and meanings of situations as they arose[288].

At Barbour considerable effort was afforded toward increasing pupil and parent participation which yielded the first Parent Teachers Association (PTA) in a Detroit intermediate school. The establishment of a PTA, coupled with the extended homeroom practice, and a fortified student council, Barbour's approach focused on enhancing the organization of school-student-parent relations but did not address the external social context in which the school was situated.

Evaluation of the broader project operating across city schools largely reflect the purported gains documented at Barbour Intermediate. As reported in the Superintendent's official publication forum, *Detroit Schools*, the Study's central thesis espoused that "The skills of

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282. James S. Poole, "Detroit's Young Citizens Go Under 'Microscope': 500,000 Study on in Schools", The Detroit Free Press, Sunday May 25, 1947, p.50.
283. Bowlby, Dora E., and Bernice M. Schreader, and Ifie Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School* (Detroit: Barbour Intermediate School, 1949, qtd. p. 22-23).
284. Bowlby, Schreader, Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School*, 5.
285. Bowlby, Schreader, Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School*, 5.
286. Bowlby, Schreader, Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School*, 5.
287. Bowlby, Schreader, Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School*, 5.
288. Bowlby, Schreader, Wyatt. *Living Democracy at the Barbour Intermediate School*, 5.

critical thinking will be best developed by the repeated use of a logical, scientific process in the solution of problems"[289]. The final report of the Citizenship Education Study highlighted by (1) annual testing, (2) targeted research projects, (3) perspectives of teachers and staff, and (4) community derived data[290]. In this way, the Study sought to evaluate quality of citizenship through analysis of "emotional adjustment" in Study participants. Testing along these axes revealed inconsistent outcomes. Practices of teachers and staff, gathered through formal interview instruments and group discussions expressed variation:

> In participating schools as a whole, about 50 per cent of the teachers felt that the Study brought about some improvements in citizenship; about 23 per cent were not sure whether significant changes had occurred, and another 25 per cent were convinced that the citizenship was poorer because of 'that Study'[291]

Despite the seeming expansion of democratic human relations in structural components of the school program, i.e. homeroom, PTA, the Citizenship Study reported that "Whether the citizenship had really improved or whether the teacher has become more sympathetic to the pupil's problems is not answerable"[292]. Citing difficulty in collecting community derived data, the Study was unable to gather any information related to interracial incidents[293]. Of data collected, the Study was unable to argue that the Study had a measurable effect on the social context of the participating schools[294]. Finally, the Study concluded that although there was testing based evidences of changing attitudes, "…the effects of these changes upon the citizenship of the boys and girls cannot be demonstrated"[295].

Section Summary

One key tension in evaluating the broader gains of the citizenship education project, signaled early in the implementation of the project, focused on how schools were impacted by the surrounding social geography. The Study Committee "…pointed out the school is in effect held in a state of equilibrium by various social forces"[296]. However, this rather central factor remained a tertiary concern in the actual Study process. The final report of the Study failed to measure any changes beyond individual perspectives of teachers/students and failed to explore the larger social context of schooling, despite the early emphasis placed on this factor.

Three years after the Study ended, on April 7, 1953 Common Council moved to replace the Mayor's Interracial Committee with the establishment of the Detroit Commission on Community Relations. This expanded fifteen-member Commission included both extant members, citizen representatives, executive directors of six city departments, including Detroit

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289. "Citizenship Study Tackles Problems of Teaching Pupils How to Think", p.2 *Detroit Schools* 6, no. 5 (January 1949):5-6. Box 89. Detroit Board of Education/ Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
290. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 178.
291. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 191.
292. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 191.
293. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 193.
294. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 200.
295. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 200.
296. Dimond. Citizenship Education Study: Schools and Development of Good Citizens, 202.

schools Superintendent Arthur Dondineau[297]. At least one white segregationist group openly protested the establishment of the Commission, the Northeast Council of Home Owners Association distributed petitions demanding voters be allowed to vote on the Commission's membership, garnering 30,000 signatures.

In response to the white-supremacist criticism of the newly established Detroit Commission, Mayor Albert Cobo appointed Martha Wents, President of the Burbank Home Owners Group to the Commission, after purportly being encouraged to do so by Ross Christie, President of the Northeast Council. The impact of Mayor Cobo's empowerment of restrictive covenant-based homeowner organizations crippled the infrastructure and future possibility of progressive city planning during his 1950-57 tenure. Mayor Cobo used racially coded language in his support of publicly funded housing as was expected given that his election was indebted to the very organizations that chided progressive planning efforts in the city. Notably, one of Cobo's campaign promises "...pledged to stop scattering public housing projects throughout the city and to build them only at segregated, inner-city sites"[298].

On the surface, the Commission on Community Relations practiced an approach to intergroup relations that favored the use of education as a progressive tool for change and openly condemned segregation. However, under Mayor Cobo's leadership, its official integration policy took a more restrained tone, with the official line being: "The Committee sanctions integration and inter-communication on the most natural unstrained basis possible"[299]. By 1953, the Committee primarily functioned along three axes: information and research, community education, and community action[300]. Schermer's resignation allowed for Beulah Whitby to finally be tapped as acting director. Whitby's final report of the Mayor's Committee, before its transition, cited the outstanding requirements needed for the Committee to be effective, "More factual community data such as specific practices in employment, business, in education, and in the housing market…"[301]. Whitby's assertions challenge political underdevelopment of the Committee, emphasizing the urgent requirement to extend its authority to structural dynamics and civic agencies. Yet, the political economic dynamics of the city remained unscathed by the Committee's work.

Conclusion

In Detroit, the emergence of intercultural education policies, and later citizenship education, arose in response to both national interests and local racialized political economic

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297. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.3. Box 3, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
298. June Manning Thomas, *Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 58-59. For a full discussion on the role of Mayor Cobo in city planning, see Manning for a full discussion on this, Chapter 3 "Eliminating Slums and Blight".
299. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, quoted on p.8. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
300. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, p.10. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
301. Transfer Summary from the Mayor's Interracial Committee to the Commission on Community Relations, 20. Box 15, Folder 43. Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Part 3. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

violence. These policies were co-constructed alongside a broader civic and national response to domestic and global ambiguity concerning American exceptionalism. Intercultural and citizenship education were paired as local responses to a race riot which was itself a manifestation of racial capitalism. The work at the school level was interconnected with broader civic policy as carried out by the Mayor's Interracial Relations Committee and allied groups.

The racial and class contexts underlying the 1943 riot forced established Black organizations in the city to actively engage in open criticism and analysis of white supremacist control over the civic apparatus challenging the paternalist practices advocated by corporate elite. The rise of the nation's first civic and funded response to race relations, the Mayor's Interracial Committee, had a limited effect on actually transforming the underlying conditions found to be shaping racial tensions. Detroit school reforms, developed in response to the 1943 race riot, did little to ameliorate tensions. Yet within these efforts to implement and manage how race and racism would be discussed and addressed in the school system, grassroots actors continued to raise criticisms, building on a tradition of differential knowledge production. These developments occurred in a geography marked by spatial politics. As Tyner argues, "Space is not an inert stage upon which society is played out. Instead, space is produced through the interactions of ideas (or discourses) and practices"[302].

In relation to the underlying ideas of what is arguably the era's most influential guiding national social policy report *American Dilemma*[303], Detroit's intercultural and citizenship educational policies and practices preceded from a predominant assumption concerning American exceptionalism. *American Dilemma* stressed "ignorance and intolerance" as impediments to the extension of freedom and equality to Black Americans, a contradiction of the American Creed. The report theorized that as Americans are made aware of this dilemma, they would move to end race prejudice and discrimination. This rationale couched the contradiction between the American Creed and the objective reality of Black people's exclusion/conditional inclusion in the U.S. society, in moral terms. This perspective introduced a conception of Black culture as pathology, in that the report advocated for the assimilation of Black people into hegemonic society, as that to do otherwise went against the American creed[304].

Historian Nikhil Pal Singh emphasizes, "Against the backdrop of World War II, the study's most important conclusion was that black inclusion in the nation-state was an index of U.S. world-ordering power"[305]. This conception of inclusion came to dominate discussions of race in education at both an administrative and curricular level. Students were encouraged to condemn the overt racist violence of the Klan as an indicator of poor citizenship and encouraged to participate in and accept a slow process of social progress through racial understanding. The hidden curriculum of this experimentation, the implicit ideals communicated and legitimized through the authority of schools and civic institutions, crafted a commonsense understanding of race and racism as redeemable social problems. As an embraced administrative policy, the ideals of intercultural education seemingly penetrated all aspects of district governance.

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302. James A. Tyner, "Urban Revolutions and the Spaces of Black Radicalism", in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, eds. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods (Cambridge: South End Press, 2007), 218.
303. Gunnar Myral, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1944).
304. Ralph Ellison, "The American Dilemma: A Review," in *Shadow and Act* (New York: First Vintage International Edition, 1995), 303-371. For a fuller discussion on how American Dilemma obscures the material basis of African American exclusion in society, see Oliver Cox, "An American Dilemma: A Mystical Approach to the Study of Race Relations," *The Journal of Negro Education* 14, no. 2 (1945): 132-148.
305. Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*, 136.

As a result, racial tensions and Black opposition were read as redeemable through a curricular and civic approach designed to prescribe a way of thinking about democracy, its bounds, and its inclusions through investment in the reproduction of American exceptionalism in schools. This happened all the while an activated community was seeking to challenge and expand their analysis of a pattern of second-class citizenship that had relegated Black people to a perpetual position of disenfranchisement. Oral histories of Black Detroiters and allied actors, articulate the social construction of a city that created through the confluence of federal segregative housing practices and labor discrimination mediated and legitimized by civic governance structures. This differential knowledge shaped a social consciousness of the city and broader society, which grassroots actors engaged to challenge racism in education. This history of the rise of the Higginbotham School protest offers a case through which to discern the effects of the era's experimentation with intercultural and citizenship education. As Lester B. Granger, Executive secretary of the National Urban League, argued in 1946:

> It may be that intercultural workshops have been held with notable attendance and enthusiasm. But I have a curious notion about intercultural education. I do not think interracial understanding can be taught by teachers who themselves are racially intolerant. I do not believe that a school system can divide its school children in different buildings on a basis of race and can assign teachers to certain schools because they are white or colored. I do not believe that that kind of school system is yet ready to teach children themselves how to live together [306]

McKittrick and Woods argue that spatial politics inform lived realities[307]. Examination of Detroit's spatialized racism suggests segregative policy decisions were naturalized through the state sanctioned authority of the Detroit Public Schools. The Higginbotham School protest exemplifies how nonhegemonic actors challenged the mobilization of racialized political economic power to foster the expansion of spatialized racism. The actions, claims, and desires of Higginbotham School advocates cannot be read simply as an appeal for inclusion, but are also suggestive of a consciousness of broader dynamics shaping the 8 Mile/Wyoming community. McKittrick and Woods explain, "Black geographies disclose how the racialized production of space is made possible in the explicit demarcations of the spaces of *les damnes* as invisible/forgettable at the same time as the invisible/forgettable is producing space - always, and in all sorts of ways"[308].

Analysis of the official reports and processes underlying the development of intercultural and citizenship education, provides an overview of the ideological worldview of policy actors and district officials. Reflected in the various reports concerning best practices in intercultural education and the implementation/evaluation of citizenship education demonstrate how 'racism' became couched in individual terms and considered an attitudinal dilemma. These educational racial projects emphasized liberal democratic approaches to education, shifting the focus on

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306. Report to Detroit on The State of Race Relations Today by the City of Detroit Interracial Committee, p.15. Folder 3-2 Popular Education Committee, Minutes, Correspondence, Reports, Jan-July 1946. Box 3, Donald C. Marsh Collection, Walter P. Reuther Library.
307. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, "'No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean,'" *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, ed, Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, (Cambridge: South End Press, 2007), 6.
308. McKittrick and Woods, "'No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean'," 7.

classroom work to the intended goal of "emotional adjustment" in students[309]. In this way, the student was the desired site of change, a pedagogical decision that obscured the structural relations that continued to organize the city and delimit Black participation in civic democracy.

Participating schools in the Citizenship Education Study cited empowered student councils and the development of PTAs, yet nowhere is there evidence that the district sought actively to condemn structural impediments to the furthering of democratic human relations in and beyond the schools. In this way, understanding impediments to democracy in schools as a structural societal dilemma, was inconceivable. The district codified this understanding in their policies which made Black grievances based on exclusionary social policies illegible, and/or unthinkable as sites of analysis and action. By the early 1950s, a survey of residents' opinions on race relations clarified just how little had changed in the city, despite the aims of intercultural and citizenship education programs.

The 1952 report *Attitude of Detroit People toward Detroit: A Summary of a Detailed Report* is the outcome of public opinion sampling procedures conducted by researchers affiliated with Wayne State University and funded by a grant from the Detroit Board of Commerce[310]. Presented in the report is a random sampling of responses. Housing and race relations were identified as the two predominant issues facing the city. Anti-black perspectives were amplified in the data, "Notable on the negative side are expressions of discontent about Negroes and Negro-white relations. The comments consist largely of complaints about the number of Negroes, their movement into white neighborhoods and their having too many rights"[311]. Absent analysis of spatial politics in the production of racial tension, civic and educational policies failed to ameliorate claims of second-class citizenship and practices endemic to the spatialization of race.

The 1952 resignation of the Mayor's Interracial Committee Director, George Schermer, exemplifies the bitter contradictions of the period. Schermer asserted, "We have been constantly under the threat of political influence"[312]. Schermer's contention that the Committee's work was bound by broader political forces operating in the city provides a snapshot of the actual gains made by the Committee since inception. Through further commentary Schermer charged that a critical aspect of the Committee that kept it from being more effective was its establishment under mayoral purview. Schermer remarked, "The committee should long ago have been set up as a separate commission under the City ordinance, instead of remaining in its present status as a mayor's committee. It's been hard to get things done"[313]. Schermer's official departure February 1953 came just two months before the dissolution of the Committee.

As racial projects, efforts at implementing intercultural and citizenship education in the district created a new commonsense concerning managing race and racism in U.S. society. This commonsense conceptualized fostering positive race relations as desirable, as opposed to confronting the structural and ideological dynamics perpetuating racism. Grassroots activism challenged the perpetuation of this logic and the practices it enabled. In the next chapter, I explore the educational effects of intercultural and citizenship education through the hegemonic development of racial liberal idealism, and the development of militant educational critique.

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309. "Teachers Held Responsible for Emotions", *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday November 28, 1948.
310. Arthur W. Kornhauser, "Attitude of Detroit People toward Detroit: A Summary of a Detailed Report". (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1952), 1.
311. Kornhauser, "Attitude of Detroit People toward Detroit: A Summary of a Detailed Report," 10.
312. "Weaknesses Seen in Racial program", The Detroit Free Press, Monday December 29, 1952, p.5.
313 "Weaknesses Seen in Racial program", The Detroit Free Press, Monday December 29, 1952, p. 5.

Chapter 4

Racial Liberalism in Educational Planning: Confronting the Color Line in School Experience and Policy, 1954-1965

Introduction

In response to widespread criticism emphasizing burgeoning class sizes, structural deficiencies, school finance issues, and a stagnant curriculum program, hundreds of civic, corporate, and civilian actors were tapped to participate in multiple efforts to study the needs of the schools. Two interdependent Committees crafted and disseminated reports intended to guide the next generation of Detroit school policy[314]. These Committees, chaired by corporate liberals, continued to recognize and emphasize a symbiotic relationship between schooling and the American social order. These 'Citizens Advisory Committees' were propelled by an underlying logic of racial liberalism, reflective of the legitimized conception of race and democracy as advanced through intercultural and citizenship educational experiments in the district.

The history of the 1958 and 1962 Citizens Advisory Committees helps illuminate the core limitations of racial liberalism approaches to advancing equality of educational opportunity in the district. The limitations of these approaches are evident particularly when contextualized alongside racialized student experiences in the district. Further, grassroot efforts to transform experiences of educational inequality illuminate nonhegemonic educational ideas and desires. To excavate underlying ideas animating these contrasting positions, I examine the interactions between district approaches to conceptualizing and redressing inequality of educational opportunity and grassroots struggles for education, housing, and political economic justice in Detroit. Drawing on archival documents and oral history data, this chapter utilizes a critical social theory framework to analyze how actors understood the function of schools in Detroit and the meaning they ascribed to this consciousness.

Conceptual and Interpretive Framework

This chapter examines a period of educational history transpiring in the context of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. In Detroit, nonhegemonic educational actors argued that district policies effectively legitimized oppression. In this period of Detroit's educational history, district officials were compelled to turn their attention to a core dilemma undermining the espoused aims of progressive liberalism[315]. Competing conceptions of equality of educational opportunity were central foci of debate and tension. There existed sharp disagreement on what exactly was meant by equality of educational opportunity, and how/if schools would advance a conception of equal education that would disrupt normative district practices. The guiding research questions for this chapter are as follows:

(1) How did students experience educational segregation in the Detroit Public Schools, what meanings did they ascribe to these experiences?

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314. See Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, 1958; and Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, 1962.
315. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922).

(2) How were racial liberalism and corporate liberalism in educational planning create, maintain, and reinforce educational oppression?

This chapter is guided by two areas of extant scholarship that have helped to support analysis of this period in Detroit's educational history. The first area of analysis includes research that has examined how schooling functions to inculcate a specific set of ideas, thereby subjugating other forms of knowing/knowledge production. A strand of literature within this area examines the educational processes by which people come to internalize and accept their status within a stratified society as an outcome of reproductive educational practice. This body of scholarship highlights the ideological function of education and the extent to which students become complicit in their own alienation[316]. The second area of literature examines the historical debates and social landscape informing the constitutional school desegregation court case *Brown v. Board of Education*. This latter area of scholarship examines the underlying ideas that shaped the plaintiff's case as well as the racial and class politics underlying the *Brown* ruling that were left unaddressed. Together these areas of literature contribute toward providing a conceptual framework for this chapter.

The first area of scholarship examines how the liminal and physical spaces where education occurs have been theorized as sites through which the work of social reproduction is internalized and reproduced. These works points to the myriad ways that ideological processes in schools produce docility/conformity leading nonhegemonic groups to internalize and become complicit in the perpetuation of their own oppression. Schooling entails the inculcation of a particular body of knowledge. Scholars argue that this knowledge works in tandem with the social complex and legitimizes social inequality that prepares differentiated social classes to assume their segmented role in the political economic sphere.

Educational theorist Michael Apple purports that the traditional educational model functions as a mechanism of social control[317]. Apple examines how curriculum enables the oppressive character of education through the transmission of a "selective tradition" of knowledge. Apple describes this as the "…the tacit teaching to students of [selective] norms, values, and dispositions…"[318] or put simply, the "hidden curriculum". Not only does this selective knowledge reify social reproduction in society, control over the educational apparatus enables the erasure of alternative ideas. Such educational practice ensures the sustainable reproduction of an oppressive social complex, pivoting on the legitimacy granted to schools through state authority.

Employing a Black Marxian socialist critique, Watkins documents the process by which knowledge reifies capitalist principles, principles that further racial oppression and economic subjugation[319]. Insightfully, Watkins extends analysis of the ideological function of schooling to attend to intermediary actors that have shaped the content and character of school curriculum. This interrogation illuminates the role of philanthropic foundations and social science institutions

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316. Classic studies: Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977). Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (London: Routledge, 1976). Pierre Bourdieu and J.C. Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: SAGE, 2000). Originally published 1970.
317. Michael Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004).
318. Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, 14.
319. William H. Watkins, "A Marxian and Radical Reconstructionist Critique of American Education: Searching out Black Voices," in *Black Protest Thought and Education* ed. William H. Watkins (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 107-136.

as entities interstitial to a larger apparatus involved in the "…management and production of knowledge"[320]. This analysis asserts the existence of an organization of a system of knowledge regulators complicit in the perpetuation of an inherently reproductive educational system Watkins explains, as a regulator of society, knowledge "…creates boundaries for discourse and understanding. Knowledge can either open up our world or close it down"[321].

Ethnographic analysis has helped to reveal how racialized students are distinctly positioned within this system of reproduction. This scholarship challenges the myth of schooling a conduit of social mobility for all and contributes to the demystification of the hegemonic function of schooling. This literature emphasizes how oppressive educational practices inculcate, within students, ideologies that perpetuate the reproduction of a social order that subsumes racialized ethnic minorities into a structure of coerced assimilation. These important works further clarify the epistemic function of hegemonic education and the production of a corresponding social order.

Valenzuela's ethnographic study of first and second generation Mexican and Mexican-American youths' educational experiences highlights the educative processes and teacher practices that delegitimize the differential conceptions of education youth bring with them[322]. This study untangles and asserts that such practices coerce students to assimilate into the social complex, leading students to tacitly accept the underlying racial logics which schools perpetuate. Acceptance of these hegemonic ideas, results in student underachievement, an effect aligned to the social reproduction of a racially segmented class society. Valenzuela's analysis illuminates how hegemonic racial logics operate in classrooms, logics that are foundational to the "founding" of American society.

Jacobs' archival analysis of Indian boarding schools illuminates the pervasive settler colonial logic that shapes school practices[323]. This logic centers the eradication of Indigenous people through erasure and delegitimization of Indigenous knowledge systems. Indian boarding schools legalized corporal punishment and ideological violence as methods to exact such outcomes. Taken together, Valenzuela's ethnographic research and Jacobs' archival analysis contend that schools do something other than offer benevolent education for the masses. These works demonstrate the violent and subtractive nature of educational structures as they interact with students from disparate racial and class backgrounds. Additionally, these analyses shed light on how educational experience contributes to racialized students' relationship to the state. Through such analyses we can invert the gaze of study to more fully understand how the state utilizes schools as a conduit of social control and reproduction, and the effects of these processes on nonhegemonic people.

The second of strand of literature informing this chapter draws from critical perspectives excavating the socio-historical landscape in which the *Brown* ruling was decided and implemented. Though the 1954 *Brown* case ruled segregation unconstitutional, how schools would engage the ruling remained a contentious issue. Guinier argues the *Brown* case set "…the

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320. Watkins, "A Marxian and Radical Reconstructionist Critique of American Education: Searching out Black Voices," 115.
321. Watkins, 115.
322. Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1999).
323. Margaret D. Jacobs, "Indian Boarding Schools in Comparative Perspective: The Removal of Indigenous Children in the United States and Australia, 1880-1940," in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, ed. Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 202–231.

gold standard for defining the terms of formal equality: treating individuals differently based on the color of their skin was constitutionally wrong"[324]. The case ruled that race based segregation "…generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone"[325]. In this way, *Brown* rested on psychological based evidences that segregation produced 'damage' in Black pupils. This is referred to as the 'damage thesis standard'. Scott's decries use of the damage thesis standard in the postwar era influencing the application of the concept to appeal to white middle-class compassion and pity instead of demanding structural change[326]. In Scott's examination of the work of Kenneth Clark and Mamie Clark, whose psychological research served to promote the damage thesis standard in *Brown*, their work was part of a body of research that argued segregation diminished Black self-esteem, a conviction that partially hinged on the belief that proximity to whites would be psychologically beneficial to Black students.

However, Bell's analysis of "…judicial activity in racial cases before and after Brown…"[327] argues that *Brown* was not solely an effect of the damage thesis but pivoted on a principle of 'interest convergence'[328]. Bell argues that interest convergence in *Brown* grants "The interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites"[329]. Further, Bell explains that the principle of interest convergence functions as a prism through which legal interpretation of the 14th Amendment unfolds. In this way, "…the availability of fourteenth amendment protection in racial cases may not actually be determined by the character of harm suffered by blacks or the quantum of liability proved against whites. Racial remedies may instead be the outward manifestations of unspoken and perhaps subconscious judicial conclusions that the remedies, if granted, will secure, advance, or at least not harm societal interests, deemed important by middle and upper class whites"[330]. Bell contends that the viability of *Brown* rested not on the notion that unequal and separate education produces Black suffering but that educational segregation could be managed while preserving the dominant power structure.

Guinier explains that the damage thesis standard emerged from an ideology of racial liberalism in the postwar era, which emphasized the corrosive effect of individual prejudice, and touted the importance of cultural contact alongside the promotion of tolerance[331]. Educational actors, ascribing to the ideal of racial liberalism, stressed the damaging effects of segregation on black personality development which arguably secured legal victory in the *Brown* case. Racial liberalism positioned the American race dilemma "…as a psychological and interpersonal challenge rather than a structural problem rooted in our economic and political system"[332]. Rather than indict the historical conditions that created a system of state sanctioned control of

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324. Lani Guinier, "From Racial Liberalism to Racial Literacy: Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Divergence Dilemma," *The Journal of American History* 19, no. 1, (2004): 92-118.
325. Guinier, "From Racial Liberalism to Racial Literacy," court analysis, qtd. 93.
326. Daryl M. Scott, *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and Image of the Damaged Psyche, 1880-1996* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
327. Derrick Bell Jr., "Brown v. Board of Education and Interest-Convergence Dilemma," *Harvard Law Review* VI, no. 93, (1980): 523.
328. Bell, "Brown v. Board of Education and Interest-Convergence Dilemma," 523.
329. Bell, 523.
330. Bell, 523.
331. Guinier, "From Racial Liberalism to Racial Literacy," 95.
332. Guinier, 100.

Black education[333], *Brown* championed interracial contact as a positive practice ameliorating "damage" in Black children. Scott, like Guinier, argues that reliance on the damage thesis in the *Brown* case demonstrates how racial liberals resorted to the historical tendency of posturing Black people as objects of pity[334].

Bell points to how *Brown* was responsive to the crisis of American imperialism at home and abroad. Bell argues that *Brown* was imagined as a tool by which "…whites in policymaking positions able to see the economic and political advances at home and abroad that would follow abandonment of segregation"[335]. Bell contends *Brown* was an immediate rebuff to the Communist appeal to people of decolonizing nations[336]. This Communist appeal threatened to disrupt segregation inhibiting Southern industrial power[337] and "…offered much needed reassurance to American blacks that the precepts of equality and freedom so heralded during Word War II might yet be given meaning at home"[338]. The 1944 publication of *American Dilemma*, "…expressly cast racial equality as the *telos* of American nationhood"[339]. In this way, "…black inclusion in the nation-state was an index of U.S. world-ordering power"[340], as Singh chronicles.

The *Brown* ruling elided the historical debates considering the function of education for Black people, specifically the notion that education might serve a role as part of broader freedom struggle. Central to the institution of chattel slavery was the denial and criminalization of literacy for enslaved Black people. One of the most well-known accounts of how chattel slavery deemed literacy a threat to settler society is Frederick Douglass' 1845 account[341]. Central to Douglass' narrative is his awareness of the function of educational denial as a constitutive component of enslavement, and thus his emergent consciousness of the how literacy can serve an emancipatory purpose is explored.

Woodson's 1933 *The Mis-Education of the Negro* condemns the use of educational practice as a vehicle through which to make Black people pliable, docile bodies. Woodson contends a core threat of normative education practice is its ability to make students complicit in the internalization of a subjugated role in the American social order, writing that "…when you control a man's thinking you don't have to worry about his actions…"[342]. For Woodson,

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333. See also James Anderson, "Black Rural Communities and the Struggle for Education During the Age of Booker T. Washington, 1877-1915," *Peabody Journal of Education* 67, no. 4, (1990): 46-62. Anderson's examination of Black educational struggle in the Black Belt from 1877-1915 documents the pernicious history of the South's ruling elite to contain the Freedman's progressive campaign for democracy and universal education. Prior to the civil war, the Southern ruling system instituted a legal system in the confederate states that denied literacy and formal schooling to Black people and subjected public education discourse. "After 1890, the Democrats in Black Belt counties seized the school funds of the disfranchised back citizens. Consequently, the general enrollment and school terms of black children, and the average pay of black teachers came to a standstill, and in many cases actually decreased", 55.
334. Scott, *Contempt and Pity*, xiii.
335. Bell, "Brown v. Board of Education and Interest-Convergence Dilemma," 524.
336. Bell, 524.
337. Bell, 525.
338. Bell, 524.
339. Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 135. Italics in original.
340. Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*, 136.
341. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2010). Originally published in 1845.
342. Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1990). See also, Barbara A. Sizemore, "Education for Liberation," The School Review 81, no. 3 (1973): 391.

normative educational practice fosters internalization of Black inferiority. From this view, a desired education would support the development of counterhegemonic consciousness.

An important connector in these analyses concerns the ideological function of schooling. Operating as an agent of a settler colonial state, schools transmit and legitimize a specific worldview. This practice simultaneously subsumes all other knowledge systems that present an alternative to the American system of education. Implementation of the damage thesis meant racial liberals could address a symptom without disrupting society as a whole. This approach privileged addressing "intangible effects", as Guinier explains, "The upshot of the inversion of means and end was to redefine, equality, not as a fair and just distribution of resources, but as the absence of formal, legal barriers that separate the races"[343]. This process highlights the interaction of state authority and capitalist interests, as mutually reinforcing and constitutive systems of oppression. In this chapter, I explore the application of the *Brown* imperative through examination of the educational experiences of nonhegemonic actors in the city and the ascendance of racial liberalism in district policy.

Analytical Framework and Methodological Process

This chapter utilizes oral history interview data, archival research, primary source documents, including biography/memoir, and secondary source material. The chapter is structured in relation to the following themes gleaned from oral history interview transcripts: racialized student experience in and beyond school; awareness of in-school racialized tracking mechanisms; and white administrative control over racialized student experiences. These themes informed my approach to archival fieldwork, as outlined in my discussion of relational historical ethnography in Chapter 2. The analytical framework operationalized in data analysis draws on theoretical devices drawn from social theorists examining the con-constitution of race and class shaping oppressive social conditions, and the interplay of civil society structures in maintaining and perpetuating these conditions.

Themes emanating from interview data suggests the role of schools in legitimizing social conditions constituted by a relation of oppression. Drawing on Fanon's conception of the material and ideological dynamics that shape relations of oppression, I engage race and class as contexts of oppression that exist in an interstitial relationship. Fanon's analysis of the colonial context further clarifies how these interlocking contexts of oppression structure subjective experience[344]. Informed by a historical understanding of the role of Western countries in the violent conquest, colonization, and resource extraction of 'Third World nations'[345] Fanon describes the evolution of a colonial context in which a relation of domination is perpetuated and maintained. I employ this conception of "colonial context" to elucidate the structural contours of racialized students' educational experiences, as an effect of a relation of domination.

In addition, Fanon's analysis of the colonial context offers an analysis of the psychology of colonization. The colonial apparatus, through violent and implicit force, employ societal structures in this process. As result of the saturation of this relation of domination, the colonized are subjected to the internalization of their subjugated position in society. Fanon explains, "The status of 'native' is a nervous condition introduced and maintained by the settler among the

343. Guinier, "From Racial Liberalism to Racial Literacy," 95.
344. Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2004), 40.
345. Vijay Prashsad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York, NY: New Press, 2007).

colonized people with their consent"[346]. This nervous condition is one of the key mechanisms by which colonial administrators are able to frame their 'civilizing projects', to rescue the colonized form their 'backwardness'. I employ this theoretical precept in analysis of district conceptions of equality of educational opportunity. Fanonian emphasis on the colonial apparatus' role in producing a psychology of colonization, distills the role of societal institutions in legitimizing and maintaining colonial conditions. The final theoretical precept animating this chapter excavates the function of state sanctioned institutions as key sites in the maintenance of an oppressive social order.

Gramscian analysis of the role of civil society institutions emphasizes counterhegemonic struggle as a method to disrupt the saturation of ideas that legitimize, through implicit and brutal mechanisms, domination[347]. His contribution to analysis of the "...role of civil society in the shifting balance of relations between different social forces in society..."[348] illumniates the role of racial liberals in educational policy setting. Gramsci's emphasis on the role of ideology in producing relations of domination points to "...the diversification of social antagonisms, the 'dispersal' of power, which occurs in societies where hegemony is sustained, not exclusively through the enforced instrumentality of the state, but rather, it is grounded in the relations and institutions of civil society". In effect, Gramsci emphasizes the emergence of a complex modern civil society structure and the "...parallel development in complexity of the formation of the modern state"[349]. In this way, "The state is no longer conceived as simply an administrative and coercive apparatus-it is also 'educative and formative'"[350].

Data Analysis

1. The racial and class contexts educational experience

1a. The racial politics of educational segregation in the model city

In Detroit, experiences of educational segregation profoundly shaped how students, parents, and the broader community understood their relationship to the social complex[351]. For white middle and upper-class students, Detroit schools functioned as a conduit to assuming power in American society. For white working class and poor students, schooling represented an opportunity to secure employment upon graduation and in some instances, rise in the social order. For racialized students, the Detroit schools, in the 1950s and 1960s, presented a structural barrier to the same opportunities afforded white children. In this way, the district performed an interstitial function to the broader power structure.

Supporting this system of spatial segregation and social containment, policing structures enforced the interests of the racist power structure's geographical configuration of the city, extending brutality to the educational sphere. A former Detroit Public Schools (DPS) student,

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346. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 20.
347. Antonio Gramsci, "State and Civil Society," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).
348. Stuart Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10, no. 5 (1986): 8.
349. Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," 18.
350. Hall, 18.
351. Mary Luevanos, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2016. Delores Guye, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2016.

Arthur Carter III, explains that during his 1954-1958 career at Eastern High School, located in the Black Bottom neighborhood, police deployed a reign of terror against students. A four-man police detail, known as the "Big Four" regularly waited near the school, "We were frightened. While I was not personally involved in any altercations, I do remember the fear…"[352]. Carter excavates a vital aspect of Detroit educational history, critical pillars of the civic structure actively participated in oppression and further, schools were not uniquely imagined as safe zones for all students. The role of police in creating a condition of educational oppression highlights the symbiotic relationship between schools and American social order. For William Mitchell, growing up in the early 1950s on the east side of the city in an apartment building near a police station brought him in to early understanding of the role of race in the city. "Hearing the white police officers beat Black people who had been arrested that weekend, that was my first introduction to what race was about", he explained[353]. Racism and class oppression were two sides of the same coin. William Mitchell lived in this apartment because he was Black, both a racial and class designation. Because he was Black, he lived in this apartment building adjacent to a center of anti-Black violence.

Although the 1962 Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity had condemned the district for its role in operationalizing education to contain Black children within specific school areas[354], racialized students observed the reality of their educational conditions. In this section I present excerpts from an interview conducted with a graduate of the Detroit Public Schools. This presentation and analysis offers a counterhegemonic narrative history of educational experience in the district. I situate this presentation of data within a critical history of the spatial racism, constituted and legitimized through civic structures that created an educational landscape within which segregated schooling was experienced.

Within the segregated landscape in which the education of Black children unfolded, a multifaceted situation arose. The racial and class contexts of the city's landscape gave rise to a Black community unified through its experience of socio-historical exclusion[355]. The central school district, occupying the inner core area of the city, predominantly enrolled Black students. A memorandum interrogating segregationist administrative practices in the district charged that since the 1930s white students experienced ease of school choice, even when living in Black enclaves. Meanwhile Black students were systematically denied such freedom of movement[356]. Yet, there was an unintended consequence of this administrative practice that placed Black teachers at predominantly Black schools. The interaction of Black teachers and Black pupils afforded, in some reported instances, a method of instilling core values that were reflective of the critical thinking Black educators believed was required of Black people in American society.

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352. "Arthur Carter III," in *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An Oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918-1967* ed. Elaine Latzman Moon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 264.
353. William Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2018.
354. Findings and Recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunities, abridged version (Detroit: Detroit Public Schools, 1962).
355. Darryl Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, August 2017. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
356. Purposeful Administrative Devices as Applied to the Detroit Public Schools, December 12, 1961. Box 8, Folder 19. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

1b. Narrative of educational segregation: Alonzo Chandler

As Black organizations and community coalitions successfully won housing vouchers in newly developed areas of the city, new pockets of Black residential areas away from the city core emerged. On the Northwest side of Detroit, the 1941 construction of a concrete wall symbolized a racial covenant border. On the opposite side of the wall, the 8 Mile/ Wyoming area was the site of newly forming Black residential community. Alonzo Chandler moved to the 8 Mile/ Wyoming neighborhood, his mother had been granted a housing voucher to move out of their original home in the Northend community in Detroit[357]. The Northwest neighborhood had a reputation as being comprised of "heathens, outcasts"[358], a reference perhaps to the influx of Southern Black migrants who maintained chicken coops. The area itself was not fully developed; many streets did not have lights and were unpaved.

In 1953, Chandler began schooling at Higginbotham Elementary School, a predominantly Black school. At Higginbotham, a majority of the teaching staff were Black educators, recruited from among the top Black southern educational institutions[359]. Chandler's earliest childhood memories of the 8 Mile/Wyoming community are fond and clear, a new community with Black owned businesses and Black professionals. These memories stand in stark contrast to his understanding of the motives driving his family out of Georgia. Like many other Black families, Chandler's family fled Southern fascism[360], a necessity once his father who worked as a sharecropper returned home from service in WWII,

> What happened, you know, you had a large migration of Black people coming from down South to escape Jim Crow, especially after World War II, because a lot of people like my father for example served in the military. Most of the Black men in my neighborhood that I knew, the Black families that I knew their fathers served in the military. They did not want to go back down South and face Jim Crow…[361]

Chandler recalls how the experience and transmitted memory of Southern racial violence acted as a unifying principle at Higginbotham. Because Higginbotham was a primarily Black school, the teaching staff was also predominantly Black, the hiring process in the Detroit schools had long been shaped by race[362], in a meeting before the district's Interracial Committee, it was explained that the "…administration openly acknowledges that assignment are made on a racial basis, and that the practice is to assign Negro (educational) personnel only to those schools where the student [is] predominantly Negro. The racial identity of each certified candidate is indicated on his card for this purpose"[363]. Many of the Black teachers recruited to work in the

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357. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
358. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
359. In Brownell's 1962 deposition for the Sherrill Case, he discusses the recruitment practices of Black teachers from Southern institutions.
360. Chandler uses this term denote how race operated in the Southern regime.
361. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
362. Report of the Subcommittee to Study the Practices of the Public Schools with Respect to Intercultural Education in Race Relations, November 30, 1949. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
363. Report of the Subcommittee to Study the Practices of the Public Schools with Respect to Intercultural Education in Race Relations, November 30, 1949. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.

district came up from the South, which Chandler believes provided Black students a tradition of interaction that was never lost in migration North.

> Q: Do you remember teachers?
> Yes. I'm going to give you some examples. It was so important because what they actually did, they were actually an extension of our families, so the same values that our families taught us, they taught us, only we understood them better because they were just like us. They came from the same places our parents come from. They came from Georgia, and Alabama, Arkansas, places like that[364]

For Chandler, cultural memory of Black educators played a role in the development of his historical consciousness. Chandler's Black elementary school teachers, as extensions of the family, played An expansive role in the community. In the 1950s the 8 Mile/Wyoming community - like other Black residential areas - included families of differential class positions. Chandler remembers one of his classmates came to school in tattered clothing because, her parents, locked out of a discriminatory labor market amid a national recession, were unemployed. When classmates began teasing the girl, and another student who was an only child of two employed parents refused to sit in the assigned seat next to her, their Black teacher seized the moment as an educative/collective community moment,

> He said 'always remember you are all Black, you are all part of the same family'. He said: you do not treat one another like that just because you are fortunate enough for your parents to be working'. Then he looked at her and said, I don't care how poor you are, I don't care if you don't have but one dress, wash that one dress, take a shower, and hold your head up high, be neat and clean, that's your responsibility[365]

Chandler's memory of his early experiences in the city are not nostalgic, but rather instructive, which became clearer in his recollections of how the 8 Mile/Wyoming area was known for its intense segregation and border wall, a reality that was most visible as he matriculated to Mumford High School. At Mumford, Chandler faced a different educational experience, the majority of students were white, as was the teaching staff. Matriculating in the early 1960s Chandler recalls that college prep curricula tracks enrolled mostly white students hailing from exclusively white neighborhoods,

> At the time they had a school called Washington Trade, on Davison, and so they would send a lot of [Black] kids there that wanted to pick up a trade. Although we had a very good shop class at Mumford, so, it was just a residual of how they saw us in general, 'you're really not college prep material, you probably should take a trade, or you probably should do this, or you probably should do that'[366]

It was at Mumford where Chandler challenged the authority of his English teacher. The teacher assigned book report projects as regular assessments. What started off as a joke took on a more serious tone when Chandler, in consultation with his friends, decided to review a 1964 book by

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364. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
365. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017
366. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.

social activist and track legend Dick Gregory. When Chandler read Dick Gregory's autobiographical account of life and resistance. On the day students were to give an oral presentation of their book reports, Chandler rose to take his position as orator. As he announced the title of the book the classroom erupted in a furor of laughter after which Chandler began his presentation of Gregory's rise to activism from his meager beginnings. His teacher, a white woman, violently castigated him, stopping his presentation, and ridiculing him as a "disgrace to his race"[367]. Refusing to hear his explanation, Chandler was dismissed from the class.

Chandler's mother actively advocated to remedy the situation and after a meeting with the school counselor, the teacher agreed to allow him to return if he issued her an apology. In an act of defiant autonomy, Chandler refused. The teacher had since learned that the book did indeed exist, and the counselor tacitly agreed Chandler was in the right, but the teacher remained steadfast on her terms. Chandler chose to complete the class in summer school rather than return to the class, and never again had direct contact with his English teacher. Outside of the classroom, Mumford operated as two social worlds, one white, one Black. The school administration stopped holding dances as more Black students began attending them[368]. Chandler's refusal to submit to the teacher's terms provides an important understanding of how Black students made sense of the racialized character within mixed raced schools, providing a composite portrait of Black student experiences in mixed-race settings.

The maintenance of educational segregation in the Detroit schools required the active participation of multiple administrative sectors and white parents. Black students remained congregated in the Central district, an outcome of segregationist practice[369]. As the Black population increased, Black Detroiters moved to different areas of the city seeking better housing conditions, job prospects, and building autonomous commercial centers. Migration and settlement in different areas of the city meant Black students were no longer congregated in the core of schools near Black Bottom. The administrative structure of the district seemed slow to consider what this meant for instructional practice, the Detroit Urban League (DUL) charged that "…many white teachers and principals and a few white administrators seemed completely oblivious and insensitive to the racial changes occurring in their midst"[370]. Containment was utilized as an educative administrative policy to thwart Black student movement into white schools, which was supported s by implicit and formal policy practices of the district. While white students could access these policy practices to avoid attending Black schools, Black Detroiters remained confined to overcrowded schools. Still, Black students and community challenges to these practices persisted in the late 1950s.

1b. Building a systemic analysis of educational oppression

In response to a lack of access to school census statistics, the DUL conducted their own racial analysis of school segregation[371]. Of the 220 elementary schools in the district, DUL estimates documented that 130 of these schools enrolled Black students. Approximately 25 of

367. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
368. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
369. The district had ended conducting racial counts in the schools, thus no data exists until the 1961 racial census conducted by the 1960-1962 CAC on Equal Educational Opportunity.
370. Joe T. Darden, Richard Child Hill, Hume Thomas, and Richard Thomas, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987), 221.
[371]. Memorandum at the Request of the Detroit Urban League, 1951. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.

these schools had school compositions that are comprised by Black students at a rate of 90 per cent. Further, "All intermediate schools (20) except four have Negro children and all high schools (23) with the exception of two"[372]. The DUL analysis offered an indictment of how administration attended to the setting of attendance boundaries. The district's official response cited racial housing patterns as the factor impacting school enrollment patterns[373]. While administrators admitted that population shifts impacted attendance boundaries, these changes were explained away as being reflective "…of an overuse of certain facilities in some schools and an underuse in others"[374]. It would prove difficult to argues that the district played an active role in maintaining segregation. But in the wake of *Brown*, local actors now had a legal mechanism on which to base their allegations.

Writing in the Black news periodical, the *Michigan Chronicle*, Richard B. Henry[375] charged, "Like the tentacles of some monstrous octopus, the evil of racial discrimination lies entwined about the heart of the Detroit Public School System"[376]. Henry blasted the race-based hiring practices of the district, linking the perpetuation of segregation to action and inaction of the Board. Henry argued that community perspectives on the fact of educational segregation challenged the district's responses to how attendance boundary shifts neutrally responded to population shifts, over which they had no control. Henry explained that in the Northwest area of the city, Black students were bussed past four local Detroit high schools. These students were bussed across the city to the predominantly Black Northern High School, a practice honoring the segregationist practices in the district. These students hailed from George Washington Carver School in Oakdale Gardens, an area just beyond the city limits in Royal Oak Township that had no high school and thus students were appropriated state education funds to attend Detroit high schools[377]. Parents at Carver had banded together forming the Oakdale Gardens Citizens Improvement Committee in order to protest the extension of Carver to include ninth grade, a practice they charged extended segregation of their children.

At the April 11, 1955 Detroit Board of Education (BOE) meeting, Otis Eaton, chairman of the Carver Committee, successfully charged that the practice was "…inconsistent in its implications with the Supreme Court decisions outlawing public school segregation"[378] leading the Board to abolish the 9th grade. Henry continued to use the Michigan Chronicle as a vehicle to challenge district rhetoric surrounding the drawing of attendance boundaries. A case in point concerned the Higginbotham School. Henry explained that in 1955, Higginbotham was a

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372. Memorandum at the Request of the Detroit Urban League, 1951. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
373. Conference Between Assistant School Superintendents and the Community Services Staff, April 17, 1952. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
374. Conference Between Assistant School Superintendents and the Community Services Staff, April 17, 1952. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
375. Henry was involved in the political activity of the Shrine of the Black Madonna, and later co-founded the Republic of New Africa. See, Chokwe Lumumba, "Short History of the U.S. War on the Republic of New Africa," *Black Scholar* 12 (January-February 1981). See also, Boggs, *Living for Change*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1998), 117-141.
376. Richard B. Henry, "How Bias Rules Detroit Public School System," *Michigan Chronicle*, April 22, 1955. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
377. Richard B. Henry, "Shuttle System Outlined: W. Eight Mile Rd School Dilemma Bared in Study," *Michigan Chronicle*, April 30, 1955. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
378. News Clipping, "Carver Body Eliminates 9th Grade," undated. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.

predominantly Black school and not currently at capacity for enrollment. It was thus capable of helping to relieve overcrowded schools. Sitting in an intensely segregated Northwest section of the city, Henry charged that Higginbotham was itself the outcome of racist attendance boundaries that could have easily been designed to be a racially mixed school and would not be under capacity[379].

Section Summary

Chandler's narrative highlights key aspects of experiences of educational segregation in the city. The 1962 racial census revealed statistical reality of segregation in the schools, while narrative data illuminates how students experience and made sense of segregation. This particular narrative highlights both the effects of a calculated program of segregation fostering a racialized dual system of schooling and the unintended consequences of segregation. Chandler's narrative asserts the tenuous of interactions between white teachers and Black students, the power of school administrators over students' futures/ability to reinforce segregationist policies, the use of curricula as a mechanism of racial segregation within mixed raced schools, and the emergent impact of the civil rights era of freedom struggle on student consciousness. These aspects of Chandler's narrative underscore the lived realities of district racial race data.

Chandler's narrative emphasizes how race and class as social relationships shaped his early educational experience at Higginbotham. Remembrance of the role of Black teachers as extensions of the family unit pivoted on a conception of education that was expansive and race-conscious. Scholars have considered the impact of differential conceptions of care Black educators bring to Black educational relationships[380]. In Detroit, Chandler's observations affirm the notion of care received in a Black school setting in contrast to mixed race schools under the authority of white administrators. The narrative presents both a portrait of educational life within a school developed in direct relation to racialized educational policies, seemingly a practice meant to subjugate student experience. However, also present is a narrative of the unintended consequences of segregated education, an experience that yielded distinctive teachings, which carried Chandler his whole life.

Growing efforts to challenge educational segregation policies post-Brown through the allied work of the freedom struggle activists and educational actors signaled a shift in educational perspective. Galvanized by the *Brown v. Board* decree, a local alliance of students, parents, and activists were empowered through a new platform from which to contest educational oppression in the city. Their articulated grievances foreshadow the militant activism emerging in the latter 1960s, discussed in chapter 5. Understanding how nonhegemonic actors considered the

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379. Richard B. Henry, "Irregular Procedures Found in 'Traditional Negro' Areas: Is School Zoning Pattern Biased," April 23, 1955, *Michigan Chronicle*. Box 42. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan. Richard and Milton Henry were also members of the Group On Advanced Leadership (GOAL), and through this organization lobbied the district to address issues of racial representation in textbooks, see also, Kefentse K. Chikwe, "From Black Power to the New Millennium: The Evolution of African Centered Education in Detroit 1970-2000" (Ph.D. diss, Michigan State University, 2011), 27-28. See also letters from Richard Henry to then district administrator Norman Drachler regarding the textbook issue here, Box 98. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

380. Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, 1996). See also, Adolph L. Reed Jr, "Romancing Jim Crow," in *Class Notes: Posing as Politics and Other Thoughts on the American Scene* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2001), 14-24.

impact of *Brown* in the urban North, excavates the racial politics of education in the city. Through the efforts of the Carver School parents and the Oakdale Gardens Citizens Improvement Committee, a community-education alliance challenged the containment of Black students enabled through official district policy. Richard B. Henry, alongside concerned parents and community members, exemplify how nonhegemonic actors relied upon grassroots structures to affect educational change.

2. Implications of Corporate Liberalism in Educational Planning: Racial Liberalism vs. Racial Justice

Racial bias in attendance boundaries emerged as a primary battlefront in educational struggle, the district effectively framed the issue in race neutral language focusing on overcrowding, dilapidated infrastructure, and the need to raise school funding. As the district entered a period of self-study, presumably to assess school needs across multiple variables, how all issues impacting the district were racialized issues became increasingly clear. Through the work of various Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC), an alliance of interests sought to construct a new educational agenda for the district. The CAC on School Needs was the first to undertake this effort. Chaired by corporate liberals, this committee reflected the interests of liberals to redress educational segregation and outmoded structures. This was imagined largely through an understanding of schools as interstitial to good business, and therefore a profitable economy in Detroit.

On February 28, 1957, the Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs convened for the first time at Chadsey High School in Southwest Detroit. Board of Education President William D. Merrifield opened the meeting reminding all of "…the general request to help the Board of Education in the development of an educational program that will meet the needs of Detroit citizens in the decade following 1959"[381]. President Merrifield had selected George W. Romney as chairman of the CAC with Edward L. Cushman serving as his vice chair. As chairman of the American Motors Corporation, Romney was an established corporate leader in the city. Serving as director of industrial relations at American Motors, Cushman, was also widely known. They represented elite corporate interests and voices on the committee emphasizing the relationship between schools and society, noting that public education was interstitial to "America's rapid rise to world leadership…"[382]. Romney announced at the first Committee meeting, "I believe only the educated can be free—that education makes a people easier to be led constructively, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave. I believe education should have as its objectives the formation of character and citizenship and the development of individual intellects and talents"[383].

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381. Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, First Meeting, February 28, 1957, quoted on p.3. Box 117. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
382. Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, First Meeting, February 28, 1957, quoted on p.3. Box 117. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
383. Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, First Meeting, February 28, 1957, quoted on p.3. Box 117. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

DPS Superintendent Samuel M. Brownell[384] noted that this endeavor was among the first wherein citizen participation would produce an evaluation of a district in a large city[385]. By the second meeting of the committee on March 14, 1957, committee members discussed a set of concerns to help support their study. In the following meeting on March 28, the committee was greeted by a variety of sources through which to develop a conception of educational philosophy for the schools and the committee's work. Just days after this meeting on April 1, 1957, voters denied passage of a millage which would have increased school funding.

At the following meeting on April 11, 1957, Superintendent Brownell discussed how the failed millage would impact the district. Brownell served as a vocal supporter of the millage campaign using his column in the Detroit Free Press, "Report Card" to highlight how increased funds would expand school extra-curricular offerings. Brownell cited building additions to almost every high school in the district, which would "…reduce overcrowding and [be used] to add laboratories to the increased demand for science instruction"[386]. One committee member asked Brownell to comment on which areas of the city suffer most from the failed millage to which Brownell responded that "…it is the areas within the Boulevard and to the east. The problem arises both from the increase in population in the area and the changing demography of the population so that a larger proportion now wishes to attend public schools"[387]. This area was widely known as Black Bottom, the residential area to which African Americans had been relegated through racial covenants and economic oppression[388].

In effect, Brownell acknowledged that of all demographic groups in the city, economically and racially oppressed Black people bore the brunt of the system's noted failure. Detroit had garnered much acclaim for its industrial role during wartime. Known widely as the "arsenal of democracy", at close range, the moniker seemed more of a tall tale, than noble truth. Mel Ravitz, a city councilman and proponent of open occupancy in the city purported that "…below the surface, there was considerable discontent. We [Detroit leadership] had not solved the problem of housing discrimination in this city. We had not done very much with the employment factor in this city in regard to black and white. There were considerable problems"[389].

As the 1958-1959 school year began, the power of white voters to determine the educational futures of Black Detroit saturated local educational politics. The failed millage in the preceding school year contextualized local school funding as a thoroughly racial and class issue. This reality countered popular rhetoric upholding education as a site of social mobility. An emergent political perspective among Black grassroots organizations had already begun to challenge longstanding accommodationist and integrationist strategy. The 1957 failed millage

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384. Brownell served as Superintendent 1956-1966.
385. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.5. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
386. Samuel Brownell, "Report Card," *Detroit Free Press*, 1957. Box 7. Samuel M. Brownell Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
387. Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, Fourth Meeting, April 11, 1957, p.27. Box 117. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
388 Karl Gregory, interview by Tobi Voigt for Detroit '67 Oral History Project, Detroit Historical Society, September 1, 2015.
389. Mel Ravitz, oral history interview by Sidney Fine, July 26, 1985, p.1. Michigan Historical Collections Detroit Riot Oral History Project. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan. Ravitz recounts that though Black Detroit represented 23% of the city population, only one member of the 9 person city council was African American, winning election in 1957 and re-election in 1961.

may have signaled how demographic shifts and political power could delimit the development of equality of educational opportunity in the city, but it also demonstrated the growing numbers of school-aged Black youth. Though whites remained the most populous demographic in the city, the Detroit Public Schools increasingly served a primarily Black student demographic.

The 1958 publication of the final report of the CAC on School Needs provided recommendations relative to the issues impacting the general school population. Importantly, as no current racial counts existed on student enrollment, the CAC on School needs recommended an independent committee convene that would specifically racial issues in the schools. The CAC on School Needs charged that "…steps be taken to provide equal educational opportunities to every child in our community, and that there be continuous appraisal of this program so that inequalities may be promptly rectified"[390]. Criticism of the school policies fostering racial segregation brought renewed attention to district administrative practices. In an effort to be responsive to community unrest, at the November 24, 1959 meeting of the Board of Education member Remus Robinson[391] moved that the district formalize its policies pursuant to its non-discrimination policies[392].

One of the major dilemmas in appraising the racial dynamics in the district was that the district had discontinued collection of racial data in the 1920s and ended the practice of racial designations on personnel applications in the 1950s. The CAC on Equal Educational Opportunity challenged this practice and when convened in 1960 called for a racial census at all levels of the district[393]. Segregation was pervasive in the system. A standing optional attendance area policy impacted 21 different schools wherein students "…living within certain elementary school neighborhoods [had] a choice of attendance at 1 or 2 high schools. At least one optional area existed in 1960 between 2 junior high schools of opposite predominant racial components"[394]. These policies were actively employed by students residing in areas undergoing demographic racial change. In effect, white students and parents gamed the system, utilizing these policies to avoid attending racially mixed schools[395].

As the Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity (CAC-EEO) convened, the Board attempted to relieve overcrowding in the Central district. The district "…opted to bus black students from the over-crowded center-district schools to the closet schools with sufficient student capacity"[396]. Returning again to the white racial extremism of the Northwest area of the city, parents from exclusively white schools threatened to boycott the plan. As the busing plan was made publicly known, "…whites on the far northwest side of Detroit organized a meeting of some 500 people"[397]. These groups encouraged white parents to boycott

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390. Findings and Recommendations of the City-Wide Committee-Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs, School-Community Relations Recommendations (Detroit: The Board of Education, 1958), p.141.
391. Remus Robinson was the sole Black member of the BOE, elected in 1955 serving until his death in 1970. For a fuller discussion on his role in establishing the Black-liberal-labor alliance on the Board, see Jeffery Mirel, *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit, 1907-81*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1999).
392. Board of Education Meeting Minutes, November 24, 1959, p. 217. Box 12, Folder 17. Remus Robinson Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
393. Don Beck, 'Detroiters Told: 'End Bias in Our Schools'", Detroit Free Press, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
394. Darden, Richard Child Hill, June Thomas, and Richard Thomas, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development*, 226-227.
395. Darden, Hill, Thomas, and Hill, 227.
396. Darden, Hill, Thomas, and Hill, 222.
397. Darden, Hill, Thomas, and Hill, 222.

the policy. Some parents fearing violence participated as well, 30% of parents boycotted at one school and 67% boycotted another school[398].

As the CAC-EEO continued its analysis of the schools, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights convened in Detroit on December 15 and 16, 1960. A wide array of stakeholders from across the civic and economic sphere attended offering testimony on the Detroit situation. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted that in Detroit, "Areas of investigation were employment, education, housing, and law enforcement"[399]. In a memorandum from the Commission to the DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations outlining the hearing, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted that Detroit Mayor Miriani described racial relations as relatively superficial issues. Mayor Miriani claimed the Commission on Community Relations[400] "…was adequate answer to any problems of race relations which might exist"[401]. In his testimony, Mirani claimed the "…commission has been a most effective weapon in in mobilizing the consciousness of the community"[402], but failed to offer any evidences of just how this has happened. Speaking on behalf of the tolerance organization, Detroit Round Table, Dr. Robert Frehse commented that housing remained a critical issue in that between 1940 and 1952 only 87,000 new housing units were made available, with only 2% of these units available to Black residents[403]. Further Frehse emphasized the relationship between housing segregation and schools[404]. UAW head Walter P. Reuther supported Dr. Frehse's assertion affirming the deleterious impact of residential segregation on schools. Additionally, Reuther noted that residential segregation practices also supported labor discrimination, noting that employers can "…legally limit their employment to persons living within a certain radius of the plant location"[405]. In this way, Reuther and Frehse affirmed that race relations were structural issues, contingent on the practices and policies that enabled their reproduction. In contrast to Mayor Miriani's position, dissenting voices painted a conflicting portrait of race relations in the city.

Linking the segmented racialized segregative policies of capitalist enterprise and schooling, Horace Sheffield, speaking on behalf of the Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC) explained that Black workers were almost exclusively denied entry in the building trades and

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398. Darden, Hill, Thomas, and Hill, 222.
399. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.1. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
400. For a fuller discussion of the establishment of the Commission on Community Relations see Chapter 3.
401. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.3. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
402. "Statement of Hon. Louis C. Miriani, Mayor of the City of Detroit," in Hearings Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Hearings Held in Detroit, December 14, 1960, December 15, 1960 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), 18.
403. "Testimony of Robert M. Frehse, Executive Director, Detroit Roundtable of the Michigan Region, National Conference of Christian and Jews," in Hearings Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Hearings Held in Detroit, December 14, 1960, December 15, 1960 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), 28.
404. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.4. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
405. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.4. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

apprenticeship programs[406]. Sheffield charged that the UAW's Fair Practices Committee as ineffective for the plight Black workers[407]. Before the Commission, Sheffield commented that these practices extended and began at the school level. Sheffield alleged that "…many high school counselors discourage Negro youth from taking courses that would prepare them for jobs that might be difficult to get"[408]. Detroit Urban League representative Ernest Brown affirmed that even when Black students were afforded entry into apprenticeship programs, students still had to secure their own jobs before being admitted to the program. Racialized labor practices engaged the schooling apparatus in the perpetuation of a racialized economy[409].

Charles Wells, a school parent and Vice President of the Citizens' Association for Better Schools "...charged the Board of Education and the school administration with discrimination and containment in setting the boundaries of the Center district"[410]. Wells brought attention to manipulation of open enrollment policies that effectively encouraged containment of Black students within Black majority schools. Wells explained that "…in September, 1960, out of the 25 vacancies at Central High School, 19 were filled by Negroes"[411]. The district had alleged that open enrollment policies were customary race-neutral policies, but as Wells emphasized, this 1960 ratio highlights how enrollment vacancies were racialized effects. Instead of mandating vacancies be filled with regard to equal racial representation, Wells' indictment of Central High School enrollment figures further cited the failure of district policies to curb segregation[412].

Presenting before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Superintendent Brownell's reference to "cultural deprivation' as a factor impacting equality of educational opportunity reflected a divergent and contested perspective. Brownell emphasized "…housing conditions, the economic climate of the community, and cultural deprivation as a factor which influence the equality of educational opportunity for children"[413]. Board Member Remus Robinson used his time before the Commission to contest Brownell's reference. Robinson, the first African American member of the Board of Education, "…criticized the Detroit group intelligence tests as being unfair to children from a rural or southern background. He made the statement that we

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406. "Testimony of Horace L. Sheffield, Executive Vice President, Trade Union Leadership Council," in Hearings Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Hearings Held in Detroit, December 14, 1960, December 15, 1960 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), 76.
407. Herb Boyd, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination* (New York: Amistad, 2017), 176.
408. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.4. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
409. The CAC-EEO found discrimination in the apprentice and cooperative work programs so intensely practiced that they advocated the programs be eliminated if they could not be reformed, see Findings and Recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunities, abridged version (Detroit Public Schools, 1962), ix.
410. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.5. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
411. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.5. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
412. "Testimony of Charles Wells, Vice President, Citizens Association for Better Schools," in Hearings Before the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Hearings Held in Detroit, December 14, 1960, December 15, 1960 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), 132.
413. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.5. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

should teach children to the 'best of our ability, not to the best of their ability'"[414]. Robinson expanded the analysis to structural concerns, explaining his belief that "…there had been some containment" in the drawing of boundaries[415].

Though between the liberal labor and Black liberal perspectives, there was a salient recognition of the social context of equality of educational opportunity, dominant educational ideas remained tethered to liberal conceptions of social change. As summarized in representatives' testimony, the racial politics of the city extended beyond issues of economy to all facets of civic social life. Perhaps, the impact of racial politics on the police workforce were most emblematic of the underlying anti-Black ideas that engulfed the city infrastructure. Detroit Urban League Representative G. Nelson Smith noted statistical analysis of law enforcement, citing that currently "…there are no Negroes in five precincts; only 3 percent of the total police force are Negroes; and only eight Negroes hold rank above that of a patrolman"[416]. An uproar occurred at the Commission hearing when Reverend Ervin Johnson of the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Police Procedure, explained that "…less than 2.3 per cent of the Negro applicants were able to pass the physical and intellectual tests which he said were objective"[417], and declared there was no evidence of discrimination-based promotional policy. Other representatives and attendees protested Rev. Johnson's analysis to which Johnson gave a most condescending rebuttal, "some of my warmest friends are Negroes"[418]. The 1960 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearing offers a composite look at the Detroit social context of education.

The final 1962 report of the CAC on Equal Educational Opportunity charged that racialized dynamics of the city had produced educational segregation[419]. When the CAC-EEO produced its final report in March 1962, the *Detroit Free Press* noted that the study found that "…despite an official school board policy of nondiscrimination in hiring and placement of teachers, there were 70 schools with all-white faculties"[420]. The report confirmed what many already knew from experience: "131,115 Negro youngsters were 'contained' in schools serving Negro neighborhoods and that there were eight all-Negro and 75 all-white schools among the

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414. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.6. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
415. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.6. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
416. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.9. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
417. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, p.9. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
418. Memorandum from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to DPS Coordinating Committee on Human Relations, December 1960, as quoted in the report on p.9. Box 5, Folder 1. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
419. "Detroiters Told: 'End Bias in Our Schools'," *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
420. Don Beck, 'Detroiters Told: 'End Bias in Our Schools'", *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

city's 273 schools"[421]. In February 1961, the first racial census was conducted revealing that "…the student population in the 273-school system is 45.6 per cent Negro"[422]. The district was organized into nine constellation areas, "…only five of the 75 all-white schools having even one Negro teacher"[423]. The vast majority of all white schools were located in the city's Northwest area, notably Redford High School had a total population of 2,756 students enrolling no Black students nor employing any Black teachers[424].

CAC-EEO Chairman and Federal District Judge Nathan J. Kaufman, explained that "…unequal educational opportunities often result from the conditions under which children must live, learn, and grow" [425]. The underlying premise guiding the study was clearly defined by the Committee, "…historically public education in the United States is based on the fundamental principle that all children must be afforded equal and favorable opportunities to discover and develop fully their capabilities and talents"[426]. The study expressed a commitment to go beyond an academic/vocation instructive role, "If our nation is to move ahead, then public education with the support of the community must make every effort…to develop a system of values based on moral precepts and social effectiveness, to learn to think analytically, and to act responsibly"[427]. The final report of the CAC-EEO seemingly signaled a new era in the district and in this way provided in roads into how *Brown* might be interpreted in the Detroit context. The report's primary conclusion, framing content of its recommendations, argued that "…of all inequities affecting our school system today, the primary concern is in the area of race relations and discrimination"[428]. No longer would racial bias in attendance boundaries be reduced to neutral responses to population shifts as the CAC-EEO charged that "…it is a fact that in the past school boundaries in Detroit have been used to further racial and social class segregation"[429].

Further, the CAC-EEO urged "… review of all school boundaries and recommends that in the establishment of boundaries the ethnic composition of the school district be given equal importance with other factors"[430]. The Committee recommended an overhaul of optional school attendance policies to empower Black students to attend optional white schools. The use of busing was also reviewed and deemed acceptable insofar as it did not support segregation[431]. Despite increases in the hiring of Black personnel, "…the Committee found a clear-cut pattern of racial discrimination in the assignment of teachers and principals to schools throughout the

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421. Don Beck, 'Detroiters Told: 'End Bias in Our Schools'," *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
422. "Full Racial Census," *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
423. "Full Racial Census," *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
424. Editorial, *Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1962. Box 6. AFT: Detroit Local 231 Collections. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
425. Findings and Recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Equal Educational Opportunities, abridged version. (Detroit: Detroit Public Schools, 1962), vi.
426. Findings and Recommendations.
427. Findings and Recommendations, viii.
428. Findings and Recommendations, viii.
429. Findings and Recommendations, viii.
430. Findings and Recommendations, viii-ix.
431. Findings and Recommendations, ix.

city”[432], explaining that such practice “…weakens the democratic opportunities of children in the Detroit Public Schools”[433].

Section Summary

The logic of racial liberalism, perpetuated through corporate liberal representation on the CAC on School Needs, ensured ideological saturation in conceptualization of school needs. Corporate liberals on the Committee emphasized the quality of the school programs and the physical plant as a marker of economic progress in the city. In this way, decline of the ‘academic ideal’ was conceptualized in terms of economic advantage. In more progressive terms, the CAC-EEO conceptualized the decline of the academic ideal as an indication of the effects of racialized education discrimination. Because the report defined race relations in terms of democratic inclusion and racial progress, and racism as an attitudinal dilemma in policy setting, the CAC-EEO emphasized integration as a responsive approach.

3. Confronting the color line in educational policy and practice

One year after the final report of the CAC on Equal Education Opportunity, the district had moved slowly forward on several recommendations[434]. In a staff issued report to the Board of Education and the public, Superintendent Brownell explained work to date. Board Member Kaisle expressed dismay that the report’s recommendations were not being effectively remedied quickly enough. The Board’s meeting minutes reflect as much stating, “It is his feelings that if it takes ten years to put the recommendations into effect, the school system may miss the opportunity to better the education of a whole generation of scholars during that time”[435]. Brownell’s response was punctuated by a claim that further study was needed to determine how many of the recommendations could be carried out most effectively[436]. These remarks acted as a buffer to dispel any impressions that there existed reticence on the part of the district to meet the aims of the recommendations and not all were convinced that new policies would circumvent segregation.

Residential segregation, the outcome of historical patterns of racist civic, labor, and real-estate practices were abetted by the district’s open schools policy. Though whites complained and feared neighborhood change, a 1962 demographic study found that “Negro Detroiters are more segregated in their housing today than they were three decades ago”[437] . The study emphasized that residential patterns and conditions of the 1960s, were comparable to available data of the 1930s noting, “The most notable feature of these maps is their clear demonstration that Negroes in the 1960 decade live in essentially the same places that their predecessors lived

432. Findings and Recommendations, ix.
433. Findings and Recommendations, ix
434. “Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 22, 1959”. Box 12, Folder, 17. Remus Robinson Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
435. “Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 22, 1959,” p. 247. Box 12, Folder, 17. Remus Robinson Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University p.246.
436. “Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 22, 1959”. Folder, 12-17, Board of Education; minutes, 1959-1961. Remus Robinson Papers. Box 12 Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
437. “Race and Residence in Detroit,” p.1 by Albert J. Mayer and Thomas F. Hoult, Urban Research Laboratory, Institute for Urban Studies, August 1962. Norman Drachler Papers. Box 15. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

during the 1930's - the only difference is that, due to increasing numbers, they occupy more space centered about their traditional quarters"[438]. This study found that in contrast to white residents' fear of expanding integration, housing patterns reflect an increase in residential segregation, "...during the thirty years between 1930 and 1960 there was a very sharp decline in the number of Negro Detroiters living in housing areas that may be described as 'integrated'"[439].

The 1962 open schools policy, a CAC-EEO recommendation, allowed students to defer attendance of their sanctioned local schools under certain conditions. Students would be able to transfer to a school of their choosing if the receiving school was not yet filled[440]. This policy allowed for the voluntary transfer of pupils, if the receiving school was less than 10% not full which effectively shifted the "…the burden of responsibility for segregation on the pupil and the parent"[441].

Notwithstanding the gains made in assessment of the district's practice, despite these recommendations, segregation practices remained in place, and teaching staff remained predominantly white. While racial segregation remained the primary concern for the oppressed, the Board of Education emphasized the need to increase school funding. In 1962, the BOE, backed by the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT), voted to launch a new school millage campaign in an effort to raise capital for school innovations and to redress the aging school plant. Reverend Albert B. Cleage, a prominent minister and organizer in the Black church community, was among those critical of the millage campaign. Reverend Cleage argued that to increase revenue for a district reproducing inequality of educational opportunity, would be a slight against the Detroit Black community[442].

The 1962 Sherrill Elementary School court case sought to demonstrate the complicity of Board actions in school segregation. The Sherrill case charged that the Board of Education was complicit in maintaining racial segregation through the setting of attendance boundaries, discriminatory hiring practices, and the open schools policy. Plaintiffs argued that as Sherrill shifted from a predominantly white to predominantly African American school it was redistricted out of feeding into a predominantly white district constellation. Beyond school segregation,

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438. "Race and Residence in Detroit," p.2 by Albert J. Mayer and Thomas F. Hoult, Urban Research Laboratory, Institute for Urban Studies, August 1962, emphasis in original. Norman Drachler Papers. Box 15. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
439. "Race and Residence in Detroit," p.7 by Albert J. Mayer and Thomas F. Hoult, Urban Research Laboratory, Institute for Urban Studies, August 1962. Norman Drachler Papers. Box 15. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
440. See also, "Admission to a Particular School. Administration Handbook Detroit Public Schools, 1961 Edition". Box 5, Folder 2. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I, Interracial Programs, 1943-1969. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
441. National Education Association, "Detroit, Michigan: A Study of Barriers to Equal Educational Opportunity in a Large City" (Washington D.C.: National Education Association, 1967), 27. In 1966 the Detroit Education Association requested the research support of the National Education Association (NEA) of the United States to help identify barriers to equality of educational opportunity in the district. The NEA's National Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities recruited a cohort of research professionals, educators and administrators to engage in rigorous study. The 1967 final report of the NEA commission outlined the problems which brought them to Detroit to examine. These included: overcrowding of classrooms, high teacher turnover, ineffectual communication between teachers and administrators as well as that between the school and community, that curriculum tended to reflect an exclusively white middle class social world, class-based achievement gap, and the inequitable distribution of apprenticeship training program slots afford Black youth.
442. Grace Lee Boggs, *Living for Change: An Autobiography*, 120.

white property owners resisted residential integration and formed coalitions seeking to influence civic policy, especially housing ordinances[443].

The Sherril School Parents Committee organized to challenge the district's practice of maintaining school segregation amid changing demographics. The road to mounting the legal challenge was a difficult one, eventually bringing in Superintendent Brownell in the process[444]. Filed in federal court on January 22, 1962, the Committee represented the grievances and aspiration of 300 Sherill school parents[445]. The Detroit NAACP Branch praised the lawsuit expressing their condemnation of the segregationist practices rampant in the district, exclaiming that "The problem of racial segregation and discrimination in the Detroit Public Schools is deep rooted. Its effects are evil and costly"[446]. George Crockett Jr., one of the attorneys representing the Sherrill Parents Committee, had garnered a reputation as a formidable labor and civil rights activist, having represented Paul Robeson and Claudia Jones before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)[447].

In the deposition of Superintendent Brownell conducted by Crockett, a core tension regarding the requirements of integration emerged early on:

> Q Does your idea of integration carry with it the notion of conscious action designed to bring about this intermixture that you speak about?
> A Well, that may be necessary. I think the best integration doesn't call for specific activity on that basis. What I would hope would be the case in our facilities, including our schools, is that we have reached the point where people live together and work together, in school and out of school, without race becoming a barrier to their relationship[448]

Superintendent Brownell testified that upon his employment in the district he discovered that the racial backgrounds of some personnel applicants were being recorded[449]. Additionally, he noted the use of busing between two schools that raised his suspicion. Higginbotham Elementary School, an under capacity Black school in the 8 Mile/Wyoming area of the city, received students from another Black elementary school despite there being a white school, with capacity,

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443. The Greater Detroit Home Owner Association was one such organization which in 1963 emerged in relation to the introduction of an ordinance proposed in the Common Council seeking to racialized housing discrimination in housing, see "From the pulpit: Is Bigotry a right?," *Detroit Free Press*, August 4, 1963. Box 2, Folder 3. David Cohen Collection, West Central Organization. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
444. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
445. News Release, February 16, 1962, A Statement by the Board of Directors, Detroit Branch NAACP. Box 11, Folder 23. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
446. News Release, February 16, 1962, A Statement by the Board of Directors, Detroit Branch NAACP. Box 11, Folder 23. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II, Box 11. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
447. Herb Boyd, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination* (New York: Amistad, 2017), 161-162.
448. Samuel Brownell Deposition, April 28, 1965, in Sherrill Court Case, p.10. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
449. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.11. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

located closer to the overcrowded school[450]. Another practice was the busing of Black students in an outlying school district, Carver School District, to Northern High School, a predominantly Black high school, Brownell stated:

> As I got into the situation I found out that one of the reasons that no one would admit seemed apparent to me why they were being bussed down to Northern High School was because the residents of adjoining school districts had not wanted to take them in, even thought they were much closer than Northern High School is[451].
>
> Some persons indicated to me that where you go to school depends on not where you live but who you know[452].

Brownell oversaw a reorganization of district administration to provide form for what had felt was a district run by independently motivated administrators, seemingly allowing a pattern of personal patronage to attend desired schools. In a stunning exchange, Crocket attempted to clarify Brownell's sense of district policies functioning along racial lines. Brownell repeatedly rebuked a line of questioning claiming Brownell's observations of low numbers of Black personnel did not lead him to note any existing policy supporting this outcome. Further, Brownell repeatedly described racial segregation in schools as not the primary concern facing the district when he began his tenure in the district. In fact, overcrowding served as his primary focus. Upon further questioning Brownell stated he had not noticed racial segregation as an overt pattern in the district, referring instead to the Detroit schools as an integrated district. While Brownell noted his observation of some all-white teaching faculties at individual schools, he did not believe there existed exclusively Black teaching faculties[453]. The final findings of the CAC EEO importantly directly challenge this assertion.

Expressing an overwhelming belief that racial segregation was in some part reflective of societal dilemmas in housing and labor practices, Brownell conveyed a sympathetic view that schools could aim to resist reproduction of these social patterns. Furthermore, Brownell argued that shifting attendance boundaries at the elementary and junior high level would do little to change school composition. When prodded by Crockett, Brownell did affirm attendance boundaries of high schools would yield a more substantive difference. Still Brownell steadfastly claimed race was never utilized as the predominant factor shaping attendance boundaries, arguing that "…to draw attendance boundaries on the basis of one factor alone would be poor administration"[454].

Crockett challenged Brownell's rebuffs that much had taken place to increase communication amongst different school communities. Crockett acknowledged the work of Parent Teacher Associations, a relatively new device developed as part of the 1940s citizenship education movement but stopped short of affirming that work as comparable to a marker of

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450. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.12. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
451. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.13. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
452. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.15. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
453. An assertion the final report of the CAC-EEO challenged.
454. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.22-23. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

integration. Crockett explained, "To bring the Parent-teacher Association from Osborn into a meeting with the Parent-Teacher Association from Northeastern is very good for the community, no question about it, but it hasn't changed one iota where Johnny, who now lives in an all-white neighborhood is going to school, -- it hasn't brought them into contact with each other"[455]. Brownell challenged Crockett's assertion by putting forth an understanding of integration as a problem of attitudes enacted through peoples' behavior. This assertion was largely reflective of the district's organizing racial logic limiting how the district would manage race relations and determine responsiveness to the demands of Black parents and community members.

Dissatisfied with the pace of district reform, the Ad Hoc Citizens Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity was established April 12, 1965 amid criticism that since the 1962 CAC-EEO report had produced minimal difference. The Ad Hoc Committee charged that since the 1962 publication of the report, the experience of educational segregation seemed unchanged. The Ad Hoc Committee charged that the district failed to institute substantive reforms to redress the 1962 report's findings[456] . In a letter to the Board of Education, the Ad Hoc Committee represented a concern for all Detroit children with an explicit intention of addressing educational deprivation in the schools:

> We seek to take from no one but to make sure that all receive an education to their full potential. We know that if we improve the education system for all, we will have to act where the evidence of under-achievement is greatest. We know that the Negro child is as intelligent and educable as the white child. The theory of genetic inferiority had been factually and fully discredited[457]

The Ad Hoc Committee met with district leadership to review statistical achievement data as well as student enrollment and teacher hiring data. This Committee sought to provide their independent interpretation of data, rejecting district interpretations which they felt came to rely heavily on a notion of cultural deprivation as an excuse for slow improvements. The district's own interpretation of reading levels, a report of which stated "A good reading program cannot lift language and reading abilities of culturally deprived children to normal achievement in any short period of time. It cannot offset all the serious affects (*sic)* of poverty and illiteracy. It can never substitute for the broad range of healthful normal experiences that children in good homes have from infancy on"[458]. The Ad Hoc Committee took issue with this statement and provided independent analysis documenting far below grade-level literacy rates in predominantly Black and integrated high school areas.

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455. Samuel Brownell Deposition in Sherrill Court Case, p.49. Box 9, Folder 3. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
456. Statement of Purpose: Ad Hoc Citizens Commission for Equal Educational Opportunity. Box 9, Folder 19. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
457. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
458. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee, as quoted on p.3. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

The Ad Hoc Committee's analysis also noted that at the high school level, the difference between where a student should be reading and their measured level widens[459]. The Ad Hoc Committee declared its relentless quest for district action as it continued it work to "define the problem of unequal educational opportunity in all its aspect"[460] and to frame literacy and achievement levels as the outcomes of imposed inferior education. In this way, the Ad Hoc Committee suggested that the district could not be trusted to secure equality of educational opportunity, for Black children. In fact, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee crystalized a divergent conceptualization of equality of educational opportunity, particularly as the district alluded to cultural deprivation as a factor impacting achievement, "The concept of cultural deprivation [the Committee charged] has become the excuse for denying the potential of the Negro child in our educational system, and to frustrate his effort to improve his circumstance"[461]. Ad Hoc members declared, "We shall tell our story in the way in which we have always, in the last analysis, had to do it through the resources of our own community and our own leadership"[462].

By 1963 a number of efforts were underway to address the recommendation of the CAC-EEO report. A district report noted that 61% of organizations engaged in cooperative efforts with the district signed non-discrimination certificates[463] including organizations involved in apprenticeship programming in schools. This strategy was cast as a method to certify collaborating partners would cease racist practices. The district reported that the new school policy refused participation of any "…cooperative educational program with any group that has refused to sign a non-discrimination certificate"[464]. By July 26, 1963, the district eliminated placement choices for teachers instituting a new policy to promote interracial teaching staff[465]. Summer 1963 also signaled a turning point in the broader activist community, "…when Detroit became conscious of itself as the spearhead of the Northern black movement…"[466].

June 23, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a march down the main thoroughfare in the city, Woodward Avenue. During the 1943 riot, Woodward Avenue had been the site of horrific bloody violence. Returning home from brutal industrial jobs, African Americans aboard cable

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459. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee, p.2. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
460. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee, p.2. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
461. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee, p.2. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
462. Open Letter to the Detroit Board of Education and to the Public from the Ad Hoc Executive Committee, p.2. Box 9, Folder 8. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
463. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.12. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
464. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.12-13. Box 10, Folder 4. Research: Detroit Schools, Board Documents, May 5, 1964. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
465. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p. 13. Box 10, Folder 4. Research: Detroit Schools, Board Documents, May 5, 1964. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
466. Boggs, *Living for Change*, 124.

cars were attacked by white mob violence. The 1963 Freedom March down Woodward, organized by CORE activists and local civil rights organizers, alongside UAW leadership, suggested that this liberal-labor-civil rights alliance would mark a turning point in Detroit's race relations. Dr. King previewed a truncated version of the speech he would give at the national monument two months later. Yet, among Detroit's activist community, not all were convinced that freedom could be achieved in the city through such an alliance[467].

In 1964, the Sherrill Elementary School case concluded and resulted in the setting of new school district attendance boundaries. But by this time residential racial segregation was not the only factor shaping inequity in the schools. Demographic shifts and the population loss of persons with greatest taxable ability also shaped the district, particularly the area of school finance. In the ten-year period of 1950-1960, Detroit increased nonwhite residents by more than 60.4 percent, while losing 22.4 percent of taxable earners[468]. Between 1961 and 1965, the school district experienced a loss of 23,728 white students and an increase of 31,108 Black students. School officials observed the impact of social and economic changes on the district, particularly the effect on school funding. In relation to historical effects of an internal colonial labor market, white resident and capital flight from the city to the suburbs severely reduced local wealth, and subsequently taxability in the city.

Simultaneously in 1964, amid sustained and external challenges to the segregationist practices of the district, the administrative apparatus struggled to present their commitment to the elimination of racial segregation. At the April 14, 1964 Board of Education meeting, Board member Dr. Remus Robinson encouraged a report be produced that documented the district's efforts toward this goal. In response, the district produced a detailed report that offers a portrait of how the district imagined its work to date and its future[469]. The report framed the relationships between schooling and society in a relational context explaining that "Schools, as an arm of state government, have a responsibility to further the understanding the fulfillment of these rights for all citizens"[470]. The report affirmed a commitment to "Achieving and maintaining a school system which is racially integrated…" and to ensure "…the organization, administration and operation of all facets of the school system are without discrimination as to race"[471]. Additionally noted was the fact of equality of educational opportunity and its importance as measure of system integration. The report largely emphasized a symbiotic relationship between schools and society noting that "A community free from racial bias and providing equal

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467. Boggs, *Living for Change*, 124.
468. National Education Association, "Detroit, Michigan: A Study of Barriers to Equal Educational Opportunity in a Large City", 14.
469. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.12-13. Box 10, Folder 4. Research: Detroit Schools, Board Documents, May 5, 1964. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
470. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.3. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
471. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.4. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

opportunities for all citizens regardless of race will make it possible for schools to attain these goals"[472].

The BOE had originally approved 140 recommendations made in the CAC-EEO 1962 final report[473]. By 1964 the district had remedied several of the report's recommendations including efforts to broaden curriculum design processes, produced an in-house publication of a supplement to 7th and 8th grade history texts, "The Struggle for Freedom and Rights, A History of the American Negro"[474] and further issued a statement on the treatment of minorities in textbooks, "…as a basic guide in the selection of all instructional materials"[475]. However, the suburbanization of spatial racism, as whites fled Detroit, was accompanied by the suburbanization of capitalist accumulations structures. As a result, a dwindling city tax base and political powerlessness of Black voters to approve school millages, created a set of interlocking issues engendering the progressive aims of the era.

In the mid-1960s, Michigan school funding was drawn from the general property tax. In addition, although the Detroit Board of Education was codified as an autonomous governing body, the authority to issue new bonds was at the purview of voters, which had "…made it impossible for the city Board of Education to increase local revenues in response to educational need"[476]. Further, the politics of race and class shaping all facets of city life were far from being eliminated. While 1940s voting patterns had documented dismal turnout, as voting power became a mechanism to control the directives of city governance structure, in the 1960s, racialized voting took on a new tenor of usage. In the 1965 city election the Citizen's Committee for Equal Opportunity analyzed voting patterns emphasizing that "…in the primary election 'white voters in appalling numbers simply did not vote for black candidates at all, or in instances where they did so, gave them such low consideration as to virtually exclude them from serious consideration'"[477].

Tuesday May 25, 1965, the Ad Hoc Committee, joined by members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Sherill Parents Group, and other allied forces, appeared before the Board of Education demanding integration of the district trade apprenticeship program[478]. One member of the Ad Hoc Committee, Horace Sheffield, organizing director of the Trade Union Leadership Council, issued a demand that 100 Black students be recruited into the program by December 1965. Observing no movement on this core demand, June 1965 the Ad Hoc Committee threatened to appeal to federal authorities in order to compel the Detroit Board of

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472. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.5. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
473. Report of Progress on Equal Educational Opportunities Recommendations Made Since August 1962, p.5, dated June 15, 1964. Box 10, Folder 5. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
474. Report of Progress on Equal Educational Opportunities Recommendations Made Since August 1962, p.5, dated June 15, 1964. Box 10, Folder 5. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
475. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.20. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
476. Report dated May 5, 1964, to Board of Education, from Superintendent of Schools, p.18. Box 10, Folder 4. The Ernest Goodman Collection, Series II. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
477. Darden, Hill, Thomas, and Thomas, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development*, 211.
478. Roberta Mackey, "Rights Group List School Demands," *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday May 26, 1965, p. 3.

Education to create a realizable integration plan in the district[479]. At the Tuesday September 28 BOE meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee once again appeared, but again no action was taken by the Board to address their demand[480]. At the end of 1965, it seemed unlikely that educational reforms could accomplish the task of ameliorating educational segregation and/or challenge the role of schools in perpetuating inequality in and beyond schooling.

Section Summary

Civil rights activists' critique of schooling as a conduit for the reproduction of a racially oppressive social order in the city, failed to be embraced by administrative district actors. Refusal to conceive of education disparity as an effect of a structural relation of domination and thus necessitating a structural and ideological response contrasted with racial liberalism conceptualization of schooling. In this era, competing conceptions of equality of educational opportunity, that found its greatest point of contradiction in attention to the role of educational oppression as one aspect of a broader relation of domination made possible through housing segregation, racial discrimination in labor, became a central focus in educational discourse. As nonhegemonic actors increased their awareness of the centrality of education as a mechanism of state power, contrasting conceptions of equality of educational opportunity moved from marginal issues in freedom struggle to a central site of debate and social struggle.

Conclusion

The Detroit Public Schools functioned as a reproductive mechanism in the local political economy of the city. Racialized educational advocates emphasized how race and class are experienced as interlocking contexts of an oppressive social relationship. From this vantage point, militant advocates identified how a racially stratified educational and vocational program produced a racially segmented social order. Critique of anti-Black exclusionary policies in school-based apprenticeship programs demonstrates the increased consciousness of the symbiotic relationship between schools and U.S. society.

In this chapter, I have examined how militant educational actors analyzed the function of education in the city. Data analysis suggests that these actors, though not engaged in educational activism initially, developed consciousness of schooling as an oppressive tool. Through this process, education became a focal point of analysis. As state sanctioned institutions, the reproductive function of schools represented a key stronghold for the dominant power structure. Transforming school policy represented a strategy to affect change beyond schooling, particularly with regard to nexus of housing segregation and a racialized political economy. Inasmuch as schools represented a node of social reproduction, transformation of school policy carried the possibility of systemic change.

In the postwar period, schools became key sites of social struggle and philosophical debate. Keppel argues "The terms of Brown transformed the public school into a symbol of a continuing American dilemma for most of the postwar era, recasting it as the principal institutional

479. Roberta Mackey, "Negroes to seek U.S. Help If School Integration Lags," *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday June 23, 1965, p. 8.
480. "Board OK's New School On Petoskey," *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 29, 1965, p.3.

battleground in the achievement of racial equality"[481]. An awakening awareness of the political economic function of schools was central in the coalitional movements and legal challenges waged by militant educational advocates against district policy. As district governance actors maintained status quo positions, militant advocates understood educational disenfranchisement as an indicator of formal equality.

Militant advocates challenged the use of the 'cultural deprivation' thesis to legitimize the finding of underachievement and illiteracy in predominantly Black schools. In contrast to district positions that cultural deprivation constituted a factor contributing to this finding, coalitional groups maintained emphasis on a pattern of racialized policy discrimination that produced such effects. Taken together, these contrasting positions demonstrate how Black educational advocates understood socially reality as fundamentally different. As Fanon explains, "Challenging the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of viewpoints. It is not a discourse on the universal, but the impassioned claim by the colonized that their world is fundamentally different"[482]. Further, Fanon argues that a colonial social reality operates as a Manichean world in that mechanisms of the colonial contexts portray the colonized as negations, as objects of pity, as the opposite of that which holds value in society[483]. This portrayal and the perpetuation of a system based on this portrayal dehumanizes the oppressed. Challenges to the perpetuation of the cultural deprivation thesis and insistence on a systematic pattern of educational segregation and disenfranchisement are efforts to transform this colonial social reality.

The appointment of former U.S. Commissioner of Education Samuel Brownell as district Superintendent in 1956 coincided with the production of a policy perspective that remained grounded in the familiar ethos of relegating racism to an attitudinal, personal dilemma. The intercultural and citizenship educational policies of the 1940s and early 1950s, had established a conception of race as an individual problem that would be most effectively remedied through intercultural contact and democratic education. Racial liberalism, an approach to managing race relations established in the postwar period, continued to shape the Detroit educational policy landscape. Rather than be responsive to the demands of grassroots coalitions emphasizing racialized education policy discrimination, key leaders of Detroit capitalist enterprise, were positioned as architects of the district's postwar educational vision. The 1957-1958 CAC on School Needs, led by corporate liberals, championed a vision of education as symbiotic to capitalist success, and to a lesser degree, the project of advancing democratic relations in society. The formation of the 1960-1962 CAC on Equal Educational Opportunity is perhaps the highlight of the '58 Committee's work. The CAC-EEO effectively forced the district to conduct a racial census of student enrollment and staff hiring practices.

The district had ended recording student racial backgrounds in the 1930s. But racial counts were kept in place to track district hiring. The practiced been used to preserve racial segregation through Black containment in the district. The CAC-EEO noted how administrative practices fostered educational segregation alongside spatialized racism in the city. Alas, the district could no longer feign innocence through blaming housing patterns in the city as the culprit for school segregation. However, optimism surrounding the EEO report, from the district's perspective, was met with the reality of students' educational experiences, experiences that were shapes by a

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481. Ben Keppel, *The Work of Democracy: Ralph Bunche, Kenneth B. Clark, Lorraine Hansberry, and the Cultural Politics of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 97-98. See also, Kenneth B. Clark, "Desegregation: An Appraisal of the Evidence," Journal of Social Issues 9, no. 4 (1953): 2–76.
482. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 6.
483. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 6.

century of Black enclosure in Detroit. As the district's oldest buildings fell into disrepair, these same buildings were found to be largely located in the Central district where Black students had been contained. White parents and voters remained staunchly opposed to school reforms that led to integration of schools. White people openly participated in school boycotts of integration and formed exclusionary residential covenant organizations throughout the city. White voters used the ballot as a tool of Black political domination, effectively making it impossible for district leadership to access much needed funding, only available through ballot initiatives.

Educational segregation occurred in a policy context where resource distribution, including access to advanced curricula offerings, was a practice mediate by political economic interests. This racialized process sought to maintain the fragility of a hegemonic social order, contingent on the proper functioning of state sanctioned institutions. Black students were subjected to an inferior curriculum concomitant to specific roles in society: unskilled industrial labor pool. Analyzing the racial logic interstitial to capitalist enterprise, Fanon asserts, "In the colonies the economic infrastructure is also a superstructure. The cause is effect: You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich"[484]. Race and class operate in tandem, co-constituted in their imposition as contexts of oppression and experienced as such in everyday life.

484. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 5.

Chapter 5

'Why Not Fight for Quality Education for Black Schools in the Inner City?', 1966-1974"

Introduction

The legitimation and confluence of oppressive social forces produced a racialized Detroit geography and political economic structure. These structures were contested, as grassroots coalitions continued to challenge their legitimization and domination while offering alternatives. Yet, much of this history has been omitted in analysis of Detroit's educational system, not uncommon in historical analysis[485]. However, critical historical analysis emphasizes quotidian acts of resistance responding to the lived experience of oppression as an articulation of an oppositional consciousness challenging dominant power structures. Such analysis encourages researchers to rethink the propensity to dismiss actions that may be deemed unsuccessful or contradictory towards visible, acceptable conceptions of success. In this vein of thought historian Robin D.G. Kelley emphasizes, "…too often our standards for evaluating social movements pivot around whether or not they succeeded in realizing their visions rather than on the merits of the visions themselves"[486].

While hailed nationally as a bastion of progressive liberalism, in 1960s Detroit, lived experience within the confines of oppressive structures challenged this dominant narrative. Subjective experiences of objective conditions informed the development of a radical analysis of city, national, and global power structures. This radical analysis articulated an alternative vision of society, to be waged by what Detroit Black labor radicals defined as the vanguard of freedom struggle, the Black worker. From 1966-1971 student militancy would gain the attention and focus of Detroit's League of Revolutionary Black Workers, a Black worker organization with strong community ties and a horizontal approach to social struggle[487]. Detroit's Black worker struggle articulated a racialized oppositional consciousness cognizant of the lived realities in Detroit, and its' historical preconditions[488]. Bringing anticolonial thought to bear on the local situation, Black labor radicalism offered an expansive social analysis of American imperialism.

For Detroit students, social critique of a power structure that denied them social mobility and full democratic participation, encouraged the development of school protest grounded in political economic analysis. For these students, challenging the symbiotic relation of school and a future

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485. Employing a conception of infrapolitics, historian Robin D.G. Kelley excavates the quotidian practices of resistance waged among the Southern Black working class. Contextualizing these practices within a broader analytic of power, Kelley describes "…the daily confrontations, evasive actions, and stifled thoughts that often inform organized political movements", practices that are often omitted from the historical register. Kelley argues that some of these actions "…reflect, to varying degrees, larger political struggle". This analysis highlights how even small acts of resistance responding to the lived experience of oppression, articulates an oppositional consciousness challenging dominant power structures. Robin D.G. Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crown South," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1, (1993): 75-112.
486. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2002), ix.
487. Jack Knight, "Students File Suit Against Principal," *Detroit Free Press*, Saturday January 9, 1971, p.3A, p.5A. The Black Student United Front pushed this case at Detroit's Pershing High School.
488. For an example of the development of oppositional consciousness through analysis of life history data and social analysis see, George Lipsitz, *A Life in the Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Opposition*, revised edition (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995).

confined to working in areas ‘plant-ations’[489], as they surmised, was a desired outcome. In this chapter, I examine the social processes underlying the development of this racialized oppositional consciousness and its conception of education in Detroit. Understanding how Black labor radicalism analyzed schooling as a site of power, and the influence this analysis had on student militancy, offers a critical perspective on the role of schooling in American society. This chapter is organized into three sections beginning with an overview of the conceptual and analytical frameworks employed. This is followed by analysis of data sources organized into the following themes: (1) student protest and district responses, (2) rise of radical left movements in educational protest, (3) revolutionary nationalism and community control of schools, and (4) neocolonial responses to educational radicalism. And finally, a conclusion section summarizes major findings.

Conceptual and Interpretive Framework

This chapter is informed by literature that examines the racial and political economic dynamics underlying counterhegemonic conceptions of education in American society. Analyses excavates how education has been envisioned as serving an emancipatory function. The orienting research questions guiding this chapter is:

(1) How did radical actors imagine the role of education amid broader freedom struggle?

Counterhegemonic Educational Struggle as Strategy

Scholars have examined the special role education has played in an effort to secure freedom in social, cultural, and economic terms[490]. For oppressed communities, the use of education as freedom struggle strategy is relational to the manipulation of education to foster oppression and reproduce a dominant power structure. Du Bois’ analysis of the Black struggle to establish public schools during Reconstruction provides an ample point of departure to understanding how education and schooling has been wielded as both a tool of oppression and a strategy for liberation[491]. Arguing that “Public education for all at public expense was, in the South, a Negro idea”[492], Du Bois excavates how Black people, aided by an alliance with Northern white philanthropists and the Freedmen’s Bureau, led the fight to develop a comprehensive and state funded public school system for all. Du Bois excavates the storied history of how formerly enslaved people endeavored to build a system of education that would secure and maintain their freedom.

489. Founding Black Student United Front member Gregory Hicks asserts this analysis of the symbiotic relationships between schools and racial and economic oppression, see, Gregory Hicks, “The League of Revolutionary Black Workers and Detroit’s Black Student United Front: Social Exchange and Leadership Development Select Interviews with Members of the Black Student United Front” (master’s thesis, Wayne State University, 2009).
490. Ronald E. Butchart, “‘Outthinking and Outflanking the Owners of the World’: A Historiography of the African American Struggle for Education,” *History of Education Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (1998): 336-366.
491. W.E.B. Du Bois, “IV: Founding the Public School,” *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black People Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company, 1968), 637-669.
492. Du Bois, “IV: Founding the Public School,”, 638.

Throughout this period of legal American chattel slavery, the education of enslaved people was legally criminalized, and brutally enforced by heightened physical exploitation and psychological dehumanization. Chattel slavery ensured that in 1863, 95% of enslaved Black people were denied literacy, "…which meant that less than 150,000 of the four million slaves emancipated could read and write. The first great mass movement for public education at the expense of the state, in the South, came from Negroes"[493]. Expounding upon the quest for literacy among the recently emancipated, Du Bois challenged debased perspectives concerning Black educability,

> "The eagerness to learn among American Negroes was exceptional in the case of a poor and recently emancipated folk. Usually, with a protective psychology, such degraded masses regard ignorance as natural and necessary, or even exalt their own traditional wisdom and discipline over 'book learning'; or they assume that knowledge is for higher beings, and not for the 'likes of us'. American Negroes never acted thus. The very feeling inferiority which slavery forced upon them fathered an intense desire to rise out of their condition by means of education. Of the 488,070 free Negroes in the United States in 1860, 32,629 were attending school, and only 91,736 were unable to read and write. In the slave states, there were 3,651 colored children attending schools supported by the free Negroes"[494].

Du Bois argues that upon emancipation, Black people struggled, through their own fundraising efforts and legislative-political process, to develop a public education system as a means to further secure their freedom in social, political, economic terms.

In response to these efforts, white property owners utilized legislative, economic, and interpersonal violence against the flourishing of Black education. Du Bois' historical analysis excavates the manipulation of the legislative structure by Southern property owners opposed taxation to support public education. White property owners struggled to maintain economic hegemony amid formal emancipation. These property owners "…believed that laborers did not need education; that it made their exploitation more difficult…"[495]. Chronicling the impact of legislative coercion, Du Bois provides inroads to understanding the centrality of control over the American educational complex to the maintenance of an oppressive social order.

Educational struggle amongst labor unions in the 1920s and 1930s presents an additional example of how oppressed groups understood education as an economically reproductive practice. Altenbaugh provides a historical examination of the origins, aims and eventual demise of the Labor Colleges of the 1920s and 1930s[496]. Central to this study is an analysis of why workers opted to challenge the traditional school system and construct an alternative educational approach. Altenbaugh maintains that "Working-class leaders and liberal educators provided an ideological rationale for workers' education, arguing that the formal educational system reflected and perpetuated bourgeois society"[497]. Labor leaders, and progressive educators of their day charged that traditional schools functioned to perpetuate the inherent inequality in the social complex. Moreover, labor leaders emphasized the ideological content of traditional educational practice as interstitial in the reproduction of a docile working-class.

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493. Du Bois, "IV: Founding the Public School," 638.
494. Du Bois, "IV: Founding the Public School," 637-638.
495. Du Bois, "IV: Founding the Public School," quoted from source material on p. 641.
496. Richard. J. Altenbaugh, *Education for Struggle: The American Labor Colleges of the 1920s and the 1930s* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990).
497. Altenbaugh, *Education for Struggle,* 20.

Labor leaders condemned the function of schooling in shaping and delimiting the social-psychological faculties of the working-class. In contrast to the purposes which formal education served, the labor colleges were charged with serving a liberatory end, "…addressing the cognitive domain of human agency" [498]. Labor leaders had identified the critical role education played in the production of hegemonic control. Informed by this analysis, radical labor colleges were envisioned as alternative institutions which could foster the cultivation of critical competencies and consciousness the labor movement required for social change.

In the early 1920s American Socialists organized weekend education programs to support disruption of a hegemonic American education system. These Socialists schools were "…among the first definitely organized to counteract the influence of capitalist State education in American history"[499]. The underlying philosophical approach to the Socialist educational program was in part a response to the emergent influence of capitalism on the organizational character of schooling[500]. Both the Labor Colleges and Socialist Sunday School models of counterhegemonic education raised a critical question: What is the role of radical education strategy in the context of hegemonic oppression? Can education alone accomplish liberation? The labor colleges and Socialist Sunday School recognized the need to cultivate a counterhegemonic movement that could effectively challenge and transform society but did not stop at the level of school based analysis. Instead these two examples point to the need to examine the political economic context in which schools are situated to advance a counterhegemonic educational approach. In addition to these examples, the interaction of movement building and education offers a portrait of how education can be responsive to the needs of radical actors and movement thinkers.

The history of the Highlander Folk School during the height of the civil rights era of the long freedom struggle elucidates the relationship between education and social change. Aimee Horton's doctoral dissertation provides an overview of the history and educational work of the Highlander Folk School, founded in 1932 in Cumberland Tennessee[501]. Myles Horton, co-founder of Highlander, remains regarded as a profound radical educator and grassroots activist. Aimee Horton writes: "In relation to the industrial union movement of the thirties and early forties and the civil rights movements of the fifties and early sixties…Highlander was in the forefront with adult education programs which anticipated and sought to encourage the process of social change"[502]. Through these adult education programs, activists working with the left movement were afforded an opportunity to expand and deepen their analysis, meet other movement actors and build solidarity struggles, and practice direct action skills. This philosophy was reflected in Highlander's Citizenship School Program, integral to the development of civil rights leaders waging the franchise struggle in the South[503]. Highlander sponsored a series of educational workshops geared toward leadership development for the southern student

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498. Altenbaugh, 2.
499. William J. Reese and Kenneth N. Teitelbaum, "American Socialist Pedagogy and Experimentation in the Progressive Era: The Socialist Sunday School," *History of Education Quarterly* 23 (1983): 429-454.
500. William J. Reese and Kenneth N. Teitelbaum, "American Socialist Pedagogy and Experimentation in the Progressive Era," 430.
501. Aimee Horton, *The Highlander Folk School: A History of the Development of its Major Programs Related to Social Movements in the South, 1932-1961* (Phd. Diss. University of Chicago, 1971).
502. Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 3.
503. For a fuller discussion on the role of Highlander and the emergence of the citizenships schools see the following: David P. Levine, "The Birth of the Citizenship Schools: Entwining the Struggles for Literacy and Freedom," *History of Education Quarterly* 44 (2004): 388–414. Septima Clark, "Citizenship and Gospel," *Journal of Black Studies* 10, no. 4 (1980): 461–66.

movement[504]. Highlander supported the establishment of an educational approach that centered radical participation and emphasized the needs of the dispossessed as a core objective of social struggle and analysis.

In the 1960s, educational activism was central in broader national and global social struggle. The relationship between education struggle and social change played a central role in racial ethnic activism in the 1960s. Historian Martha Biondi examines how the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements ideologically influenced college student activism. This influence encouraged students to challenge and transform what they came to perceive as a fundamentally racist educational system[505]. Between 1968 and 1969, Black students staged upwards of 200 protests on U.S. college campuses[506]. Linking the rhetoric, analyses, and socio-political practice of radical social movements to campus activism, Black college students brought the struggle in the streets to the university.

Many Black college students were also engaged in community level freedom struggle. These student activists connected the grassroots demand for community control over local resources to the struggle to control admission practices and intellectual production in colleges. The departmentalization of Black Studies is a direct outcome of educational activism of the late 1960s. Historian Martha Biondi argues that higher education emerged as a central terrain for Black Power activism given the expansion of access to higher education for racial ethnic students as a result of the G.I. Bill, national desegregation policies, and Black community emphasis on the centrality of education to progress[507]. The 1968 student strike at San Francisco State College[508], propelled onto the national stage the efforts of the college's Black Student Union. Core initial demands included granting admission to all Black student applicants and the development of an autonomous Black Studies department[509]. Harnessing the power of multiracial coalitions, inspiration drawn from the Civil Rights Movement, and the burgeoning Black Power Movement, militant Black students galvanized their comrades on and off campus and grappled with how to effectively challenge hegemonic education[510].

Radical educational activism was also deployed as strategy among other oppressed people combating racial oppression. Carlos Muñoz Jr. examines the interaction of student and community struggle in the context of the Chicano Power Movement. Responding to the "…psychological colonization of Mexican American youth"[511], the multifaceted and ideologically complex Chicano student movement challenged the hegemonic assimilationist educational programs rampant in Chicano communities. Key to combating psychological colonization was the development of educational programs that rigorously developed Chicano political consciousness. Chicano student actors emphasized community connection in the development of higher education programs, a demanded practice carried forth in the departmentalization of Chicano Studies. Movement thinkers envisioned that strong community connection would yield a conception of education/research centering the liberation of Chicano

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504. Horton, *The Highlander Folk School*, 3.
505. Martha Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014).
506. Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus.* See also, Russell Rickford, "Black Studies and the Politics of 'Relevance,'" in *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 47–73.
507. Biondi, 14.
508. Now, San Francisco State University.
509. Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus*, 43.
510. Biondi, 44.
511. Carlos Muñoz Jr. *Youth, Power, Identity: The Chicano Movement* (Verso Press, 2007), 92.

people. Such emphasis would also challenge the reproductive function of educational institutions.

Both the movements for Black Studies and Chicano Studies demonstrate how educational practice could build an infrastructure to develop a counterhegemonic conception of education. As opposed to viewing Black and Chicano education struggle as a politicized question, Biondi and Muñoz emphasize how the ideological content of curriculum occupies a central front of educational protest thought and action. In this way, educational activism theorized the symbiotic relationship of school governance structure, ideological content of school practice, and the reproduction of an oppressive, racialized social order. Beyond the educational activism of students, grassroots movement actors engaged in radical educational praxis at the community level. This practice helped bridge and expand radical social analysis.

The relationships between political analysis and pedagogical strategy was a pillar in radical social movement thought. Perlstein offers a critical synthesis of the interaction of social context and political analysis on pedagogical choices in the history of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Black Panther Party's contribution to the founding of Black Studies at San Francisco State College[512]. Analysis of the evolution of pedagogical thought of Black Panther Party activist Stokely Carmichael reveals the interaction of political values and educational program, "Whereas SNCC had once embraced a pedagogy of open-ended inquiry the Panthers applauded explicit, direct instruction in revolutionary analysis"[513]. This pedagogical choice was rooted explicitly in the Panther's experience in radical political action. Pedagogical choices were informed by analysis of what would best cultivate the conditions necessary for Black liberation, which rejected liberal inclusion in American society, after careful analysis of the nature of racial oppression in and beyond American society. To quote Perlstein, "Pedagogy is shaped not only by one's understanding of cognition but also by ones understanding of political and social relations"[514].

These analyses demonstrate the centrality of social context in the cultivation of an education strategy that would challenge oppression rather than reproduce its essential terms. In the Detroit context, previous examination of educational struggle portrays Black educational radicalism as motivated by a quest for control. Absent in this analysis is the relationship between political self-determination and curriculum content and how this shaped educational protest concerns and demands. The existing literature engaged in this section, emphasizes how examples of counterhegemonic models of education developed in response and relation to oppressive social realities. These divergent conceptions demonstrate the radical potential of educational protest alongside broader social struggle.

Educational institutions represent key mechanisms in the legitimization and reproduction of the dominant power structure. Yet, there is a rich tradition of developing educational practice that centers the eradication of interlocking systems of oppression. Analysis of the Panther schools and Socialist Sunday Schools demonstrates how educational strategy, interstitial to

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512. Daniel H. Perlstein, "Minds Stayed on Freedom: Politics and Pedagogy in the African-American Freedom Struggle," *American Education Research Journal* 39, no.2, (2002): 249-277. See also, Ericka Huggins and Angela D. LeBlanc-Ernest, "Revolutionary Women, Revolutionary Education: The Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School," in *Want to Start a Revolution? Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 161–84. 21. Joy Ann Williamson, "Community Control with a Black Nationalist Twist: The Black Panther Party's Educational Program" in *Black Protest Thought and Education*, ed. William Watkins (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 137-157.
513. Perlstein, "Minds Stayed on Freedom," 262.
514. Perlstein, 268.

broader social struggle, requires concerted focus to the distinct contexts of oppression facing differential groups. In fact, this analysis suggests that the potential of educational strategy is aligned with its ability to center specific forms of oppression. A case study of educational protest that centers racial and class oppression simultaneously, rather than treating either one or the other form of oppression as epiphenomenal, offers an elucidation of an approach specific to the domestic American context, but that has implications far beyond the political borders of this nation[515].

Analytical Framework and Methodological Process

This chapter examines oral history interview data, archival research, biography/memoir, and secondary source material. Analysis is grounded in two strands of critical social theory. The first strand emphasizes the emergence of counterhegemonic consciousness. I draw on theoretical precepts from Fanonian theory of consciousness and Gramscian conception of organic intellectuals to excavate Detroit radical social thought and the role of educational consciousness as interstitial to a broader conception of freedom struggle. Secondarily, I draw on conceptual devices of the internal colonial model to analyze the political economic context underlying the emergence of radical educational thought and activism in the Detroit left.

In *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon describes the production, maintenance, and reproduction of a colonial condition[516]. Endemic to the reproduction of a colonial condition is the dehumanization of colonized people. Fanon's discussion of the 'psychology of the colonized' details the social processes by which the colonizer inculcates within the colonized a debased conception of self, wherein the colonized become complicit in their own alienation. Fanon's conception of a colonial condition pivots on the ongoing, continuous, brutal dehumanization of colonized people. Also key here is Fanon's contention that the colonial condition is not a given natural state, but that it must be worked at, perfected again, and again. Inherent to this conception is Fanon's insistence that the colonized must struggle against the internalization of their objectives conditions. To do so would support the development of a counterhegemonic consciousness, this process of mental decolonization, a rejection of white supremacist values and aspirations, underlies Fanon's theory of liberation.

In this chapter, I draw on oral history interviews conducted with former members of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), a new left social movement formation in Detroit [517]. Broadly speaking, social theorist Max Elbaum describes the formation of new left social movement formations as those with "...focused attention on the intertwining of class and race relations, drawing out links between capitalism and racism without reducing racial injustice to a simple quantitative extension of class exploitation"[518]. The LRBW situated their analysis of the role of the Black worker in revolutionary struggle within a broader global analysis of imperialism. This interview data, supported by archival research and other primary/secondary source material, excavates the imagined role of educational struggle as a constitutive front of

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515. Curriculum theorists William H. Watkins argued, "Some Black culturalists have been virulent and strident in their criticism of Marxism. Many refuse to connect racial oppression to the expropriation of labor and property ownership", William H. Watkins, "A Marxian and Radical Reconstructionist Critique of American Education: Searching out Black Voices," in *Black Protest Thought and Education* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2007), 131.
516. Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2004).
517. Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (London & New York: Verso, 2006).
518. Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air*, 328.

broader freedom struggle. In order to contextualize the LRBW conception of social analysis, movement practices, and educational activism, I draw on a Fanonian conception of historical consciousness of the colonial relationship. Further, the Gramscian conception of organic intellectuals, provides a conceptual language through which to contextualize student militancy in the Detroit Public Schools[519].

Gramsci theorized the subjective process through which a cohort of radical actors would emerge, and serve as ambassadors/organizers/architects of counterhegemonic radicalism. These actors were imagined to serve as a conduit of social thought, interpreting the objective conditions of the social complex, and formulating theory, strategy, and action that would support the rejection of hegemonic values and aspirations. Together Fanon and Gramsci provide an analytical framework through which to situate oral history and archival research data producing the following core themes which structure this chapter: education as a tool of capitalist reproduction; the Black worker as the vanguard of the revolution; and freedom struggle as a multi-front movement.

In analysis of the interaction of interview data, archival data, and political economic analysis, I draw on theoretical devices from the internal colonial model to excavate the social processes producing a Detroit colonial social system. These devices including the following conceptual categories: colonial social system; political powerlessness; and neocolonial administrative class. I employ these conceptual tools grounded in extant research concerning the development of the internal colonial model. The concept of internal colonialism, in part, evolved out of the social thought and activism of 1960s Black and Third World thinkers and activists. The model gained traction in academic contexts and is also referred to as the semi-colony thesis, or internal colonial theory. The historical context of the emergence of the internal colonial model helps to illuminate the relevance of the theory to my study.

In the 1960s, movement thinkers argued that the racial and economic oppression faced by racialized people in U.S. society was relational to the colonial rule of the Caribbean, Africa and Asia by European nations[520]. Underlying this assertion was an analysis of the effects of formative preconditions in American society, settler colonialism and chattel slavery. Consideration of the long-term effects of chattel slavery, and ongoing settler colonization, and the imperialist role of American society made possible through land and body theft, fortified a radicalism that imagined freedom as a global project. The 1960s represents a unique moment in the political history of U.S. society, racialized people and allies, engaged in diverse and transformative social struggles advanced issues that included demands for community control of neighborhood institutions, political sovereignty, and economic justice. Domestic activists were particularly influenced and inspired by the radical social thought and action from anticolonial struggles in the Third World[521].

In the 1950s and 1960s, colonized nations in the global south continued their struggle for independence. As part of this movement, Prashad asserts a conception of "Third World" ascended into popular movement parlance. The "Third World", explains Prashad, is not a place but a project, an idea[522]. "During the seemingly interminable battles against colonialism, the

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519. Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).
520. See Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (New York: Vintage, 1992).
521. See Kelley, *Freedom Dreams* and, Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (New York: Verso, 2006), and Laura Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006).
522. Vijay Prashsad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007), xv.

peoples of African, Asia, and Latin American dreamed of a new world"[523], explains Prashad. Leaders of this global movement "...assembled their grievances and aspirations into various kinds of organizations..."[524]. Particularly important was a meeting hosted in Bandung, Indonesia, where Third World leaders gathered to ferment unity against colonizing forces into political strategy. The 1955 Bandung Conference "...produced something: a belief that two-thirds of the world's people had the right to return to their own burned cities, cherish them, and rebuild in their own image"[525]. Third World leaders surmised that, "Under colonial conditions, the darker nations had been reduced to providers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured goods produced in Europe and the United States"[526]. In the domestic American context, analysis of this relation of domination, the colonial condition, resonated with people struggling against oppressive social and political economic conditions. Not only did this analysis resonate, but it helped to clarify the particular dimensions and function of racial oppression within a broader system of domination. Critical interactions between U.S. radical actors and Third World movements helped support and mature the exchange of ideas and actions[527].

Writing in 1967, Ture [528] and Hamilton argue that African Americans exist in a "colonial relationship to the larger society, a relationship characterized by institutional racism"[529]. Ture and Hamilton explain that a hegemonic white power structure defines the terms of African American incorporation into the democratic and capitalist social system, a differential process based on racial ideology. This assertion is also referred to as the semi-colony thesis in that the relationship between African Americans and white society is distinct from the classic colonial relationship, yet the structural and ideological relation of domination, the colonial relationship, is present and enduring. The semi-colony thesis, termed interchangeably as the internal colonial model, also gained traction in academic discourse. Social scientists have extracted, clarified, and advanced theoretical precepts within internal colonial theory and applied these precepts to analysis in U.S. society.

I draw on precepts of colonial social system, political powerless, and neocolonial administrative class in data analysis. Robert Allen's analysis of Black peoples' differential 'inclusion' into U.S. society, Black radicalism, and subsequent repression of Black peoples' articulation of collective self-determination underlie my conceptions of 'colonial social system'. The assertion of the concept of internal colonialism, provides a conceptual language through which to clarify the racialized economic structure constituting the terms of U.S. racial minorities' incorporation into a colonial social system. Political powerless has been examined by Muñoz, Barrera, and Ornelas in order to analyze the racial logics underlying liberal democracy and the myth of democratic incorporation of differentially racialized people into the American social order[530]. These social thinkers observed the limitations of ascribing to a liberal politics of inclusion, that obscured the material basis of racial capitalism. Describing the contours of

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523. Prashsad, *The Darker Nations*, xv.
524. Prashsad, xv.
525. Prashsad, *The Darker Nations*, 33.
526. Prashsad, 44.
527. Angela Denise Dillard, *Faith in the City: Preaching Radical Social Change in Detroit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 234-235. See also, Robin D.G. Kelley and Betsy Esch, "Black like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution," *Souls*, (1999): 6–41.
528. Kwame Ture is formerly known as Stokley Carmichael, was a member of SNCC and later the Black Panther Party member.
529. Ture and Hamilton, *Black Power*, 6.
530. Carlos Muñoz Jr., Mario Barrera, and Carlos Ornelas, "The Barrio as Internal Colony," in *People and Politics in Urban Society*, ed. Harlan . Hahn (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972), 463-498.

geographic enclosure and political cooptation of Chicanos in a system of colonial relations, political powerlessness describes the effects of these dynamics[531].

Finally, the concept of internal colonialism has been extended through the concept of neocolonialism[532]. Allen describes the effects of the transformation of political economic relations in colonial conditions. Allen argues, "...beginning in the late 1960s, a new-colonial situation was developing in the relationship between whites and blacks in the US. This shift to new-colonialism was motivated by the fact that, with the rise of Black militancy and urban rebellions, the white power structure, locally and nationally, was presented with a crisis of control, and finding itself increasingly challenged and discredited in black communities"[533]. The structure reacted by developing a class of bureaucrats that could function as a "...buffer and be co-opted by the white power structure to act on its behalf in controlling African American communities"[534].

Data Analysis

1. Student protest and district approaches to confronting community unrest

In 1966, the Detroit Public Schools were organized into twenty-two constellations comprised of several elementary schools, a few junior high schools, and a high school. Four of these constellations were almost completely Black and five were nearly completely white[535]. By 1966 Black students represented 57% of total Detroit Public Schools enrollment, though the white electorate exhibited enormous influence over school policy. The power of white voters to determine the election of Board of Education members and shape school millage outcomes had historically been decisive in school matters. Despite attempts by alliances of white corporate liberals, labor leaders, and African American civic leaders to garner support for millage campaigns, racialized voting patterns had successfully voted these measures down. April 1966, a student-led walkout at Northern High School, a predominantly Black school, challenged and upended normative district approaches on which it had established its approach to race relations[536].

Located at Clairmount and Woodward in the central city area, Northern High had once been all-white but by 1966 served a predominantly Black student population. Infrastructure conditions at the school, in addition to the subjugated treatment of Black students by white administrators and teaching staff, permeated all aspects of the student experience at Northern. Informed by these experiences, Northern High School student Charles Colding sought to openly challenge the segregative practices at his own school. Colding authored an editorial in the school's paper *The Northern Light* that interrogated and contrasted curriculum offered to Black students at Northern

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531. See also, Robert L. Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America: An Analytic History* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, Inc., 1992).
532. See also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Neocolonialism: The Last State of Imperialism*, (New York: International Publishers, 1966).
533. Robert L. Allen, "Reassessing the Internal (Neo) Colonialism Theory," *The Black Scholar* 35, no.1, (2005): 4.
534. Allen, "Reassessing the Internal (Neo) Colonialism Theory," 4.
535. Arthur Johnson, *Race and Rememberance: A Memoir* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2008), 84.
536. For a discussion on the role of the walkout and Freedom School in unifying the Black community in opposition to educational oppression, see Barry Franklin, "Community, Race, and Curriculum in Detroit: The Northern High School Walkout," *History of Education* 33, no. 2 (2004): 137–156. For my study, I engage the 1966 NHSM to ground my analysis of the transformation of militant educational activism to radical educational activism.

versus white students at Redford High School. "The English Department, backed up by the principal, refused to allow the editorial to be published"[537], demonstrating the administrative commitment to thwarting student voice. Student actors banded together deciding to engage in an act of protest that would galvanize students and community in a collective indictment of the district's segregative policies.

The school's principal, Arthur Carty, blocked the publication of the article and went as far as to disband the newspapers[538]. In response to this repression, Colding formed a student coalition adding two other well-known Northern students, Judy Walker and Michael Bachelor, to the leadership roster[539]. The student coalition represented "…several different and influential student groups, [and] brought cohesion to and loyalty from the student body"[540]. The initial walkout organized for April 7, 1966 was approved by district superintendent Samuel Brownell. The massive display of community included students and parents carrying signs that read "This should have happened 20 years ago"[541]. The protest march finished in a rally at St. Joseph Episcopal Church, "About 1000 students and community residents jammed into the church…"[542]. The meeting was chaired by student leaders Charles Colding, Judy Walker, and Michael Batchelor, as well as Al Roberts, a representative of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

At a meeting with Superintendent Brownell on Monday April 11, 1966, during Easter break, students issued a list of demands for action and threatened a student strike if no action was taken. Primary among their demands was the call for the removal of Northern High School Principal Carty. Students agreed to return to school on Monday April 18, but after a series of condescending meetings and hearings with district officials, students decided to force the issue. A student boycott began on Wednesday April 20, with students congregating at St. Joseph Episcopal Church. A Freedom School had been proposed and began on Thursday April 21[543], "The three student leaders were responsible for all decisions about the boycott, while the elected Freedom School Board made curriculum decisions"[544].

Not all Black community members stood behind the student struggle, in fact, the Northern High School Movement (NHSM) brought competing ideas concerning racial progress to the forefront of movement debate. At the Sunday April 24, 1966 NAACP Freedom Fund dinner, serendipitously honoring Superintendent Brownell as he prepared for retirement, Northern student activists were invited guests but not allowed to address the forum,. In fact, "The NAACP line was the same as the *Detroit News* editorial line: You have made your point, return to school now, don't let the radicals spread this thing; we, the enlightened community leaders, will take over from here"[545]. The contrast in positions between NAACP leadership and the NHSM

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537. David Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," *New University Thought* 5, (1967): 13-38.
538. Report of the High School Study Commission, June 1968. Box 8. Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution. Stanford University.
539. "Dr. Karl Gregory, September 1st, 2015," Detroit 1967 Online Archive, accessed January 15, 2018, https://detroit1967.detroithistorical.org/items/show/249.
540. "Dr. Karl Gregory, September 1st, 2015," Detroit 1967 Online Archive, accessed January 15, 2018, https://detroit1967.detroithistorical.org/items/show/249.
541. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," quoted on 15.
542. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 16.
543. A volunteer teaching staff was recruited by Karl Gregory, one of which was Wayne State Professor Dr. William Bunge who would play a role in producing the Black Plan decentralization plan, in Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 19.
544. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 20.
545. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 23.

exemplified a changing tide in the city's social landscape. Though the NAACP had and continued to advocate for educational change, the NHSM articulated a conception of educational change rejecting old patterns of paternalism as strategy in achieving individual forms of progress.

Northern students remained steadfastly determined, which proved successful winning their chief demand in a Monday April 25 meeting with Superintendent Brownell and members of the Board of Education (BOE), Peter F. Grylls and Reverend Darneau Stewart. On the morning of Tuesday April 26 speaking before a Freedom School assembly, student Mike Batchelor announced, "Mr. Carty is not at Northern"[546]. The students subsequently decided to return to school on their own accord. Reverend Gracie, minister of St. Joseph Episcopal Church, surmised the significance of the NHSM asserting that "…in the absence of a militant community organization of adults and with teachers badly divided along DFT/DEA lines, who else had the unity and strength to apply the pressure?"[547].

Karl Gregory, Principal of the Northern High Freedom School contextualized the walkout as "…a symptom of an interweaving of fundamental and persuasive neighborhood, city, metropolitan area, state, and national problems"[548]. The politics of race and class that had shaped district hiring practices, attendant zone policies, and historical practices of Black student containment within the central district, had allowed the development of a dual school system: one for white students and one for Black students[549]. Further, Gregory argued that the use of police force in schools further demonstrated how schooling was utilized as a mechanism of Black enclosure in the city. The Northern High School Movement went farther in its articulation of educational criticism, challenging the function of schooling in American society. Rather than focus on the plight of one school, the Northern High Student Movement engaged in system-wide analysis that pointed to the collusion of civic, police, and housing forces that together produced a condition of Black educational containment. Northern High students pointed to how this condition resulted in their relegation to a disenfranchised future. Further, NHSM emphasized the importance of historical analysis of social processes that made racialized disenfranchisement in the idealized urban North possible.

Key to this analysis was a recognition of Black political powerlessness in the city[550], a status conditioned and reproduced through racial capitalism. In a 1967 article on the Northern High Student Movement, Karl Gregory argues that the Detroit political sphere was beholden to the whims and interests of white residents stating:

> Slowing the exodus of whites is a major objective of the redevelopment policy of the City, and the Board is presumably not oblivious to this. Voting patterns clearly show that conservatives need white voters, and that the race of candidates is important in both white

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546. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 24.
547. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High," 25. Gracie did explain that influential Reverend Albert Cleage organized sympathy strikes at other school and DFT President Mary Ellen Riordan came to the Friday April 22 rally attempting to persuade student leaders to return to school.
548. Karl Gregory, "The Walkout: Symptom of Dying Inner City Schools," *New University Thought* 5 (1967): 29-54.
549. Original oral history interviews suggest the racial politics of student-teacher interactions, Jesus Tabares, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, August 2016; Mary Luevanos, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2016.
550. Muñoz, Barrera, and Ornelas, "The Barrio as Internal Colony".

> and black areas, and more so in white areas. It is clear that the quality of school ranks highly among the variables accounting for such holding power[551].

Linking political power to the redistribution of resources, or rather the ability to receive a return on educational protest, Black working class and poor communities were powerless[552]. The NHSM galvanized the broader community and made visible the grassroots understanding that appealing to normative political process was a zero-sum game. Educational resource allocation was constitutive to racialized voting power in the city. Student protests and subsequent engagement with the BOE demonstrated the unwillingness of district officials to construct meaningful reforms. Responding to this understanding, the NHSM evidenced the community initiated claim that district administration power to intervene on behalf of students was restricted to the desires/demands of white educational advocates.

Racially integrated school contexts did not guarantee equality of educational opportunity. In mixed-race school contexts, Black educational actors maintained that the curriculum remained highly differentiated by race. At Mumford High School on the city's Northwest End, "…a public statement by its principal indicated that 90 to 95 percent of the students in the upper track were white, while 72.9 percent of the student body was Afro-American"[553]. These dynamics encouraged and reinforced the notion that community control of schools and non-racist teaching practices, offered the most viable remedy to achieve educational self-determination. Examining recent school graduation data revealed that "…only about 20% of the graduating class of Northern High in June, 1966, were achieving at 12th grade level"[554]. The NHSM demonstrated that Black students understood the confluence of these dynamics and embraced a radical practice organic to their containment, which "...should have been cause for rejoicing in the city. Instead it produced a reaction of fear.

Late summer 1966, Dr. Norman Drachler, a rank and file educator who rose through the ranks and served in various administrative capacities, ascended into the position of superintendent. Drachler diverged from his predecessor in important ways. Superintendent Brownell's philosophy had centered on an understanding of education as a panacea for good business and as pathway to individual success and social-economic wellbeing. Brownell affirmed this relationship, stating "Where educational levels are high, business is good, wages are high, and people are free. Education is the most fundamental business in the world. When education is thorough and sound, its products are successful, self-reliant men and women"[555]. In contrast, Drachler's conception focused on preparation of students for active participation in democratic life and practice.

Drachler's ascent to power reflected his long history of involvement in previous district research projects and his work to advance his brand of racial liberalism. Dr. Drachler emerged as the ideal candidate upon Superintendent Brownell's resignation, a graduate of Central High School, Drachler began his teaching career in 1937[556]. Over the span of his career, Drachler had moved up the ranks achieving a principalship before moving to the central administrative staff.

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551. Gregory, "The Walkout: Symptom of Dying Inner City Schools".
552. The district attempted to pass a 1966 school millage campaign, it was voted down.
553. Gregory, "The Walkout: Symptom of Dying Inner City Schools".
554. Gracie, "The Walkout at Northern High".
555. The Pursuit of Excellence: The Superintendent's Ten-Year Report, 1956-1966, p. 4. Box 37. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.
556. "Dr. Drachler Named Acting Superintendent," *Detroit Schools*: *A Publication of the Detroit Public Schools*, 27, no.1. (September 6, 1966), 1. Box 39. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.

Drachler had also supported efforts by local activists, Richard and Milton Henry of Group on Advanced Leadership (GOAL), to challenge the omission of the African American experience and social contributions in school textbooks[557]. His appointment as director of research for the 1958 Citizens Advisory Committee on School needs, by George Romney chair of the CAC, cemented his city-wide prominence.

By all accounts, Drachler was poised to ascend to the top position in the district just as racial and class politics moved from margin to center in education discourse. Drachler was an avid participant in district initiatives to retain the commitment of 1940s and 1950s era intercultural and citizenship education experiments. The Coordinating Committee on Human Relations of the Detroit Public Schools was one such articulation. Its publication, Human Relations Review, centered on the ideal "...that, in a culturally diverse society, man can learn to live and work together in harmony and mutual respect"[558]. Writing in Human Relations Review, Drachler shared and communicated his conception of educational, liberalism with teachers. "As teachers in a democracy, it is our responsibility to transmit to students those insights which will help them to appreciate our strengths as well as recognize our shortcomings"[559], Drachler asserted.

In many ways, Drachler was the ideal representation of liberalism's avowed promise and its vital limitations. Equality of educational opportunity was the driving theme behind much of his rhetoric and writing, going farther than his predecessors in employing Black thinkers in his conceptions. However, visible within the contours of his ideas are points where Drachler conflates the distinctive nature of Black freedom struggle with the liberal equality project. In an editorial Drachler proclaimed, "What Douglass and Dr. King have said about civil rights as these pertains to Negroes, has been true of other efforts for freedom in the history of mankind"[560]. Linking the Black freedom struggle to the national founding myth of democracy, Drachler furthered emphasized, "We must recall the grand dream - equality of opportunity- envisioned by the founders of our nation"[561].

Fall 1966, Drachler appointed the first Black assistant superintendent in the district, Arthur Johnson. Johnson had previously served as executive secretary of the Detroit branch of the NAACP followed by a stint in 1964 as the deputy director of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission[562]. Johnson assumed the position October 15, 1966[563], albeit with a hint of trepidation, understanding that education had become "…the primary battlefront in the overlapping issues of segregation, equal opportunity, and black nationalism"[564]. Johnson

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557. These efforts eventually resulted in the district self-publishing new textbooks and the placement of a moratorium on purchasing new textbooks from external publishers. Historian Rickford charges that efforts to transform the curriculum at the primary and secondary school level as part of the 'textbook revolution of the postwar era' failed to transform the "structural dimensions of white supremacy. Nor could curricular changes alone fulfill desires to foster a deeper sense of African-American peoplehood" in *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 47.
558. "Education for Human Rights", p.6, Human Relation Review, Detroit Public Schools, December 1964. Box 38. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.
559. "Education for Human Rights", p.2, Human Relation Review, Detroit Public Schools, December 1964. Box 38. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.
560. "Education for Human Rights", p.6, Human Relation Review, Detroit Public Schools, December 1964. Box 38. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.
561. "Education for Human Rights", p.6, Human Relation Review, Detroit Public Schools, December 1964. Box 38. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institute. Stanford University.
562. Arthur Johnson, oral history transcript. Michigan Historical Collections Detroit Riot Oral History Project. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
563. "Johnson To Assume New Post October 15," The Detroit Courier, October 15, 1966, front page, p.2.
564. Johnson, *Race and Remembrance*, 84.

recognized a shift to Black radicalism in educational debate in the city, which led him to consider how working within the system was increasingly at odds with activists in addition to recognition of the "…considerable distrust between the black community and school system"[565]. Johnson however remained an advocate of integration, enacting a politic of racial liberalism that pivoted on a conception of racial integration as a pathway to equality of educational opportunity.

Drachler's ascent to power and Johnson's historic appointment, coincided with the ongoing work of the High School Study Commission. Established in response to the claims advanced by the Norther High School activism, the High School Study Commission (HSSC), co-chaired by civil rights advocate and United States District Judge Damon J. Keith, sought to evaluate every aspect of the high school program. District high schools had not been reorganized since 1960 and were presently administered through the oversight of an assistant superintendent[566]. Study committees were established to evaluate each of the district's 22 high schools which in turn reported back to the Commission[567]. These school level committees included representatives from an array of concerned interested groups, and importantly included student members.

The Commission found school principals exacted dominating control over school practices. In addition, Commission meetings with Board of Education and central staff members revealed how the high school program was impacted by expansive disorganization and under-staffing that maintained segregative practices. Executive Deputy Superintendent Dr. Wolfe explained that principals were the main conduit by which the central staff would be apprised of high school level issues. Additionally, the teacher evaluation process in place granted discretion to principals. For this reason, principals were viewed as vital school actors and could also be gatekeepers against systemic change. Regional superintendents directly oversaw principals through bi-monthly meetings, but Dr. Wolfe acknowledged a lack of "key principals"[568].

In another convening of the Commission, the Board of Education and district Superintendent Norman Drachler covered topics that ranged from the existence of differentiated curriculum and the function of the Board[569]. In response to questions of curriculum differentiation, Board Vice-President Mrs. G. Canty answered that every effort was made to ensure that curriculum remained standard in impoverished areas and asserted that work was being done to upgrade schools in these areas to attract people back to the neighborhood. In this way BOE member Canty acknowledged a connection between quality of school and neighborhood dynamics. Drachler's responses to questions concerning his official role clarified that he shouldered much administrative responsibility, meeting daily with various principals, overseeing school level

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565. Johnson, *Race and Remembrance*, 85.
566. Sub-committee of the Detroit High School Study Commission Relationship Between Central Administration and Schools: Summary of Interview with Dr. C.J. Wolfe, Executive Deputy Superintendent, Detroit Public Schools, April 28, 1967. Box 68, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
567. Next Steps in the Study of the Detroit High Schools, by Frederick Bertolaet. Box 68, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
568. Sub-committee of the Detroit High School Study Commission Relationship Between Central Administration and Schools: Summary of Interview with Dr. C.J. Wolfe, Executive Deputy Superintendent, Detroit Public Schools, p.4, April 28, 1967. Box 68, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
569. Sub-committee of the Detroit High School Study Commission Relationship Between Central Administration and Schools: Summary of Interview with The Detroit Board of Education, April 18, 1967. Box 68, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.

staffing issues, and managing Board interactions with district staff. No formalized policy dictating the superintendent's duties existed[570].

Responding to the demands of the NHSM and the establishment of the HSSC, the Detroit Urban League (DUL) conducted their own comparative analysis of high school program differentiation releasing a report April 1967. Drawing on school data, the DUL examined achievement scores and staffing ratios among three Black inner core schools and three white fringe area schools. The DUL argued that comparatively lower achievement scores in Black core schools could not be understood irrespective of the broader school dynamics. The inner core schools were older in construction, except for Eastern High School which had been torn down and reconstructed elsewhere. Thus, the fringe area white schools were in generally better condition[571].

At the May 31, 1967 meeting of HSSC, June Shagaloff, Director of Educational Affairs for the National NAACP, appeared before the High School Study Commission. Director Shagaloff's presentation entailed an overview of national efforts to redress educational segregation. The presentation also took a candid and incisive position as Shagaloff stated:

> We have no expectation that in the big city school system, it's going to be possible to desegregate every segregated Negro school or to desegregate every segregated white school, but we are urging school officials to develop city-wide plans of schools desegregation, not isolated plans, or piece-meal plans, but city-wide comprehensive plans[572].

Importantly, Shagaloff drew attention to how standing district policy had contributed to segregation, decrying the use of open enrollment programs, a policy of practice akin to Southern Jim Crow practice stating,

> In the south, the same programs are called 'freedom of choice' because we don't believe this is an effective plan of school desegregation, either at the elementary school level, or at the secondary school level. At best, the open enrollment program gives individual parents an option to send their children to schools other than the segregated schools nearest their homes, but it shifts the responsibility for affirmative school desegregation planning from school officials and the school system, where we contend it belongs, to the individual parents…it does not change the pattern of segregation on a city-wide basis[573].

Further, Shagaloff challenged what had become normalized language in discussions of race in education. The district had adopted the language of cultural deprivation in relation to below-average achievement rates for Black students, which the Ad Hoc Citizens Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity had challenged in 1962[574]. The Detroit NAACP also challenged this

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570. Sub-committee of the Detroit High School Study Commission Relationship Between Central Administration and Schools: Summary of Interview with The Detroit Board of Education, April 18, 1967. Box 68, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
571. Comparison Study of Six Detroit High Schools Prepared by Education and Youth Incentives Department, April 1967, p.12. Box 42, Folder 3. Detroit Urban League Collection. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan,
572. Detroit High School Study Commission Meeting May 31, 1967, p.2. Box 1, Folder "Detroit High School Study Commission". Curtis Rodgers Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
573. Detroit High School Study Commission Meeting May 31, 1967, p.4. Box 1, Folder "Detroit High School Study Commission". Curtis Rodgers Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
574. See Chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of the Ad Hoc Committee's efforts.

position, arguing that resource segregation was the preeminent factor shaping differential achievement outcomes[575].

The role of teachers in this process remained tenuous along racial and class lines. Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) President Mary Ellen Riordan crafted a strategy that seemingly pitted teacher contracts against student experiences. Having won bargaining rights May 11, 1964, the DFT proved a formidable force in district matters. The teacher's union, in addition to the relative autonomy afforded principals to oversee their evaluations, supported the role of teachers as authoritative in schooling. The historical role of race in shaping teacher hiring practices which led to the relegation of Black teachers to inner core schools or fringe area segregated schools had been dismantled under Superintendent Brownell, however there was no evidence that the union would consider or take action based on the effects of this practice. At the national level, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) hosted a 1966 Conference on Racism in Washington D.C. which Detroit members. May 1967, under Riordan, the DFT hosted a similar conference that offered a glimpse into how internal battles were striving to change the tenor of the union. May 11-13, 1967, the DFT hosted a conference titled, "Racism in Education" at the University of Detroit campus[576]. The conference was attended by over 300 participants and featured panelist lectures by Pan-Africanist and historian John Henrike Clarke and CORE leader Floyd McKissick[577]. The conference also provided an exhibition hall filled with teaching and study materials to support the teaching of "Afro-American life and culture[578]. The conference legitimized both student and teacher demands for a responsive and culturally respectful education.

On July 23, 1967, Detroit erupted in what has been commonly termed, the Great Rebellion. Immediately following the 1967 rebellion the school district considered how best to support students caught in the wake of activity. A hastily produced review of student involvement in the rebellion surfaced revealing that in areas where students were enrolled in a district summer apprenticeship, the area was less affected by rebellion activity. Further, district Superintendent Norman Drachler led a review of its social work efforts, promising to increase services. Published September 1967, "A Report on Immediate Needs of Public Schools in Areas Affected by Civil Disturbances of July 1967" focused attention on deficient schools, highlighting school constellations serving those neighborhoods most impacted by the rebellion[579]. A series of recommendation were put forth by the report, inadvertently evidencing Shagaloff's May comments.

The report noted that schools in the rebellion area suffered from severe overcrowding, the district recommended the hiring of an additional 1,111 teachers to reduce class sizes to 30 students. The report also emphasized the interplay of economic oppression and school areas impacted by the rebellion,

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575. Detroit High School Study Commission Meeting May 31, 1967, p.4. Box 1, Folder "Detroit High School Study Commission". Curtis Rodgers Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
576. See DFT Negro History Conference, May 1967, Box 25, Folder 6. Mary Ellen Riordan Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
577. Ken Coleman, "How issues at a 1967 education conference foretold Detroit's historic civil uprising," *BLAC Magazine*, June 2017.
578. Exhibition Halls, DFT Negro History Conference, May 1967. Box 25, Folder 6. Mary Ellen Riordan Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
579. A report on immediate needs of public schools in areas affected by civil disturbances of July 1967, dated September 19, 1967, p.1. Box 81, Folder "Detroit Disturbance 1967". Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives. Stanford University.

> Of the 15,100 class situations with more than 30 pupils, 9,500 occurred in school attendance areas which, under criteria established by the federal Elementary and secondary Education Act of 1965, are characterized by poverty and its attendant educational handicaps. Included in these 9,500 class sessions, there 2,000 in schools in areas of the city where the tiny civil disorders in the summer of 1967 were greatest[580].

This would necessitate more classroom spaces to be secured through purchase of transportable classrooms, an effort notably at odds with the possibility of busing. The report reflects the ideas that schools, though not the perpetrator of the July 1967 eruption, did serve a role in educational deficiencies rampant in the areas of most rebellious activity. In addition to class size, textbooks proved a lacking vital resource with only one textbook per two students available in grades one through eight. Increasing community use and accessibility of school buildings as sites of recreational use and broader student/parent/community use, was also recommended.

Superintendent Drachler, convinced of the need for schools to aid in the post-rebellion efforts, flew to Washington D.C. to request federal money to support educational rebuilding in the city. Drachler was successful in his bid for federal money, and subsequently launched the Neighborhood Education Centers initiative. These Centers employed differential and experimental classroom strategies to provide additional support structures[581]. While these efforts are not to be discounted, they did not represent a total overhaul of systemic segregative patterns, which had fostered educational disenfranchisement for a century. Local school HSSC reports demonstrated how historical segregative actions taken by the Board and central staff had resulted in wide spread patterns of differential educational experience[582].

The October 1967 final report of the HSSC Mumford High School Subcommittee on Students revealed some of the tensions that erupted throughout the course of the HSSC, further demonstrating the inequitable nature of the high school program[583]. A student questionnaire was constructed based on small group student meetings, which were racially segregated. Student survey data found white students concentrated in college preparatory courses at 91%, while Black students reported 47% enrollment in the same college track courses. The report argued for the implementation of an intensive counseling program to support Black student enrollment in college courses. The report linked this data to curricular offering at the elementary and junior high level. Black feeder schools had lower rates of college prep course offerings when compared to white feeder schools[584].

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580. A report on immediate needs of public schools in areas affected by civil disturbances of July 1967, dated September 19, 1967, p.1. Box 81, Folder “Detroit Disturbance 1967”. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives. Stanford University.
581. Operating in the areas affected by the '67 rebellion, the centers were lauded for their ability to foster a progressive educational space for disenfranchised Detroit youth. See, Faith T. Murdoch. “A Commitment to Achievement: Detroit’s Neighborhood Educational Project,” *American Libraries* 1, no.8 (1970): 758-761.
582. The High School Curriculum of Detroit, an Evaluation by The Curriculum and Extra Curricular Activities Subcommittee of the High School Study Commission. Box 51, Folder 4. Mary Ellen Riordan Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
583. Mumford High School Study Committee, Final Report of the Subcommittee on Students, October 1967. Box 68. Detroit Urban League Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
584. Original oral history interviews suggest the racial politics of racialized tracking within the system as a common observation, Mary Luevanos, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2016; John Telford, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2016.

Mumford High, located in fringe area of the city, was experiencing demographic school and neighborhood change. Located in an area historic for its commitment to residential exclusion of Black people, the school was now almost evenly Black and white, what one could term as integrated. In this way, Mumford provides a portrait of an integrated school context. The Subcommittee report pointed to the disparities in educational programs for students along racial lines and noted that white students self-reported higher achievement scores than Black students. The report documented a slight increase in school achievement scores as students matriculated, which led the Subcommittee to note the importance of feeder school quality, stating "It appears that Mumford students produce close to their entry level". In "integrated" school settings, achievement scores were understood as relational to segregated feeder school patterns reflecting differential curricular practices. As principals operated in a rather autonomous fashion and were easily beholden to neighborhood dynamics, it was clear that at the high school level, the same racial and class dynamics shaping the social construction of the city were also influencing individual school programs. These broader dynamics acted in concert with school-level segregative practices that fostered Black student containment.

The impact of racialized policy discrimination on school policy and curricular practices created dual system of education. The final report of HSSC reflected many of the issues grassroots organization had long held as vital truths about the school system as whole. The Commission cited the failure of the centralized school system to meet the needs of all Detroit students, particularly students in the inner-city schools. Boldly, the Commission argued,

> Study committees examining Detroit's high schools that are virtually all black have been highly critical of the Detroit Board of Education for its failure to educate students in these areas. Lack of achievement in the elementary grades has been cited as a major indictment. It has been pointed that for many students, academic deterioration becomes progressively worse the longer a child remains in school[585]

The first recommendation centered on enforcing quality integrated education throughout the district. As articulated in the Mumford High Subcommittee on Students, in "integrated" schools, student courses enrollment was racialized. The Commission also recommended the district foster a climate conducive for standardized performance of all students across all levels. This recommendation acknowledged the curricular inequality among feeder schools that reflected racial and class divisions. The Commission also acknowledged differential needs of students from disparate social class backgrounds.

The Commission claimed that the centralized governance model of the district had allowed for local school actors to operate on a subjective level which could not ensure equality of educational opportunity. Financing the schools was a major focus of the Commission, a dilemma most apparent in that the majority of school millage campaigns in the past ten years had been voted down. The HSSC called for the creation of a Tri-County School Tax Authority through a specialized tax formula. The State Legislature had refused to acknowledge that financing the schools through property tax was no longer viable for the district. The Commission

585. Report of the High School Study Commission, June 1968, p. 5. Box 8. Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution. Stanford University

proposed a school financing formula that accounted for the impact of poverty on the city, families, and students amid a changing political economic landscape[586].

On September 3, 1968 Superintendent Drachler prepared to usher in a school year in a new Detroit address the district's 12,000 employees. Informed by the Kerner Commission's critique of the role of urban schools and the final report and recommendations of the 1966-1968 High School Study Commission, Drachler emphasized the belief that societal problems will not be solved exclusively through education, but remained certain that "most of these problems will not be resolved unless education is improved"[587]. A survey conducted by the Kerner Commission claimed that the "typical riot participant was a high school dropout"[588]. In a show of empathetic responsibility, Drachler called on district staff to recognize their failings stating,

> I am certain that most of the criticisms directed at the schools would decline - if we were able to raise the educational achievement level of the vast majority of our students…We simply cannot write off a generation of youth so essential to the well-being of our society. It is not merely the personal future of our students that is at stake - but our national future as well[589]
>
> Wherever a student attends school he and his parents must look to the school as a gateway of opportunity to higher education, employment and meaningful participation in our community[590]

Section Summary

Drawing attention to the racial contours of inferior high school curriculum, accounting for differences in class, race, and geography, offered a nuanced analysis of the racial and class racialized education policy discrimination. Students noted how inferior high school programs perpetuated a racialized social complex. Black students were tracked to enter the deadliest manufacturing jobs, prepared to perform the most dangerous roles. Northern High School student demands and actions challenged the very gains the district imagined had been made through racial liberal approaches to race relations.

The NHSM galvanized students, parents, and community members to challenge the district's conception of educational change, which had been largely advanced through its Citizens Advisory Committees. The efforts of corporate liberals and civic leaders to produce research-based policy reports to achieve equality of educational opportunity, had not disrupted the fundamental organizing logic of the district. The NHSM demonstrated the poverty of this

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586. The Detroit High School Study Commission Report, draft revised introductory statement, p.17. Box 68, Folder 5. Detroit Urban League Collections. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan.
587. Statement of Superintendent Norman Drachler to Employees of the Detroit Board of Education, p.1, Tuesday September 3, 1968, delivered at 1:30pm. Box 89. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
588. Statement of Superintendent Norman Drachler to Employees of the Detroit Board of Education, p.1, Tuesday September 3, 1968, delivered at 1:30pm. Box 89. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
589. Statement of Superintendent Norman Drachler to Employees of the Detroit Board of Education, p.2, Tuesday September 3, 1968, delivered at 1:30pm. Box 89. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
590. Statement of Superintendent Norman Drachler to Employees of the Detroit Board of Education, p.4, Tuesday September 3, 1968, delivered at 1:30pm. Box 89. Norman Drachler Papers. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

approach while grounding emergent analysis in the radical potential of the Black Power Movement. Grounding their analysis and action in both their local experiences and freedom struggle, Northern High School students offered a conception of educational radicalism effectively linking the plight of Detroit Black students to the destruction of an oppressive social order.

Challenging liberal conceptions of schooling as conduits of social mobility and democracy, the NHSM asserted a conception of education as violent and oppressive. These students pointed to the reality that Black students existed in a continuum of inferior education, entering a segregated high school as graduates of inferior and segregated elementary schools and communities. The High School Student Commission supported the central claims of inferior quality of educational programs across racial and class lines, noting that recommendations made in the 1962 Citizens Advisory Committee on Equality of Education Opportunity report continued to be insufficiently implemented[591]. District inquiries into the school areas most physically impacted by the '67 rebellion revealed the need for an overhaul of services provided to students and the community. However, the NHSM walkout, boycott, and Freedom School signaled a change in dynamic between Detroit's Black community and white electorate power to exert complete control over schools.

2. Rise of radical left movement in educational protest

Detroit activists and social theorists James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs foresaw the developing role of Northern urban social struggle as a decisive site in movement struggle in their essay, "The City is the Black Man's Land"[592]. Arguing that cities would become decisive sites in Black freedom struggle, the Boggs' noted that Black school-aged children were now the majority in Detroit schools. However, the dominant electorate remained white. This created a context in which Black students were effectively controlled by a white electorate. The function of hegemonic control of education was understood as a central front of urban freedom struggle. From 1967 to 1970 radical social movements brought renewed attention to the role of schools in the maintenance of an oppressive social order.

In Detroit, multiple social formations of teachers, parents, and students had historically engaged in open criticism of school segregation. Reverend Albert Cleage continued to minister at the Shrine of the Black Madonna, developing the Black Teachers Workshop, alongside veteran activists Grace Lee Boggs and James Boggs. Of the radical left organizations operative in Detroit, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW) was among the most engaged in serious and sustained efforts to transform the Detroit Public Schools. Founded in 1968 and lasting until June 1971, the League served as an umbrella organization for Revolutionary Unions Movements (RUMs) operating in different plants across Detroit and nearby cities[593].

The relationship between the UAW and Black workers had always been tenuous, mitigated by wartime labor needs that produced a fragile relationship[594]. This relationship was never

591. See Chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of this report.
592. James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs, "The City is the Black Man's Land," in *Pages from a Black Radical's Notebook: A James Boggs Reader*, ed. Stephen Ward, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press), 162-170. This piece was originally published in *The Monthly Review* 17, no 11, (1966): 35-46.
593. James A. Geshwender, *Class, Race & Worker Insurgency: The League of Revolutionary Black Workers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012).
594. Herb Boyd, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination* (New York: Amistad, 2017), 177.

absolutely accepted, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers manifested a radical rejection of the UAW position. The League was run by a seven-member Executive Board comprised of Detroit Black working class revolutionaries and intellectuals. The first RUM developed at the Dodge Main plant in Hamtramck[595], an outcome of Black workers' grievances. The Dodge RUM became known simply as DRUM and served as a forceful organizing base that encouraged similar organizations across metro-Detroit manufacturing plants[596]. Dodge Main worker General Baker became actively involved with student and intellectual radicals who had founded a post-rebellion newspaper, the *Inner City Voice* (ICV). The ICV was established fall 1967 and utilized as a tool to build a broad awareness of the concrete conditions confronting Black Detroit, the organization simultaneously advanced a global analysis of power.

Reflecting the broader vision of ICV founders, the newspaper connected local and national issues to global conditions. Analysis of U.S. imperialism abroad and Third World revolutionary struggle were often featured themes in the newspaper. Mike Hamlin, a co-founder of the ICV began to write articles based on the experiences of Black workers[597]. The newspaper served as a method of communicating the plight of oppressed people in the city, emphasizing the racial contours of economic oppression. The *Inner City Voice* advanced an analysis of the symbiotic relation between the plight of colonized people in the Third World, and oppressed Black workers. General Baker recruited Black workers to visit ICV headquarters where Hamlin would conduct dialogue-based interviews of the workers. In this way, Hamlin directly transmitted to the broader Black community an overview of the conditions faced by Black workers, which heightened the social analysis of workers and the public.

The LRBW was founded in relation and response to the oppression and exploitation of Black workers[598]. The guiding principle of its work was the belief that Black workers occupied a strategic position in society, the position where American wealth was produced,

> We the super-exploited Black workers recognized the historic role that we must play and the grave responsibility that is ours in the struggle for the liberation of Black people in racist U.S.A. and people of color around the world from the yoke of oppression that holds all of us in the chains of slavery to this country's racist exploitative system[599]

The League perspective held that it was at the point of production where the greatest potential for bringing about full-scale revolution existed. While the League operated along two predominant theoretical contexts, revolutionary nationalism and Marxism Leninism, civil society structures including housing, healthcare, and education were recognized as fronts of social struggle. The League offered a synthesis of how race and class as mutually constitutive systems

595. An autonomous municipality surrounded by the city of Detroit.

596. Peter Gessner, Stewart Bird, Rene Lichtman in Association with the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, "Finally Got The News" (Third Reel Films, 1971).

597. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016. William Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2018. For a discussion of the role of Southern racial economic violence in shaping Black migration to the urban North and subsequent Black labor radicalization see, Mike Hamlin*, A Black Revolutionary's Life in Labor: Black Worker's in Detroit* (Detroit: Against the Tide Books, 2013).

598. It should be noted that the League as an organization tool was demanded into formation by female identified members in the League who saw a need to bring together in an organized fashion all the many different arms of activity operating in relation to the RUMs.

599. League of Revolutionary Black Workers Constitution, Box 4, Folder 8, Dan Georgakas Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

operated in tandem to produce specific forms of violence and exploitation. Three major social processes contributed to the development of the League: the emergence of a radical Black consciousness in the long civil rights, the historical process enabling perpetual anti-Black racial and economic oppression, and anticolonial struggle/dissemination of Third World Marxism. The League saw a historical relationship between the dimensions of forced physical exploitation of enslavement and the confinement of Black labor in the 1960s to a dual-wage system and segregation within industry to the most menial and dangerous jobs,

> The League of Revolutionary Black Workers represents the highest form of struggle which the conscious insurgent movement of Black labor has reached, being guided by revolutionary principles and striving to unite all Black workers, we will certainly be victorious[600].

League members were involved in radicalism outside of formal League activity including participation in more traditionally established groups representing an array of social issues[601]. Additionally, a core arm of League activities was its commitment to youth development. The Black Student United Front (BSUF), an umbrella organization representing students in several junior high schools and senior high schools, formed an integral arm of the League structure. The Black Student United Front represented a network of school based Black student organizations. At its height, the BSUF was active in 22 of the district's high schools. From 1968-1971, the BSUF organized and/or supported seven student led strikes and developed two Freedom Schools alongside these protests efforts[602].

Students were a regular presence at the LRBW offices, participating in solidarity support activities. Students could be entrusted to leaflet and picket plants, which helped protect workers from being fired. BSUF members organized and implemented protest critique and actions at the local level, contributing to a systemic analysis of Detroit school conditions. Another aspect of the relationship between the LRBW and BSUF entailed the analysis of the correspondence between schools and jobs. For Black students, racialized labor discrimination marked their futures just as they determined the present conditions of Black factory workers. A core demand from varied BSUF protests championed the call for college preparatory courses alongside demands for responsive Black history. Participation in student strikes and boycotts was also fundamentally about transforming futures. Black students recognized that the dual school system in which they existed led to a dual wage society, their efforts sought to disrupt this cycle.

During the period of 1968-1971, critique of the conditions and quality of education in majority Black inner-city schools was joined by student radicalism from high schools on the city's border with suburbs. The confrontations in mixed schools were critical in the overall BSUF analysis. March 1968 Black students at Mumford High School, a school that had been exclusively white, challenged an impending new school policy strictly determining locker assignments. Upon hearing of the plan Black students organized a sit-in strike but the school Principal Bertrand Sandweiss, intervened in the plan calling a school wide assembly. Sandweiss then lectured the students on how "…nice Mumford used to be", seemingly referring to its

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600. *Inner City Voice*: Official Organ of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Vol. 2, No. 8. October 1970, front page. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

601. Hicks, "The League of Revolutionary Black Workers and Detroit's Black Student United Front".

602. Hicks, "The League of Revolutionary Black Workers and Detroit's Black Student United Front", 31. Freedom schools were held at Northern High School (1970) and Cooley High School (1969) with additional student strikes taking place at Western High School (1970), Highland Park (1971) and Mumford High School (1970).

heyday as an exclusively white school. In the wake of the assembly, students self-organized and issued demands,

1) Do something about the overcrowded lunch room.
2) More black administrators.
3) More emphasis on college prep programs rather than Booker T. Washington bull shit about working with four hands.
4) Establish better communication channels between students and the faculty.[603]

Organizing on a city-wide basis required the development of a formalized communication structure. Drawing on the success of the *Inner City Voic*e, the Black Student United Front utilized the *Black Student Voice* (BSV) as its official communication organ. The BSV was printed in the same facilities as the ICV and the DRUM newsletters[604]. The Black Student Voice operated as a city-wide tool to support the development and connection between school level Black student organizations. BSUF emphasized its commitment was to "…a) enlighten and educate our fellow students to the deteriorating conditions of their schools b) to provide a broad organizing base c) aid to provide concrete activity for the unorganized student movement"[605]. Each high school BUSF affiliate printed their own version of the Black Student Voice, writing articles capturing the specific grievances experienced at the school and advertising local/city-wide student organizing meetings. The first edition of the BSV published September 1968 was entitled, "White Bullshit", asserting that "…Black students, the sleeping giant, had awakened, and began their historical mission, the destruction of racism in education and the construction of a relevant quality education[606].

The *Black Student Voice* also featured articles mirroring those running in the Inner City Voice and the DRUM leaflets. These articles demonstrated the relationality between Black worker radicalism and Black student activism as constitutive to broader freedom struggle. Additionally, the Black Student Voice emphasized two key aspects of the BSUF ideological orientation: emphasis on the revolutionary role of collective student radicalism and an internationalist orientation toward Black freedom struggle. The first aspect was developed throughout issues of the Black Student Voice and articulated through a popularized BSUF recruitment slogan,

> Our heroes are not Huey P. Newton's nor are they Stokely Carmichael, Our heroes are you! The masses of Black students involved in struggle[607]

The underlying analysis of the slogan reflected the ideological orientation of the League, which had posited Black workers as the vanguard of the movement in defiance of similar claims issued by other Black Power Movement organizations of the moment. The League's assertion of Black

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603. "Mumford Students Defy Bogart", p.2. *Inner City Voice: Detroit's Black Community Newspaper*. Vol. 1, No. 6. March 1968. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
604. Darryl Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, August 2017.
605. "Formation of the Black Student Voice", *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February – March 1971, p. 3. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
606. "Formation of the Black Student Voice", *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February – March 1971, p. 3. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
607. Advertisement in *Black Student Voic*e 2, no. 10. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

workers as the vanguard of the movement was informed by its general Marxist-Leninist outlook and emphasis on organizing segregated Black workers. However, behind this statement was an implicit commitment to fostering the revolutionary potential of "ordinary" people, a commitment that embraced a broader segment of society. An additional slogan, credited to League co-founder General Gordon Baker, furthered emphasized this orientation,

> Dare to Fight! Dare to Win! Fight, Fail, Fight Again – Fight on to Victory!! Long Live Black People in this Racist Land! Death to Their Enemies!!! Long Live the Heroic Black Students Struggle!![608]

The second key aspect of the BSUF perspective concerned adoption of an anticolonial internationalist perspective. In a newsletter article directed toward discouraging Black students from joining Osborn High School's ROTC Training Corp, BSUF activists wrote,

> Can Black youth go along with the suppression and killing of courageous freedom fighting peoples throughout the world (i.e. the non-white Vietnamese and Laotians, struggling in Asia, the Black Revolutionary forces of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Rhodesia in Africa, the Liberation minded people of Brazil, Peru, Uruguay, Mexico, and Paraguay in Latin America) under the logic of stopping the so-called threat of 'communism'…Our fight for freedom and justice ae within the shores of this United States of American, not in some far off foreign country[609].

BSV consistently sought to express this internationalist perspective that emphasized solidarity with anticolonial movements around the world. Alongside student leaders active at the local high school level, the BUSF also had a nexus of city-wide youth actors who benefited from direct political educational offered by the League. Under the direction of League co-founder Mike Hamlin, students participated in political education classes. Hamlin served as one of the core advisers to the BSUF[610].

From 1969 to March 1970 a series of student actions provided an opportunity for the BSUF to demonstrate its outlook on social struggle. In addition to these classes, political education courses taken alongside LRBW members, the BSV newsletters document the array of source material deemed relevant to the student struggle. Analysis of these actions offers a portrait of the ideological orientation of the BSUF and deepens our understanding of how students experienced inferior education and the alternative educational visions they developed based on these experiences[611].

As noted by the High School Study Commission, there existed much variation of curricular programs throughout the district. Black students had identified the experience of a dual high school program: one track for white students and one for Black students. Northern High School's 1966 walkout had articulated how students experienced this dual system. Within white majority schools with larger Black student populations, student experience of this dual system was

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608. "Down with Tomism," *Black Student Voice* 2, no. 3. p.1. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
609. "American is the Black Man's Battle Ground", Osborn High Black Student Voice, Vol. 1, No.1. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
610. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016. See also Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 76
611. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016.

reflective in racial composition skilled trades apprenticeship programs, vocational education programs, and honors/college preparatory courses. Bill Kellerman a white student at Cooley High in 1967, recalls how his honors courses often only had one or two Black students enrolled. As captain of the basketball team, Bill interacted with Black students not in class but through participation in team sports[612].

As African Americans secured housing farther away from the Lower East Side's confinement of delipidated housing options, white residents migrated further away forming a ring of white neighborhoods on the city's borders. Northeast/Northwest Detroit, like other regions farther away from the inner city, remained a predominantly white region. Empowered through the racialized policies of the Federal Housing Authority and contemporary real estate practices of 'block busting', white residents formed organizations known as "neighborhood improvement associations" in order to wield influence over residents/real estate brokers who might sell their properties to racial ethnic minorities[613]. Cooley High School came to reflect the tenuous forces at play in the surrounding neighborhood. Racial demographic change at the school was manifested in the interplay of anti-Black sentiment and militant Black student activism.

In 1967, Cooley High School remained predominantly white, but just one year later demographic changes in the surrounding community reshaped school dynamics. By 1968 the Cooley basketball team was now predominantly comprised of Black students,[614] with a new head coach who was also African American, yet other aspects of student activities remained racialized. October 1968 militant Black students at Cooley alleged a pattern of racism in student-teacher interactions. Out of the 3,035 enrolled students at Cooley, at least 850 were African American students. As a minority population, Black students alleged their mistreatment at the hands of white teachers and administrators[615]. Friday October 25, 1968, after a meeting with deputy superintendent of community relations, Arthur Johnson, at least 125 Cooley students, marched down to the Schools Center building[616]. When they arrived at the district headquarters, Superintendent Norman Drachler, along with Arthur Johnson and other top administrators met with the students. Upon hearing of the students' allegation that centered in racial bias as a standard aspect of white controlled student activities and student-teacher relations, Drachler pledged his support to the students. One year later, militant student activism, responsive to broader forms of freedom struggle would effectively shut down Cooley High School.

Friday October 19, 1968 militant Black students organized solidarity school protests, including Cooley High School, in response to the sentencing of Fred Ahmed Evans. Evans was sentenced to the death penalty, after a shoot-out in Cleveland Ohio resulted in the deaths of several policemen. Black students alleged that Detroit police beat students with nightclubs during the Friday solidarity protests. Monday October 22, 1968, interracial student fighting shut down the school[617]. Cooley Principal Wayne K. Nester kept the school closed on Tuesday

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612. Bill Wylie-Kellerman, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.

613. For a fuller discussion on the role neighborhood improvement associations in perpetuating racial housing segregation. Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

614. Bill Wylie-Kellerman, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.

615. Tom DeLisle, "125 Stage a Cooley Bias March," *Detroit Free Press*, Saturday October 26, 1968, p.1, 2A

616. Tom DeLisle, "125 Stage a Cooley Bias March," *Detroit Free Press*, Saturday October 26, 1968, p.1, 2A

617. Susan Holmes and Don Lenhausen, "New Violence Closes Cooley High School," *Detroit Free Press*, Tuesday September 23, 1969, p.8B.

October 23, meeting with teachers to decide next steps. The 3,900 students enrolled at Cooley were now almost evenly distributed along racial lines.

For many observers, Cooley was reflective of the central tensions of the city, as stated by Lewis Schulman, the school's principal[618].Mainstream views posited racial change at the school as a preeminent factor shaping school conflict. The Board of Education had made changes to the school's attendant boundaries, which brought an influx of Black students into what was regarded as a predominantly white middle-class student body. The existing Black student population shared in the same middle-class background as the white students, but boundary changes brought in students from lower class backgrounds. However, the broadening analysis of Cooley High student activists could not be overlooked as shaping the contours of student consciousness of their experience in and beyond schooling[619].

Monday September 22 and Tuesday September 23, 1969, students at Northwest Detroit schools Mumford High, Cooley High and Post Junior High, staged school boycotts, pickets, and marches in defiance of lingering racialized policy discrimination[620]. Core aspects of the school operated along racial lines, with little done by school administrators to address the structure of every day educational experience[621]. Regional superintendent Jessie Kennedy explained that police presence at the school was interpreted as a "symbol of force that only angered black students further"[622]. Only 30 to 40 students showed out of 3,100 enrolled student returned to Cooley Wednesday September 24 after four days of school closure[623]. Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh placed the onus of student protest on outside influences including militant Black activists referring to these actors as "…pied pipers of separation…"[624]. Notwithstanding these assertions of reductive militant analysis and action, the BSUF galvanized the Black student community in solidarity campaign designed to deepen and broaden analysis.

As exhibited in the *Black Student Voice* newsletters, the BSUF emphasized solidarity actions and regularly reported on freedom struggle beyond schooling, in the plants and globally in the Third World. A solidarity walkout in protest of recent police violence on Thursday December 18, 1969 exhibited against the Black Panther Party, in Atlanta and Chicago, involved roughly half of the 400 students enrolled was also staged by BSUF members at Post Junior High School[625]. In another show of solidarity organizing, the LRBW partnered with the BSUF, and the West Central Organization to provide direct support to the family of Clifford Howell who was killed

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618. William Grant, "Cooley Struggles to Make Integration Work," *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday March 6, 1969, quoted on p.3A, article continues on p. 11A.
619. William Grant, "Cooley Struggles to Make Integration Work," *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday March 6, 1969, quoted on p.3A, article continues on p. 11A.
620. William Schmidt and Don Lenhausen, "Violence Disrupts Schools for 3d Day," *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 24, 1969, p. 1A, p. 2A.
621. "School is Split Along Color Lines: Inside the Story of Strife at Cooley," *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday October 5, 1969, p. 2B.
622. William Schmidt and Don Lenhausen, "Violence Disrupts Schools for 3d Day," *Detroit Free Press*, Wednesday September 24, 1969, quoted on p. 2A.
623. William Schmidt and John Giffith, "Schools Stay Peaceful as Cooley Opens," *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday September 25, 1969, p.1, p.4A.
624. William Schmidt and John Giffith, "Schools Stay Peaceful as Cooley Opens," *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday September 25, 1969, quoted on p.1.
625. "Students Protest for Panthers," *Detroit Free Press*, Friday December 19, 1969, p.35.

by the Detroit Police[626]. LRBW co-founder Mike Hamlin believed there was more to the story of the shooting than officially reported by the police department which alleged Howell was participating in a home robbery and tried to flee when police arrived. The organizations helped to raise funds for the Howell family and provide moral support to the family. Understanding the relationship between the revolutionary role of Black student struggle to a broader militant vision of solidarity movement was central to the BSUF program.

At the school level, BSUF involvement was widespread and consistently sought to question the validity of core structures/practice of the American education system. A 1969 campaign was launched to rename Northwestern High School to Malcolm X Senior High School and McMichael Junior High School to Malcolm X Junior High School[627]. As student activists began to incur harassment from school officials, students organized to protect their peers from repressive policies enacted by the district which included ordinances regarding the distribution of materials no less than 300 feet from school grounds. March 1969 students and parents organized a list of demands presented to the Board of Education calling for community control of schools[628]. Twenty-five demands were represented to the Board by student representatives from Northern and Northwestern High Schools, along with a representative from McMichael Junior High School but no Board action was taken[629]. Like the struggle to decolonize the American higher education system being waged by Black and Third World college students, Black students in Detroit challenged underlying cultural norms and political ideas that's overdetermined their educational futures. As student organizations developed their analyses, the ideological content of schooling came to occupy a central front of struggle.

Fall 1969, students at Northern High School waged two protests and established another Freedom School as an alternative to "white man's education"[630]. At Northern High School students continued to combat inferior quality of education and lackluster responses from the Board and school administrators to their demands that student-community oversight of the school program be increased. A list of demands produced through the Northern Black Freedom School emphasized the relationship between student revolutionaries and the masses of Black student, a vital connection to be cultivated[631]. In this way, the BSUF purposefully supported the local components of activists while developing city-wide approaches to student-community educational radicalism. Rather than simply treat school specific issues as distinctive, the BSUF analyzed school level grievances as part of a broader practice of educational oppression. As district data reflected an increasingly inner core of predominantly Black schools surrounded by a fringe of white schools, the BSUF articulated the conditions in this inner core, provided a mechanism to articulate the experiences students incurred, and created a platform to challenge the colonizing effects of segregated education[632].

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626. Chris Singer, "Helping in Their Thing," *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday December 25, 1969, p.3A

627. "Formation of the Black Student Voice," *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February – March 1971, p. 3. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

628. Proceedings of the Board of Education, Detroit, 1968-1969, March 25, 1969," p. 546, 558-560. Detroit Board of Education/Detroit Public Schools Collection, Papers 1860-1980. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. See also, "Formation of the Black Student Voice", *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, February – March 1971, p. 3. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

629. *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 2, No. 10. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

630. *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 2, No. 10. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

631. *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 2, No. 10. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

632. See also, Muñoz, *Youth, Power, Identity: The Chicano Movement*.

League co-founder John Watson approached the notion of educational struggle akin to his general view on the Black worker struggle. Watson emphasized to student activists that regarding the community control of schools, the goal remained the same, seize power[633]. The League's success in recruiting members and galvanizing community support was partially the result of their active involvement in out of plant organizing. This was generally reflective of the fact that League membership included radical intellectuals and professionals. Watson himself completed a stint at Wayne State University, a bastion of militant student radicalism in the 1960s[634].

During his 1968 tenure, Watson seized control of the university's student newspaper, *The South End*. As the editor of *The South End*, Watson added two black panthers to the masthead logo[635] and on occasion added a tagline, "One Class-Conscious Worker is Worth More Than 100 Students"[636]. The use of *The South End* enabled broader dissemination of the League perspective and challenged the reproductive function of the University. A campus confrontation involving Watson let to vilification of his role as editor by campus officials. Watson retired from his post as editor and transitioned to the directorship of a highly regarded community agency, the West Central Organization (WCO). The West Central Organization had built its reputation through housing justice struggles in the city. Watson assumed leadership of the WCO while continuing his broader work in the League. As the student struggle continued to gain traction, increasing its city-wide presence, the League continued to wage the revolutionary worker struggle and expanded its city-wide presence. Momentum and timing led to the evolution of a fruitful coalition directed toward the educational struggle. In 1969, the Detroit Board of Education was forced by state legislation to put forth plans for decentralization, a tactic some Black radical actors believed would more practically yield Black community control of schools. As the Board announced it would consider plans for how best to establish the boundaries of a decentralization plan, Watson mobilized the West Central Organization to support the development of what became known as Parents and Students for Community Control (PASCC).

Section Summary

In the wake of the 1967 rebellion, militant Black labor activists espoused a radical analysis of American society. This analysis centered the plight of the Black worker as central to understanding the racial and class contexts of oppression in U.S. society. The LRBW posited that Black workers as a subjugated, racially segmented class of society, occupied a strategic position in American capitalist relations. Black workers as the vanguard of a revolutionary movement, held the potential to subvert and overthrow the broader oppressive system. Interstitial to this LRBW analysis was the understanding that state sanctioned institutions were complicit in the perpetuation of the plight of the Black worker, and thus, were fronts of social struggle.

The LRBW linked their analysis of U.S. society to a global analysis of power and capital, notably focusing on the ongoing (neo) colonization of Third World nations. The influence of

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633. Gregory Hicks, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.

634. Boyd, *Black Detroit*, 190.

635. Cover page, *The South End* 26, no.1, Thursday September 26, 1968. Wayne State University South End Newspapers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

636. Cover page, *The South End* 27, no.60, Thursday January 21, 1969. Wayne State University South End Newspapers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

anticolonial struggle and thought informed the development of a counterhegemonic consciousness that emphasized the transformation of the structural and ideological contexts of oppression. Schools, as state-sanctioned institutions, were identified as central sites in the perpetuation of psychological oppression of Black youth. This psychological oppression had produced, according to LRBW members, internalization of Black inferiority among the Black community. As a student activist in the BSUF, Gregory Hicks recalls how the LRBW and the Black youth contingent saw their struggles as coterminous. This perspective advanced an analysis of the role of schools in the maintenance of racial and class oppression in U.S. society.

Informed by Marxism and revolutionary nationalism, LRBW members emphasized the role of civil society institutions in maintaining an oppressive society. Working to support the maturation of Black student radicalism, the LRBW offered students organizing mentorship and political education, the latter grounded in Marxist theory and readings in anticolonial social theory and praxis. The imagined revolutionary role of Black students challenged the school district's containment of Black students within patterns of inferior education, as well as the disenfranchisement of the Black community in education policy setting. Encouraging a more expansive conception of educational praxis, the efforts of the LRBW and BUSF reimagined the role of Black students, Black parents, and the broader Black community as experts in educational decision-making practices. Schools as sites of state power, and capitalist reproduction, emerged as central sites of militant Black radicalism.

James and Grace Lee Boggs noted that in the late 1960s as activists rejected integrationist approaches to movement struggle, no longer would piecemeal inclusion satiate. "But the war is not only *in* America's cities; it is *for* these cities"[637], surmised James and Grace Lee Boggs. Rejection of a liberal democratic conception of social life and capitalist enterprise were expressions of the shift from Civil Rights to Black Power, which would require beyond plant organizing. Founding core member of the Black Student Front, Gregory Hicks had been expelled from various schools before linking with other students in the creation of a city-wide Black student organization. Through his involvement in UNICOM, a community organization in Northwest Detroit, Hicks came under the mentorship of General Gordon Baker, Mike Hamlin and John Watson, founding members of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. In considering the role of educational struggle, Watson's advice to Gregory Hicks was simple. Watson told Hicks to "seize power"[638]. In the next section I describe the social context in which the PASSC developed as a challenge to the structural and ideological contexts of educational segregation.

3. Community control of schools: Collective self-determination as strategy

The 1950s and 1960s, ushered in a wave of citizen participation in shaping district policy. "Detroit appears to be the least insulated of all the large city school systems, participation by non-professionals has greater acceptance and in some respects has been encouraged from within the school system", Gittell and Hollander explain[639]. But greater participation by 'non-professionals' did not insure equitable participation of historically disenfranchised voices in educational decision making processes. Non-hegemonic grassroots educational perspectives

637. James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs, "The City is the Black Man's Land," 173.
638. Gregory Hicks, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.
639. Marilyn Gittell and T. Edward Hollander, *Six Urban School Districts: A Comparative Study of Institutional Response* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968), 143.

remained maligned in the educational landscape. The movement for community of control of schools evolved in relation to this local contradiction, which was understood as a manifestation of a broader societal dilemma. In this section I examine the assertion radical educational consciousness in the context of the development of the Detroit movement for community control of schools. I further consider the ideological tenets underlying the community control movement alongside the Black worker struggle in Detroit.

Sidney Berkowitz, a veteran educator and district administrator defines the Detroit community control effort as "...a movement of basically black people forming into organizations that may or may not have formal ties but which have as their common goal the transference of the power to control their schools to the local community"[640]. Historian Russel Rickford notes, "Grassroots opposition to underdevelopment of African-American schools and communities signaled a broader crusade to liberate both the black urban 'colony' and African-American consciousness itself" [641]. In the Detroit context, the community control movement was brought to fruition through the work of grassroots educational struggle. In response to hegemonic control over the Detroit schools, grassroots militants appealed to political actors strategically positioned within the state's architecture of power to produce legislation at the state level that would force the district to engage in a deliberate process of system reorganization. This was imagined as a strategy through which grassroots actors could offer an alternative conception of educational practice in the city. Coleman A. Young, a rising state representative in the Michigan House of Representatives, had honed his political analysis through his own experienced growing up in Detroit and participation as an activist with ties to various radical organizations[642]. In 1969, Coleman A. Young advanced legislation in the Michigan Legislature, designed to force the desegregation issue in Detroit.

Coleman A. Young crafted legislation to 'decentralize' the schools authority in the Detroit district. Through Public Act 244, decentralization was envisioned as a strategy to force the citizenry, as well as school and civic leaders of Detroit, to address the concentrated accumulation of school governance power along racial and class lines. This decentralization legislation called for the creation of new feeder school patterns and the establishment of regional boards of education, a school governance design imagined to be more responsive to the unique needs and desires of local regions. As this process unfolded in Detroit, 'community control of schools' had nationally become reflective of an applied Black Power precept in educational struggle[643]. In Detroit, community control was imagined as a method to disrupt a de facto system of racialized educational policy discrimination which could also ebb the flow of oppressed Black students into subjugated positions within the urban economy. Decentralization was seized as an opportunity to advance community control as strategy in Detroit.

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[640]. Sidney J. Berkowitz, "An Analysis of the Relationship Between the Detroit Community Control of Schools Movement and the 1971 Decentralization of the Detroit Schools" (Ph.D. diss., Wayne State University, 1973), 1.
[641]. Russell Rickford, "Community Control and Struggle for Black Education in the 1960s," in *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 24.
642. For a fuller discussion on Coleman Young's social activism and ascent to political office see, Coleman Young and Lonnie Wheeler, *Hard Stuff: The Autobiography of Mayor Coleman Young* (New York: Viking Press, 1994).
643. Daniel H. Perlstein, *Justice, Justice: School Politics and the Eclipse of Liberalism* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2004).

In response to the decentralization legislation, a coalition of parents and students formed an alliance known as Parents and Students for Community Control (PASCC)[644]. The PASCC "…came to see itself as the beginning of a permanent citywide network of communications and action. Hundreds of rallies and meetings took place, and PASCC representatives made regular appearances on radio, on television, and in schools"[645]. The newly formed PASCC adopted an ideological orientation akin to that espoused by the LRBW and BSUF, influenced by both revolutionary nationalism and Marxism[646]. The PASCC argued,

> Although we understand the true nature of the Decentralization Bill, Public Act No. 244, which gives No real power, we must struggle to capture that control[647]

PASCC directed an arm of struggle against the Board of Education controlled by white liberals. The Board of Education was chaired by Abe Zwerdling who had close ties to the UAW[648]. As Zwerdling worked to craft a Board approach to the decentralization mandate, the PASCC developed its own decentralization plan. The task before the BOE and the PASCC required the Board to create 7 to 11 regional contiguous school districts with with a range of 25,000-50,000 students in each regional district[649]. Each new regional district would have their own regional Board of Education which would act as a conduit of school issues and concerns to the overarching Central Board of Education. Theoretically, Regional Boards would be able to reflect the immediate concerns of the local school community. For the educationally disenfranchised Detroit Black community, decentralized district power was imagined as a method to apply the community control precept.

To accomplish this task, John Watson and State Senator Coleman Young requested the support of the Detroit Geographic Expedition and Institute (DGEI). The DGEI began with a group of geography academic researchers, led by Wayne State University geography professor, Dr. William Bunge. Bunge wanted to conduct research in the city and perhaps on a secondary basis, lend his skills to social struggle. One of the critical factors shaping the work of the DGEI was found in its initial efforts to recruit Detroit Black youth to participate in the Expedition. One of these students became central to how the Institute reorganized its work and internal philosophy. Gwendolyn Warren, a Mackenzie High School student, was an active member of a youth organization known as "The Infernos". The Infernos represented the interests of students who were being pushed out/in the process of dropping out of school. At Mackenzie, Warren helped to organize a boycott against the practice of busing students to white suburban schools for half-day "integrated" schedules where Black students were relegated to vocational courses, did not attend classes with white students, and were provided second-hand materials[650]. Warren dropped out of school, with an understanding that the only outcome of a segregated education was at best, a factory job. As a 16-year-old watching the deterioration of her neighborhood and

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644. According to BSUF member Gregory Hicks, the PASCC was also referred to as the BPASCC, Black Parents and Students for Community Control, depending on who you were speaking with. Gregory Hicks, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.
645. Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 76.
646. Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 76.
647. "PASCC: Black Students Unite," Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
648. Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 77.
649. State of Michigan. Senate Bill No. 635. Approved by Governor Milliken August 11, 1969.
650. Gwendolyn Warren and Cindi Katz in Conversation, The Center for the Humanities
The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2012, https://vimeo.com/111159306.

looking at a factory worker fate, Warren chose to leave school. Warren continued to organize with other local youth when they were approached by professor Bunge[651]. Subsequently, she was recruited into the DGEI where she quickly challenged the underlying imperialist logics academic researchers employed in their work[652]. Under the direction of Warren and other youth, the DGEI developed an accountability-based collaboration[653]. As part of the research undertaken by the DGEI in the period of 1968-1972, Gwendolyn Warren served as the Institute Director, leading other youth and community members in systematic survey and analysis of Detroit conditions.

John Watson requested the help of the DGEI to conduct residential analysis to inform the construction of a decentralization plan that would foster Black community control. DGEI members conducting geographical research prioritizing community participation and concerns, including racial and class composition in land use practices[654]. A core facet of this work was the insistence by Detroit Black youth on "memory as infrastructure"[655]. In this way, Expedition researchers disrupted positivist approaches to conducting social science research[656]. Working under state mandate to develop a decentralization plan, the Board of Education held a series of public forums to gauge community perspective[657]. These public hearings reflected the racial politics underlying the decentralization issue. At a hearing held Tuesday October 28, 1969 more than two-thirds of the 1,000 in attendance walked out after a Black college student was barred from addressing the forum. One forum participant decried the refusal seizing a microphone and stating, "If black people won't be heard, black people won't listen"[658].

In contrast to the general tenor of these hearings, the WCO backed decentralization conference was imagined as a mechanism to listen to community members' grievances, funnel specifics of the decentralization legislation back to the grassroots, and develop a community-based strategy to educational community control[659]. The DGEI presented a tentative decentralization plan at the WCO sponsored People's Decentralization Conference held December 27-31, 1969[660]. The conference, held on the campus of the University of Detroit, was attended by some 300 student and community members representing at least 70 organizations.

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651. Gwendolyn Warren and Cindi Katz in Conversation, The Center for the Humanities The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2012, https://vimeo.com/111159306..
652. See also, Rich Heyman, "'Who's Going to Man the Factories and be the Sexual Slaves if we all get PhDs?" Democratizing Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and the Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute," *Antipode* 39, no. 1, (2007): 99-120. The DEGI remains considered one of the more important applications of geographical theory.
653. Gwendolyn Warren and Cindi Katz in Conversation, The Center for the Humanities The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2012, https://vimeo.com/111159306. See also, Gwendolyn Warren, "About the Work in Detroit, Remarks to the Conference on the Geography of the Future", Bayfield, Ontario, October 18, 1970.
654. Cindi Katz, "Refusing Mastery: The Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute as Minor Theory". Accessed on June 1, 2017 from, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WVOF3Ym6B8
655. Cindi Katz, "Refusing Mastery: The Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute as Minor Theory". Accessed on June 1, 2017 from, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WVOF3Ym6B8.
656. Geographer Cindi Katz has written critical about the DGEI as still operating with racist, sexist, imperialist undertones.
657. "William Grant, "School Board's Attitude Alienates Many Parents," *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday November 2, 1969, p.12A.
658. "William Grant, "School Board's Attitude Alienates Many Parents," *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday November 2, 1969, quoted on p.12A.
659. "School Redistricting Conference Set", *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 24, 1969, p.17.
660. "People's Conference". Cooley High School *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 5, 1970, p.1.

Many of the organizations attending the conference were Black-led entities, including the local NAACP branch and W.E.B. Du Bois Club[661], and a few were white or had integrated memberships[662]. Allied groups included Americans for Democratic Action and factions within the Archdiocese of Detroit[663]. Participants gathered to discuss pertinent topics as school geographic boundaries, student problems, and curriculum inadequacies. Participants began the conference attending lecture workshops on the "History of Blacks in the Educational System", and "Why Community Control"[664]. In the coming days participants would hear from a variety of allied partners including Detroit school employee and DFT executive board member Zeline Richard[665]. A central component of the five-day conference were resolutions passed clarifying participants' stance on key issues.

On the final day, participants ratified several resolutions alongside city-wide Black student demands. These demands included a demand of removal of all police/guards from schools, amnesty for student activists, institutionalization of Black Studies, and community control of Black schools[666]. Emerging from the WCO backed Decentralization Conference, the PASCC adopted a DGEI plan that became known as The Black Plan which sought to put Black youth under control of people who cared about them[667]. The Plan would ensure Black control in six out of eight newly formed regions[668].

The Black Plan would serve to disrupt hegemonic control over education, which had come to include the interests of the white liberal controlled UAW. In this way, the Black Plan served to further the objectives of the LRBW, while explicitly functioning as an educational strategy. The plan would meet the state's demand for seven new regions, five of the proposed regions would be comprised by constellations of schools with at least 50 percent Black student enrollment[669]. The proposed plan would leave two regions under white control. The Plan emphasized the need to directly challenge the historical practice of white electorate control over Black education and rejected the racial liberalism ideology that had enabled this historical practice.

The radical contours of the Black Plan laid in its analysis of the function of schools in a capitalist society[670]. As a result, the Plan produced a pathway to circumvent the reproductive nature of American education. This effort unmasked the symbiotic relationship between educational oppression and racial capitalism. For the LRBW, the Black Plan further advanced its analysis of the Black worker struggle as a societal struggle that required transformation of all

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661. "School Redistricting Conference Set," *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 24, 1969, p.17.
662. Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying,* 76.
663. "School Redistricting Conference Set," *Detroit Free Press*, Monday November 24, 1969, p.17.
664. "People's Conference," Cooley High School, *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 5, 1970, p.2. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
665. Richard sat on a panel on the third day alongside Ken Cockrel and others; she was active in the Black Caucus of the DFT, critic of DFT President Riordan, and organized beyond the union. See her oral history.
666. "People's Conference," Cooley High School *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 5, 1970, p.2. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
667. "The Black Plan", p.13, *Inner City Voice*, Vol. 2, No. 8, October 1970. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
668. "Parents and Students for Community Control, progress Report, June – December 1970". Box 4, Folder 20. Dan Georgakas Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
669. Michael Maidenberg, "Blacks Seek Bigger Voice With School-Region Plan," *Detroit Free Press*, Sunday December 28, 1969, p.3, p. 13A.
670. The Plan was rooted in an overarching analysis of racial capitalism as a system of domination. For a fuller discussion of racial capitalism see, Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

state sanctioned institutions. As the school district represented a base of power and legitimacy for UAW leadership, the Black Plan buttressed the LRBW claim of hegemonic reach of racial capitalism. Sociologist Geschwender surmised, "The UAW already had a major voice in the existing Detroit school board, which it did not wish to have weakened by power shifting to local community groups that were heavily influenced by the League"[671]. Parents and Students for Community Control further articulated its stance,

> PASCC's position on the purposed (*sic*) integration region is that they serve no other purposes than to have a white racist control on Black inner city schools. We say this because first, very few changes in actual school boundaries have been proposed. The Black inner city will still have predominantly Black schools, all white areas will have all white schools. The only areas that will have integrated regions are the areas where black's and white's live together, same school they are now attending. The Black inner city schools will still be predominantly Black, all white areas will have all white schools. The only areas that will have integrated schools are the areas where Blacks and whites live together[672]

The PASSC argued that the plans submitted by the Board of Education reflected the maintenance of white control over all school regions, even those areas that were residentially integrated. Moreover, the PASCC desired something more than control over the newly crafted education regions,

> Third, even if magic could 'integrate' all Black and white students into the same school, unless Black voters had the power to direct the education being taught to their children the 'integrationist' plan would harm to (*sic*) many innocent Black children[673].

The PASCC outlook represented a different and divergent conception of the educational issue. While the NAACP sought to challenge the BOE busing plans on grounds that homogenous Black schools created a damaged psyche – the thesis underlying the *Brown v Board of Education* ruling – the PASSC argued against this logic. Instead of backing the busing of Black inner-city students to white schools, the PASCC raised the question of, "Why not fight for quality education for Black schools in the inner city?"[674]. In this way community control was viewed as a method to challenge the idea that quality education could only be achieved through integration. BSUF members assessed Black support for busing as a practice of resignation to a hegemonic oppressive relationship. Explaining how community control could also transform the state of the parental despair and hopeless the BSUF explained,

> Our parents have been exposed to the struggle long, long years before us. Most of them were from down south, and knew directly the horrors of the white reign of terror. They have

671. Geshwender, *Class, Race & Worker Insurgency*, 149.
672. "PASCC Outline on Integrationist Plan," Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
673. "PASCC Outline on Integrationist Plan," Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
674. "PASCC Outline on Integrationist Plan," Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

> known the beating, murders and lynchings of many a black man and woman. Therefore, they know how it is to be black and oppressed[675].

Suggesting a relationship between parental support for busing and the internalization of oppressive objective conditions, the BSUF emphasized the utility of community control as a strategy to combat the paralysis of internalized oppression within the broader community.

The final PASCC plan, "A Report to the Parents of Detroit on School Decentralization", was published May 1970[676]. The DGEI worked to devise "…every possible legal regional combination of [the] Detroit high school district…" which were then "…ranked according to sympathetic authority to the children from most to least, the measure of sympathy used was "…the total number of black children under white authority"[677]. The intended goal was to devise a plan that maximized Black community control, a goal imagined to provide Black students with a politically and culturally relevant education. The PASCC plan was opposed by an alliance of the Board of Education and UAW leadership[678]. The April 7 plan adopted by the Board of Education was a slightly modified version of the Board's proposed Plan B-2 which would not alter political control. The DGEI argued, "Integration under such conditions is harmful to the children. The master and slave were geographically and physically integrated, but the master ruled"[679].

Section Summary

Parent and Students for Community Control developed education policy analysis, with the support of the DEGI, which emphasized the interrelationship between school governance, student achievement, and freedom in social, political, and economic terms. This analysis framed educational achievement in terms superseding standardized test assessments. Noting the impact of teacher attitudes, curriculum content, and white control over education policy, the PASCC positioned educational attainment within an analysis of racialized school governance structures[680]. The PASCC evidenced this critique based in everyday racialized experiences of Black students in the system.

Moreover, the LRBW-BSUF-PASCC alliance situated educational critique within a broader analysis of racial capitalism. The socio-historical processes underlying the urgency of the Black Plan, illuminated by city-wide spatialized racism had perpetuated decades of policies designed to contain Black students within particular school feeder patterns. BSUF members challenged this hegemonic social process that perpetuated a matriculation of students from inferior schools to inferior jobs. PASCC rejection of integration as strategy was informed by

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675. "Black Youth the World is Yours, Take It", p. 3. Black Student Voice, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 7. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files. This analysis was drawn from resolutions drafted and passed by participants at the 1969 decentralization conference organized by the WCO.
676. See the full plan, Detroit Geographic Expedition and Institute. Fieldnotes 2: Decentralization, 1970, from https://radicalantipode.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/dgei_fieldnotes-ii.pdf
677. Detroit Geographic Expedition and Institute. Fieldnotes 2: Decentralization, May 1970, p.1. Accessed from https://radicalantipode.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/dgei_fieldnotes-ii.pdf
678. Geshwender, *Class, Race & Worker Insurgency*, 150.
679. Geshwender, *Class, Race & Worker Insurgency*, 10.
680. For a discussion on the requirement of liberation curriculum as a requirement of education that supports liberation see, Barbara A. Sizemore, "Education for Liberation," *The School Review* 81, no. 3 (1973): 393-398.

educational experiences and social analysis. The Detroit Public Schools perpetuated and legitimized the imposition of an inferior and oppressive education.

This case against integration emphasized the ability of white power structures and representatives to make Black students complicit in their own alienation. Fanon explains, “The status of 'native' is a nervous condition introduced and maintained by the settler among the colonized people with their consent”[681]. The BSUF consistently focused on the function of ideological content transmitted through school curricula as a mechanism of psychological colonization. The alliances formed to advance community control of schools provided a method to disrupt these practices by seizing power over Black educational practice. The PASCC recognized that shedding this ‘nervous’ consciousness was as a pre-condition for broader freedom struggle.

Community control as educational strategy sought to transfer power from the dominant white power structure to the Black community. This strategy asserted the right of students as architects of their own education, grounded in political analysis of their objective conditions. Further, community control emphasized the rights of Black parents as central actors in educational decision-making. Community control radically challenged the district’s decades-long policies of Black community disenfranchisement in policy setting. The PASCC backed the Black Plan as an effort to bring as many Black students as possible under “sympathetic” control. Community control of schools was an articulation of the will to create the conditions necessary to bring to fruition collective self-determination and to mitigate the effects of ideological violence transmitted in dominant educational practice.

The interactive systems of settler colonization and chattel slavery pivot on a conception of race as a demarcation of humanity. Community control served to circumvent this idea, “...that some men (whites) are more equal or more capable of self-government (citizenship) than others (colored)”[682]. Emphasis on parental and student involvement in educational planning, subverted these controlling ideas in the educational landscape, radically challenging the culture of deprivation thesis advanced in administrative approaches to equality of educational opportunity. Further, insistence on collective self-determination was imagined as a strategy wherein the colonized could shed their ‘nervous’ condition, rejecting the ideals/desires/aspirations of the colonists[683].

4. Neocolonial formations, educational enclosure, and the constitutional case against metropolitan desegregation

4.1 Racial politics of school decentralization

The BOE’s adoption of the April 7, 1970 decentralization plan was met with multiple forms of dissent and increased racialized violence. The April 7 Plan called for the reorganization of feeder patterns for twelve high schools[684]. The Plan was marketed as an effort to “…solve the

681. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 20.
682. James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs, “The City is the Black Man’s Land,” 170.
683. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*.
684. The Boundary Plan for School Decentralization in Detroit, A summary of action by the Board of Education at its meeting on April 7, 1970. Box 7, Folder 24. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University

dilemma of racially isolated, segregated education…"[685]. Superintendent Drachler asserted that at core, the decentralization plan was an effort to foster an interdependent relationship between quality of education and racially heterogeneous classrooms[686]. This intention did not deter white parents advancing claims that the plan was a mechanism of forced integration and a violation of their right to neighborhoods schools. Weary of any plan that did not include transference of power, Black radical educational actors emphasized the demand of a politically and culturally relevant education linked to broader freedom struggle. From 1970-1974, Detroit educational debate and violence occurred in a broader social context in which population and capital flight led to the development of a racialized regional political geography

White parents based their opposition to the April 7 Plan in a claim to their right to neighborhood schools, and as the debate developed more fully, a contention that proximity to Black people would be an imminent threat to their children's safety. Historically, "White Detroiters voiced their opposition to [their perception of] the school board's actions in a variety of ways, including voting down mileage proposals to raise more money for the schools as the black population in the city increased"[687]. In the wake of the April 7 Plan, White parents of Arthur School students, a feeder school for majority-white Denby High School, opposed the plan that would send white Arthur students to Kettering High School, a majority Black student school[688]. White exclusive schools remained largely concentrated in Northeast and Northwest Detroit neighborhoods and were actively involved in anti-integration efforts[689]. The April 7 Plan called for the redesign of high school feeder patterns that challenged white homogeneity in these neighborhoods.

Refusal to engage the PASCC backed decentralization, the BOE's adoption of the April 7 Plan demonstrates the power of the colonial social system to be responsive to crises of control and legitimacy. Slated to coincide with the start of the 1970-1971 school year, the Osborn High School BSUF evaluated the plan in light of the distinctive formation of their Northeast neighborhood, a corner of the city that was predominantly white. Osborn High School student activists considered the plan "…a sham integration program of Detroit's Black youth…"[690]. White parents and community residents of Osborn organized violent opposition against all efforts at desegregation. On Tuesday April 7, 1970 white students and white residents violently greeted Black students in defiance of the Board's integration plan. Simultaneously, Black students created a parallel picket line outside of the school protesting the integration plan, which they argued had disrupted their ability to attend a school near them.

Both whites and Black educational advocates dissented to the April 7 Plan, though each group pivoted on differential conceptions of education. Looking ahead to the August 4, 1970

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685. Statement of A.L Zwerdling, President of the Detroit Board of Education, April 7, 1970. Box 7, Folder 24. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University

686. Statement in Behalf of Proposed Plan, Norman Drachler, Superintendent of Schools, April 7, 1970. Box 7, Folder 24. Detroit Public Schools Community Relations Division, Series I. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University

687. Heidi L. Maityou, "Mothers Battle Busing and Nontraditional Education in 1970s Detroit," ed. Eileen H, Tamara, T*he History of Discrimination in U.S. Education: Marginality, Agency, and Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 198.

688. Roberta Mackey, "Pressure by Parents Nearly Empties School" *Detroit Free Press*, Tuesday April 7, 1970, p. 3.

689. Maityou, "Mothers Battle Busing and Nontraditional Education in 1970s Detroit," 193-220.

690. "Racists on the Wild", Osborn High School, *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 2. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

primary election, white electoral power responded by launching a recall petition to oust the four BOE members who had voted in favor of the April 7 Plan. While white electoral power threatened to marginalize the decentralization issue, radical student activists observed an increase administrative surveillance of their efforts to transform the school engineered more severe repressive actions. During this era, the district also expanded its use of school security personnel. However, not all student appeals to the Board of Education were engaged uniformly. The vilification of student activists can be gleaned from the differential reactions to student protest efforts.

In the climatic era of decentralization, students at Western High School had learned that several Detroit high schools would be receiving structural upgrades and curriculum improvements, but Western was not on that list. Situated in the Southwest region of the city, an an industrial corridor near the commercial bridge to Canada, Western High School demographics were reflective of the varying racial ethnic and white ethnic groups that had moved through the area. The only high school with a concentration of Latinx students[691], the school was 49.8% white, 39.2% Black, and 14% Latinx[692]. In 1968 a group of Latinx DPS teachers, parents, and allied partners formed Committee of Concerned Spanish Speaking Americans (CCSSA)[693]. Core organizational leader Ignacio Gonzalez served as a history teacher at Western High School, having grown up in Southwest Detroit and attended Western in the 1940s. Alongside school counselor Isabel Salas, Gonzalez formed CCSSA as a method to emphasize the issues facing Latinx/Spanish speaking students in the district[694]. By 1970, CCSSA focused on building interracial solidarity ties to bolster the Latinx educational cause, including heralding the issue of hiring more Latinx teachers in the district, working toward the institutionalization of bilingual education, and district recognition of Latinx students as a distinctive racial group.

In the tumultuous educative climate of the decentralization moment, Western students formed an organization to advance student concerns. Andre Hunt, star athlete and senior class President led this charge, receiving critical encouragement from history teacher Ignacio Gonzalez. Gonzalez encouraged Hunt, who he met as his student, to raise the issue of the distribution of school rehabilitation funds and substandard curriculum. Generally, Western students felt their school merited BOE action precisely because unlike other schools, Western had experienced no major racial disturbances[695].

March 1970, a multiracial coalition of Western High School students presented a list of demands to the monthly Board of Education meeting that happened to be hosted Western[696]. The students requested a formal answer to their demands no later than May 1. While the demands

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691. For a discussion of the proletarianization of Latinx in Detroit see, Zaragosa Vargas, P*roletarians of the North: A History of Mexican Industrial Workers in Detroit and the Midwest, 1917-1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
692. Board of Education. Regular Meeting May 12, 1970. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
693. Oral History Interview with Ignacio González. January 7, 2017.
694. Oral History Interview with Ignacio González. January 7, 2017. See also, Jose Cuello, "The Struggle to Full Institutionalize Latino Studies: The Detroit Latino Community, Academic Activists, and Wayne State University, 1971-1980" (Paper presented at Conference on Constructing Latina/Latino Studies: Location and Dislocation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 1998).
695. Western student letters sent to Remus Robinson. Box 2, Folder 14. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
696. Contents of the proceedings include the Western hearing, Board of Education. Regular Meeting, March 24, 1970. Box 12, Folder 21, Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

were led by a core group of students, organizing through the creative use of free periods and thanks to the use of the school auditorium made possible by the school's audio-visual technician, Robert Midgett[697]. Eventually, more than nine groups eventually joined in backing the charges made before the BOE[698]. Feeling that the district had ignored their demands[699], on May 5, 1970, students held a sit in at the school. The BOE agreed to hear from the students at the May 12 regular meeting. On a rainy May 12, 1970, Western students staged a mass walkout and protest march to the Schools Center Building, where the BOE convened.

James Wright, a freshman at Western and participant in the walkout, recalls the feeling of euphoria surrounding the march in the rain[700]. Wright remembers standing amongst hundreds of other students, rain soaked, in the lobby of the district headquarters some six miles from Western High School. The BOE agreed to see only the core student leaders and a contingent of adult allies, including Ignacio Gonzalez. BOE President Zwerdling began by praising the conduct of Western students stating, "At a time when some people seem to forget the meaning of the Bill of Rights and right to petition for a redress of grievances and right of freedom of assembly. I am very appreciative of the fact that the students at Western High School have reminded us of how this is used in a constructive manner"[701].

Students focused on the issues they felt were inhibiting equality of educational opportunity at Western. Student movement leader Andre Hunt emphasized, "We say that at Western High School the students deserve and demand the best education possible. We say that the students at Western High School need this education because basically they are the students who go out in the World of Work with no skills. They are the people who get laid off when auto sales do gown. They are the people who get laid off in factories"[702]. Andre Hunt's sentiments emphasized consciousness of the symbiotic relationship between schooling and the reproduction of social precarity, as the students at Northern High School had championed in their 1966 protest. Other student speakers emphasized their frustrations that such 'good conduct' had little bearing on their ability to get the BOE to take action on their demands. Western student Luciano Maldonado affirmed before the BOE, "We have played the game your way so far. They say it doesn't matter if you win or not, it is how you play it. Well, we have played it your way. We have abided by the rules and your wants, but now it is time for you to give us a sign that you also have faith in us by working through the system"[703].

Perhaps Western student William Brown surmised the limits of 'good conduct' as a pathway to achieving their demands. Addressing the Board, Brown declared, "We have received a lot of compliments from you, I will grant you that. The news people have said you have done a good job. Our administration, our faculty is saying it is beautiful the way you have been doing things.

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697. Robert Midgett, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, January 2017.
698. Senior Class 1970, Student Council, Western Student Union, Black Studies Association, Latin American Social Organization, LA SED, CCSSA, Southwestern Area NAACP and Western High Parents Club.
699. Getz, A. "Zwerdling ignored Western requests" *Detroit News* May 17, 1970. Box 3, Folder 27. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
700. James Wright, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.
701. Board of Education Regular Meeting, May 12, 1970, p. 625. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
702. Board of Education. Regular Meeting May 12, 1970, p. 629. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
703. Board of Education. Regular Meeting May 12, 1970, p. 626. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

Yet, I seriously wonder have we done the right thing in trying to work through the system"[704]. The Western student leaders shared their remarks capturing the spirit of the moment, but also suggesting their dismay that perhaps more militant action should be the next recourse for action[705]. The BOE did not rule on the demands at the May 12 meeting, but inquired into the estimated costs and the matter was moved to a special meeting on May 23. Later it was decided it would be ruled upon at the May 26 regular meeting[706]. On May 26, 1970, the BOE awarded Western nearly $3 million in funding drawn from a federal grant and bond issued money to improve its physical plant and conduct an architectural feasibility study of the school needs[707].

The belief that the BOE would be responsive to student demands was short lived. Though the Western High School student movement appeared a moment of district responsiveness, just two months later, white electoral power was successful at the polls, with all four members of the BOE who voted in favor of the April 7 Plan voted out at the August 4 primary. Further, in response to white parental unrest, the Michigan Legislature implemented a new decentralization law, Public Act 48, which barred the Detroit Public Schools from implementing changes to attendant school boundaries and feeder school patterns but retained the decentralization of school governance oversight mandate.

August 1970, in response to Governor Milliken's signing of Public Act 48 into state law[708], the Detroit NAACP sued the Detroit Public Schools District and the State of Michigan on behalf of parents alleging a pattern of segregative school practices. The plaintiffs claimed this pattern was a result of official policies of the district, which operated as a subsidiary of the State of Michigan. In this way, should the state be found culpable, any remedy would have to be metropolitan in scope. Plaintiffs argued that the State of Michigan bore responsibility for historical/systemic segregative patterns in its delegation of power and authority to the Detroit BOE to legislate school policy. Plaintiffs argued that the state's nullification of the April 7 Plan demonstrated the state as the ultimate arbiter of educational conditions in Detroit.

Students returned to school fall 1970, students returned to classes in the aftermath of Public Act 48, passed at the end of the State Legislature's summer session[709]. The Black Student United Front explained this condition of educational oppression in their newsletter:

> The Black Student United Front was created as a result of the ever worsening conditions in the schools in an effort to build a black student movement to end the misery and suffering that we endure during the years that we spend inside racist schools. We are aware that the

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704. Board of Education. Regular Meeting May 12, 1970, p. 631. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
705. Board of Education. Regular Meeting May 12, 1970, p. 625. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
706. Board of Education Special Meeting, May 23, 1970. Box 2, Folder 67. Remus Robinson Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
707. Carla Burgess, "Board to Grant Millions in Improvement", *The Round Up* [Western High School Newspaper], front page, Volume 78, Number 13, Wednesday December 23, 1970. Courtesy of Ignacio Gonzalez. See also, "Committee forms to help plan school", *The Round Up* [Western High School Newspaper], front page, Volume 17, Number 16, Monday June 8, 1970. Courtesy of Ignacio Gonzalez.
708. Informational Bulletin Public Act 22 Amended August 1970, Office of School Decentralization, Box 44, Folder 20. Mary Ellen Riordan Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.
709. Opening Remarks of Superintendent Norman Drachler to Employees of the Detroit Board of Education Tuesday September 8, 1970, Detroit Schools Vol 31. Box 44, Folder 20, Mary Ellen Riordan Papers. Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

> real issue that black people have to address themselves to is not integration, but racism. The racism that brought about a situation of inequality in the schools in the inner-city where we live with the schools located in the fringe areas of the city where whites live[710].

The first fall 1970 edition of the *Black Student Voice* was directed toward providing local school units guidance to move forward in the context of the desegregation/decentralization debates[711]. The BSUF reasoned that white violence against busing obscured the reality of the conditions Black students confronted daily. In addition to a dilapidated school infrastructure, the presence of the Detroit Police Department "…forever harassing, brutalizing, victimizing and arresting our brothers and sisters…"[712] was stressed. Further, the executive board of the BSUF outlined key facets of the oppressive nature of schooling. Adding to the repressive aspects of segregated schools, the ideological function of schooling occupied a center of critical student analysis:

> The Detroit Public School System perpetuates indoctrination within everyone of its inferior schools. We are taught to remain ignorant and passive when the time has arrived for constructive change. It is this very process of indoctrination that keeps our mouths shut and feet planted to the ground when we see white teachers mis-use and mis-educate black students, and the same process of indoctrination that keeps our ears closed and our eyes shut, when we see an act of police brutality against our fellow black students[713]

The BSUF argued that school-based ideological indoctrination rendered the Black community docile and resistant to challenging oppressive conditions. Based in broader radical analysis of political economy, the BSUF contextualized Black support for integration as an outcome of indoctrination. The BSUF steadfastly argued white dominated institutions could not be entrusted with the education of Black students. There were no assurances that white controlled integrated schools would yield different educational experiences. In this way, the BSUF rejected integration and busing as mechanisms that could achieve equality of educational opportunity.

4.2 Neocolonial formations and education enclosure of the Detroit Public Schools

In the aftermath of the state's passage of Public Act 48, the district remained mandated to decentralize its governance model. The NAACP continued to advance its case in the courts. For radical educational advocates, the state's position was viewed as repressive and NAACP court was viewed as a reactionary measure. A convergence of factors impacted the underlying organizational network that had bolstered the actions and analyses of radical education activism. Given the successes of the LRBW, the ensuing global realignment of capital and power - a development that threatened the material base of the Black worker struggle in Detroit - and

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710. "Black Youth the World is Yours, Take It", p.1. Black Student Voice, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 7. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
711. In Dimond's legal analysis, he claims that he did not know why other Black actors in Detroit did not weigh in on the NAACP case. However, the ongoing work captured in archival documents of the BSUF and LRBW suggest that other issues were more identified as more predominant.
712. "Black Youth the World is Yours, Take It", p.1. Black Student Voice, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 7. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.
713. "Black Youth the World is Yours, Take It", p. 2. *Black Student Voice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 7. Courtesy of Darryl Mitchell and General Baker Personal Files.

ideological/practical differences among leadership led to the dissolution of the League[714]. These developments, coupled with the impact of the suburbanization of racialized capitalist accumulation structures, and the continuing domination of Detroit's white electorate on educational issues, produced an educational enclosure in Detroit.

The decline of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers as an organizational front yielded variegated theoretical tendencies that promoted differential, though allied, political struggles in the city. In part, the successes and contradictions of the League, determined the relative need to expand practical activities of the movement actors[715], while the global realignment of power and capital led to the disintegration of the material base of the LRBW's movement orientation[716].

In Detroit, the enclosure of the Detroit Public Schools was shaped by a confluence of political economic and social factors[717]. While the implications of radical Black labor activism continued to inform movement building in the city, broader shifts in the global political economy alongside regional shifts along race and class lines projected the local racialized political economic structure to a regional level. Metropolitan Detroit, a regional formation inclusive of the city of Detroit and the surrounding municipalities/suburbs, formed along racial and class-based cleavages. These new surrounding municipalities reflected the same pattern of spatialized racism that had constituted the development of the architecture of Detroit. This effectively produced a regional political landscape wherein demands for a transference of power to Black communities could be mitigated by a now regional political structure that boasted strong representation at the state level.

The ensuing NAACP case alleging a state-sanctioned pattern of district segregationist policies illuminates how the racial and class politics in the Detroit Public Schools reflected these broader dynamics. The road to the case which became known as *Milliken v Bradley I*[718] was shaped by long standing racially segregated policies[719]. Paul Dimond assisted the NAACP chief legal counselor Nathaniel Jones throughout the three and half years of court battle, that was then appealed to the United States Supreme Court. Dimond contends that initially, DPS Superintendent Norman Drachler sought to support the case, agreeing that the district was racially segregated[720]. However, in a meeting between plaintiffs' lawyers and district representatives including their chief legal counsel, George Bushnell[721], the district retracted their

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714. The stress associated with the physical rigor required of movement struggle participants, also played an exacting role, according to Hamlin.

715. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016. See also, Ernie Allen, "Dying From the Inside: The Decline of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," *They Should Have Served That Cup of Coffee: Seven Radicals Remember the 60s* ed. Dick Cluster (Boston: South End Press,1999). See also, Georgakas and Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, 131-173.

716. For discussion of these shifts, see Andrew Barlow, *Between Fear and Hope: Globalization and Race in the United States* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003), and Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America: An Analytic History*.

717. See, Clyde Woods, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta* (London and New York: Verso, 1998). Damien Sojoyner, *First Strike: Educational Enclosures in Black Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

718. Hereafter, *Milliken I.*

719. Paul, R. Dimond, *Beyond Busing: Reflections on Urban Segregation, the Courts, and Equal Opportunity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2005). See also, Muhammad Khalifa, Tyrone M. Douglas, Terah Venzant Chambers, "White Gazes of Black Detroit: Milliken v. Bradley I, Postcolonial Theory, and Persistent Inequalities," *Teachers College Record* 118, (2016): 1-34.

720. Dimond, *Beyond Busing*, 29.

721. Bushnell formerly was a member of the Detroit NAACP Board of Directors, he later resigned from this role as the case advanced in the courts.

support. Dimond explains that in this meeting it became increasingly explicit that in addition to suing the state, the district would also be named as a defendant. Bushnell disagreed with this strategy and the district withdrew its support. Additionally, noted is that the teachers' union did not extend support, they stood opposed to the use of racialized teacher hiring practices as redress to alleged grievances[722]. Liberals in the central administration that could have thrown their support behind the plaintiffs, a move that would have been reflective of their espoused racial liberal ideals, withheld their influence.

Public Act 48 mandated the Detroit Central Board of Education develop guidelines that would extend authority over specific issues to both the Central and Regional Boards. The boundaries of the regions would be legally mandated by a newly established and gubernatorial appointed Detroit Boundary Commission[723]. Within this new structure, the majority of educational power remained within the purview of the Central Board including the "...power to limit or extend the power of the Region Boards"[724]. Educational matters over which Regional Boards could advance some autonomy were still subjected to final approval by the Central Board. These political structures ensured that the racialized dynamics asserted through electoral power could continue to control education writ-large in the city, contrasting with the basic underlying premise of the community control of schools movement[725].

The Detroit Boundary Commission crafted eight regions, 4 majority white, 4 majority Black. In this configuration, 40 percent of the district's Black students were under white electoral control, while the political economy of the city was beholden to racialized regional political structure. The PASCC ran 18 candidates in the 1972 election of the Region Board[726], however, these candidates were unsuccessful[727]. The racial configuration of these Boards demonstrates the political repression of Detroit's Black community[728]. Only two Regions elected a majority of Black representatives, and two other Regions reflected the realities of how white electoral power function as a determinative force in Black education. In these two other Regions, white majorities were elected to the Regional Boards, despite the public school enrollment in these areas being predominantly Black. Berkowitz notes, "Three Region boards were all white, and one Board had a single black member. Of the total of forty elected Region Board members, only twelve, or 30 percent, were black"[729]. After the 1972 election, white domination of the Central Board of Education was more complete than before decentralization.

While the decentralization elections and internal tensions between the Central and Region Boards ensued, the NAACP case moved its way through the courts. The plaintiffs initially asked for and were denied an injunction against Public Act 48[730]. Eventually, the district court found in favor of the plaintiffs and further decreed that a metropolitan desegregation plan be submitted for review. Deciding the case, Judge Stephen Roth concluded that the State of Michigan was indeed culpable in fostering racial segregation through enabled through official policies of the district operating in tandem with city-wide segregative housing practices. The district's position alleged

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722. Dimond, *Beyond Busing*, 30.
723. Berkowitz, "An Analysis of the Relationship," 138.
724. Berkowitz, 140.
725. Berkowitz, 142-146.
726. Berkowitz, 150- 151.
727. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016.
728. Berkowitz, "An Analysis of the Relationship," 150-151.
729. Berkowitz, 150.
730. Mark A. Gooden and Terrance L. Green, "A Sad Journey Down History: A Conversation With Judge Nathaniel Jones About Litigating Milliken v. Bradley I (1974), 40 Years Later," *Teachers College Record* 118, (2016): 5-6.

that adjustments in school attendant boundaries reflected population shifts they had no control over. Judge Roth's ruling finally dismantled this claim of district neutrality in the setting of attendance boundaries and overturned the restrictions on integration enabled by Public Act 48. Judge Roth ruled that even though Black people were more recently settling in new areas in the city, changing the patterns of school enrollment that did not excuse the district's historical segregative practices. Considering that 133,000 Black students were presently concentrated in 133 core Black schools surrounded by a suburban ring of predominantly white schools, Judge Roth mandated a metropolitan remedy. The ruling and remedy were subsequently appealed before a full panel in the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the panel affirmed the lower court ruling.

The ruling was then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court which agreed to hear the case narrowly focusing on the constitutionality of a federal court to impose a metropolitan desegregation order beyond a district found in constitutional violation. Suburban district mounted their own cases against the previous metropolitan desegregation order[731]. The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments February 27, 1974 wherein assistant counsel Harold Flannery and NAACP chief legal Counsel Nathaniel Jones argued for the plaintiffs[732]. The plaintiffs argued that the State of Michigan acting through the Detroit district had implemented and perpetuated "…segregative practices affecting a limited number of school children within the Detroit district"[733], and "There were a variety of governmental private and quasi-governmental practices which caused housing segregation and school segregation to be mutually supportive, mutually interlocking devices…"[734]. These practices led to what Flannery described as a core of Black majority schools and a corresponding ring of white majority schools encircling the core Black schools.

Citing testimony of school officials, plaintiffs argued that the 1959 attendance boundaries were intentionally created to enclose Black families. The practice of attendance boundaries conforming to housing segregation, when lines could have been reasonably drawn to mitigate school segregation, evidences the central allegation of intentional segregation in the district. Further cited was the case of Higginbotham Elementary School, built in the 8 Mile/Wyoming neighborhood, as a response to white parental objection to integration[735]. Deposition testimony from school officials supported analysis that attendance boundaries surrounding Higginbotham had built and maintained "…a school and its attendant zones to contain black students, [and] at times black students were transported to relieve overcrowding, passed white schools with space to other black schools"[736].

On July 25, 1974 the Court rendered its ruling against the plaintiffs in a 5-4 decision[737]. In his dissenting opinion Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall explained the implications of the decision,

> After 20 years of small, often difficult steps toward that great end, the Court today takes a giant step backwards. Notwithstanding a record showing widespread and pervasive racial

731. David Riddle, "Race and Reaction in Warren, Michigan, 1971-1974: 'Bradley v. Milliken' and the Cross-District Busing Controversy," *Michigan Historical Review* 26, no. 2 (2000): 1-49.
732. For an account of Jones' perspective on litigating the case, see also, Nathaniel Jones, *Answering the Call: An Autobiography of the Modern Struggle to End Racial Discrimination in America* (New York: The New Press, 2016).
733. Oral arguments, February 27, 1974, Milliken v Bradley I, 418 U.S. 717 (Supreme Court 1974).
734. Oral arguments, February 27, 1974, Milliken v Bradley I, 418 U.S. 717 (Supreme Court 1974).
735. See Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion of the founding of Higginbotham Elementary School.
736. Oral arguments, February 27, 1974, Milliken v Bradley I, 418 U.S. 717 (Supreme Court,1974).
737. "Wrong Without Remedy", New York Times, July 28, 1974.

> segregation in the educational system provided by the State of Michigan for children in Detroit, this Court holds that the District Court was powerless to require the State to remedy its constitutional violation in any meaningful fashion. Ironically purporting to base its result on the principle that the scope of the remedy in a desegregation case should be determined by the nature and the extent of the constitutional violation, the Court's answer is to provide no remedy at all for the violation proved in this case, thereby guaranteeing that Negro children in Detroit will receive the same separate and inherently unequal education in the future as they have been unconstitutionally afforded in the past[738]

Milliken v Bradley I did not overturn the lower court finding of racial segregation in the schools. But it did demarcate the extent to which federal power would intervene to displace the *Brown* mandate in practical terms. Lower court rulings were clear, the Detroit Board of Education, sanctioned by the authority of the State of Michigan, had through official policy created a pattern of segregative educational conditions. Further, the lower court's ruling found that the state's authorization of new school districts in the developing ring of white suburbs acted to protect and expand racial segregation. Justice Marshall's dissenting opinion pointedly explained how the State of Michigan could have optioned to bus suburban students to Detroit schools, instead of incurring the cost of building entirely new districts. Additionally, there existed intra-district agreements where students could cross district lines to receive specialized educational accommodations if needed, thus negating the notion that district lines are impermeable.

In the final analysis, the State of Michigan protected racialized geographic boundaries, and educational policy proved an interstitial mechanism in this process. The decision constitutionally guaranteed that Black students and parents could not appeal to intra-district bussing as a remedy to school desegregation[739]. Justice Marshall described how Detroit attendant zone boundaries were the outcomes of a carefully crafted pattern of Black pupil containment stating, "In sum, the evidence produced below showed that Negro children had been intentionally confined to an expanding core of virtually all-Negro schools immediately surrounded by a receding band of all-white schools"[740]. The State of Michigan's intervention in the Detroit decentralization process, Public Act 48, demonstrates the role of the state in protecting the white power structure, and the role of educational policy in supporting this broader goal.

Section Summary

The PASCC aided by the support of an alliance of organizations and the research support of the DGEI engaged hundreds of Black Detroiters in the production of a decentralization proposal seeking to transfer educational power to the grassroots community. However, both Black education radicalism and anti-Black opposition by whites, created a crisis of administrative authority and legitimacy. The school district responded to this crisis by rejecting the PASCC Black Plan, while anti-integration whites appealed their position to state authority. In this appeal, they found a captive ear in the Michigan Legislature which successfully overturned

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738. Marshall, Thurgood. Dissenting Opinion, Milliken v Bradley I, 418 U.S. 717 (Supreme Court 1974).
739. Joe T. Darden and Richard W. Thomas, *Detroit: Race Riots, Racial Conflicts, and Efforts to Bridge the Racial Divide* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 73.
740. Marshall, Thurgood. Dissenting Opinion, Milliken v Bradley I, 418 U.S. 717 (Supreme Court, 1974).

the features of Public Act 244 that called for the changing of high school feeder patterns thus nullifying the district's April 7 Plan. The new state decentralization law, Public Act 48, coincided with the ousting of the four BOE members who had supported the original April 7 Plan.

The new state decentralization law was an articulation of white electoral power mobilized to circumvent civil rights advances in the district. Whites effectively mobilized racial bias to perpetuate a condition of political powerlessness for nonhegemonic Detroiters[741]. The PASCC formation recognized this technique of the white power structure, and continued to advance their radicalism, however unsuccessfully in their efforts to elect sympathetic candidates to the newly established Regional Boards. Whites remained predominant on Regional Boards, despite the district now servicing a majority African American student community. That whites were able mobilize state legislative power and local electoral power to control ideological representation on Regional Boards constituted the ascendance of a neocolonial formation. The white power structure responded to a crisis of legitimacy and control by developing a new class of local bureaucrats, protected through state power, that could function as a "...buffer and be co-opted by the white power structure to act on its behalf…"[742].

The political rights of militant Detroiters were further delimited by a convergence of the local neocolonial formation and the federal legal apparatus. The *Milliken I* ruling, advanced by the NAACP which continued to emphasize integration as strategy, cemented the educational enclosure[743] of Detroit Public Schools. In the Detroit context, structures involved in the underdevelopment and control of the Detroit Public Schools operated relational to broader political economic interests. These same interests had produced the spatialized racism of the city, expanding regionally as whites fled Black articulations of self-determination.

Milliken I focused on the unconstitutionality of a metropolitan desegregation order, because suburban districts, the Court held, could not be compelled to participate if they were not culpable in creating a condition of racial segregation in the Detroit district. However, the growth of suburban residential settlement and economic development was aided by establishment of school districts sanctioned by state authority. These newly built and funded districts, served all white populations, reflecting the racialized patterns of suburban settlement. Capital flight and white flight to the suburbs occurred in tandem, creating a context that challenged the gains of Black labor radicalism. Coupled with automation and globalization of capital, these dynamics produced a context in which Black Detroit remained excluded from political access and economic power. The effects of these realignments were reflected acutely in the educational sphere.

Conclusion

From 1966 - 1974 the Detroit Public Schools was the site of violent educational tension and simultaneously a central site of liberation struggle. The Northern High School Movement

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741. For a fuller discussion of 'political powerlessness' see, Muñoz, Barrera, and Ornelas, "The Barrio as Internal Colony," 463-498.
742. Allen, "Reassessing the Internal (Neo) Colonialism Theory," 4.
743. Scholars have described how "enclosure" operates as an analytical tool to refer to the nexus of social forces that emerge and converge to stabilize dominant power structures amid communal forms of resistance, see Clyde Woods, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta* (London and New York: Verso, 1998). Damien Sojoyner, *First Strike: Educational Enclosures in Black Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

articulated a collective indictment of district segregative practices and through its Freedom School, articulated a grassroots conception of education that challenged the hidden curriculum transmitted in schools. Convened in the wake of the Northern High School Movement, the 1966 High School Study Commission affirmed one of the central claims of the NHSM, the existence of a racialized dual educational system. The 1967 rebellion affirmed another central claim of the NHSM, that militant action could not be coopted.

In the aftermath of the rebellion, Black workers directly challenged the reproduction of the underlying causes of the 1967 rebellion by seizing power at the point of production. Informed by the experiences of everyday violence, degradation, and a historical materialist ideological orientation, Black workers sought to seize control over the power to reproduce capitalism. In this effort, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers built a network of community organizations, redistributing organizational resources to advance the struggle. Identifying the relationship between the reproduction of internal colonial labor markets and inferior educational policy, Black students were interstitial to broader freedom struggle. A commitment to Black youth was informed by the League's broader work to foster organic relationships among youth, workers, and community activists. The interplay of interpersonal and community level dynamics fostered unique interactions cultivating comradery and commitment to the struggle among these seemingly disparate groups.

The development of the Black Student United Front, as an umbrella organization working to support school level Black student organizations, coincided with LRBW efforts to expand fronts of struggle in the city. LRBW co-founder John Watson's role at the West Central Organization during school decentralization debates cemented student-community-worker coalition movement through the development of Parents and Students for Community Control. In this way, in 1969 Detroit, the BSUF, PASCC, and LRBW offered a conception of education informed by the quotidian experiences of local people and radical social analysis. This vision of education remained central to the development of a racialized oppositional consciousness advanced through efforts to galvanize broader segments of the community. The PASCC decentralization proposal was an effort to institute an educational program that would foster collective self-determination.

Radical educational struggle in Detroit sought to combat the repressive policy practices and racially segregative patterns in the district. Students identified and challenged the relationship between educational segregation and future subjugation within an internal colonial labor market. In this way, their efforts sought to combat state sanctioned educational violence that functioned as a mechanism of capitalist reproduction. Students, informed by revolutionary nationalism, argued that the administration of the district was beholden to a white electorate and connected this total system analysis to the underdevelopment of curricular offerings in predominantly Black schools. The psychological colonization of Black students was a central point of student analysis, drawing attention to the concentration of Black students in vocational tracks while whites dominated the college preparatory track. Militant Black students asserted consistent demands for access to college courses and Black anticolonial history as a strategy to disrupt the reproduction of a colonial labor market and oppressive American education system.

In this chapter I have examined how the rise of Black educational radicalism was subsumed by the ascendance of a neocolonial educational structure in the history of the Detroit Public Schools. More recent urban educational literatures have cited urban systems as bastions of

educational inequity, particularly along race and class cleavages[744]. These large-scale systems have been cited as inefficient bureaucratic institutions plagued by financial mismanagement and political corruption. However, critical education researchers argue that educational administrative practices and achievement outcomes are relational to the social context in which school systems are situated[745]. Adding to this literature, this study suggests a broader historical analysis of social context as interstitial to future trajectories of urban school systems.

This chapter also adds to the literature regarding Black educational struggle in the urban North[746]. Historian Jeanne Theoharis argues that a historical preoccupation on the freedom struggle movement as it evolved in the South "miss[es] the systems of racial caste and power-pervasive and entrenched across the North"[747]. Such omission results in the naturalization of race relations in the North as "not a racial system like the South's but one operating on class and culture with racial discrimination a by-product"[748]. This practice obscures the function of racial capitalism as system. As Theoharis illuminates in the study of educational activism centering Boston Public schools, "de facto" segregation was enabled by an interlocking system of legal, political, and racial factors structuring educational oppression[749]. Assertion of a broader legal-political economic apparatus excavates the racial and class politics of education in urban North.

Educational theorist Jean Anyon argues that urban school underachievement and administrative mismanagement are outcomes of a broader process of urban ghettoization. Citing the advent of white flight from inner city to outer suburbs, economic urban disinvestment, and political isolation, Anyon demonstrates that educational stratification and practices are tightly linked to issues of social class and racial difference[750]. In this chapter, I have analyzed the interrelationship between white flight/capital flight, political powerlessness, and the manipulation of state power to create an educational enclosure, responsive to political economic

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744. David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974). Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).
745. Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, S*chooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (London: Routledge, 1976). Pauline Lipman, *The New Political Economy of Urban Education: Neoliberalism, Race, and the Right to the City* (New York: Routledge, 2011). John L. Rury and Jeffrey Mirel, "The Political Economy of Urban Education," *Review of Research in Education* 22, no. 49, (1997): 49- 110
746. For accounts of comparatives histories of Black educational struggle in the urban North see the following: Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children: Black Organization in the Chicago Public Schools, 1963-1971* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002). Adina Back, "'Exposing the Whole Segregation Myth': The Harlem Nine and New York City's School Desegregation Battles," in *Freedom North; Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 65–91. Daniel Perlstein, J*ustice, Justice: School Politics and the Eclipse of Liberalism* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004). Jeanne Theoharis, "'I'd Rather Go to School in the South': How Boston's School Desegregation Complicates the Civil Rights Paradigm," in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 125–152. Douglas Davison, "Responding to the Spread of Northern School Segregation: Conflict Within the Black Community, 1900-1940," in *Jim Crow Moves North: The Battle over Northern School Segregation, 1865-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 167–218.
747. Jeanne Theoharis, "Introduction," in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 3.
748. Theoharis, "Introduction," p.3
749. Jeanne Theoharis, "'I'd Rather Go to School in the South': How Boston's School Desegregation Complicates the Civil Rights Paradigm," in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 125–152.
750. Jean Anyon, *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997)

interests[751]. In this way, the trajectory of urban educational systems is a linked fate to the power of racial and class oppression in American society.

In Detroit, white parents resisted racial integration, premised on a logic that reorganization of school feeder patterns disrupted 'neighborhood schools'. But this rhetoric masked the underlying anti-Black racial logic that ascribed a negative worth to proximity to Black students[752]. Rejecting an appeal to white liberals and/or equal participation with racist whites, the formation of the BSUF and the PASCC offered a conception of counterhegemonic educational practice and policy-setting. Moreover, this formation went further in its analysis of the function of schools as interstitial in the reproduction of an oppressive U.S. society, than any of the preceding attempts to include citizens in Detroit school policy making. The PASCC alliance pushed the relationship between democracy and education to its ultimate end and in so doing revealed the core limitations of racial liberal approaches to equality of educational opportunity. Educational policy, from this perspective, would require analysis of the political economic conditions structuring racial and class oppression in American society.

751. See also, Ansley Erickson, "Building Inequality: The Spatial Organization of Schooling in Nashville, Tennessee, after Brown," *Journal of Urban History* 38, no. 2, (2012): 247-270.
752. Michael J. Dumas, "A Cultural Political Economy of School Desegregation in Seattle," *Teachers College Record* 113, no. 4, (2011): 714.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Study overview

This study examines the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit, 1943-1974. Utilizing archival and oral history research methods, this study asserts radical educational consciousness in Detroit pivoted on a conception[753] of spatialized racism that reproduced a hegemonic political economic structure. This radical analysis directly challenged racialized administrative control over the school system. By the late 1960s, radical educational consciousness conceptualized educational struggle as a front of broader social struggle. In Detroit, a radical conception of community control of schools was articulated as a rejection of both racial liberalism and bourgeois cultural nationalism. 'Community Control' was rooted in analysis of racial capitalism and imagined as interstitial to revolutionary struggle as advanced in the actions and analyses of Detroit's League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW). Informed by the revolutionary nationalism and Marxist orientation of the LRBW, radical educational actors challenged the oppressive reproductive function of schools and offered an alternative conception of educational practice. My analysis illuminates how rejection of racial liberalism and bourgeois cultural nationalism developed over time and further excavates the extension of this analysis to educational critique.

Research questions, methodology, and main findings

The central organizing research question animating this study asked, "*How did radical actors in Detroit imagine the role of educational struggle as interstitial to broader freedom struggle, and how did they come to this analysis?*" Departing from this question, I employed archival and oral history research methods, excavating a political economic typology in Detroit which informed the organization and temporal focus of each chapter. Much of this study explores the historical development of this understanding through historical analysis of the city and its school. Each chapter explored a subset of refined research questions relational to my central research question. These refined chapter specific questions were designed to focus analysis on the development of educational consciousness amid the interplay of the state, civil society, and political economy structures.

This study utilizes a relational historical ethnographic approach to educational research, employing oral history and archival research methods. My methodological design was grounded in literature challenging the reproduction of extractive approaches to research, including works that interrogate the role of power in shaping archival depositories. Utilizing a snowball approach to participant recruitment, I conducted 16 oral history interviews in Detroit. I conducted research at the archival holdings of the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Detroit Public Library Burton Historical Collection, the University Michigan Bentley Historical Library and the Hoover Institution Library and Archives at Stanford University. I additionally was granted access to the private collections of several narrators interviewed for this study. The

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753. Conception of objective conditions of subjective reality was based on experiential knowledge produced through daily/quotidian interactions and systematic analysis of these objective conditions. The interplay of experiential knowledge and social analysis cannot be reduced or understated.

analytical frameworks employ, draw from scholarship aligned with the theoretical precepts of critical social theory.

Main findings drawn from my study assert the following conclusions. In response to my overarching research question, historical analysis of the development of radical educational consciousness, finds that Detroit Public Schools was conceptualized and experienced as an oppressive state agent, complicit and integral in the reproduction of a racialized political economy. Radical educational analysis emphasized both repressive and ideological aspects of schooling. Equal to these aspects of critique, radical student activists articulated dimensions of educational experience that reflected a specific form of oppression perpetuated against Black students. In this way, schooling represented a mechanism of social reproduction and racialized oppression. In response to this understanding of the function of schooling in Detroit, radical actors identified educational struggle as a front of broader social struggle.

Summary of chapter arguments

This study examines the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit. Central herein, is examination of racial capitalism in U.S. society and the importance of attention to this system in education research. Race and class operate as contexts of a system of oppression fostering an oppressive racialized social order. To understand the interaction of these contexts of oppression in U.S. society I have examined their co-constitution in Detroit from 1943-1974. This section provides chapter summaries and findings.

Chapter 3 Reconstructing Race and City: The Racial and Class Contexts of Educational Politics in Postwar Detroit, 1943-1953

The 1943 Detroit race riot created a crisis of control for the political economic elite. The riot was the climax of the historical development of spatialized racism, a process shaped by the effects of chattel slavery and ongoing Indigenous erasure. The 1943 race riot manifested a nascent community consciousness that would challenge hegemonic control in Detroit. In the immediate aftermath of the riot, Black leaders gathered in Black Bottom, a community shaped into being by restrictive housing covenants, to demand mayoral responsive action. Taking this stance as a collective group challenged old patterns of individuals and organizations appealing to the favor of political economic elite, as opposed to seeking systemic redress. Detroit's political economic elite responded to this 1943 crisis of legitimacy by developing a political infrastructure to perpetuate a conception of racism as an attitudinal dilemma that jeopardized the American Creed of democracy and unity.

In the wake of the 1943 race riot, Detroit became the ideal center of racial liberal idealism. The development of the Mayor's Interracial Committee demonstrates how the political elite perpetuated an approach to race relations that elided the material basis of racism in the city. This conception of the 'American Dilemma' was manifested in the Detroit Public Schools through adoption of intercultural education policies and practices, as well as citizenship education experimentation. Intercultural and citizenship education functioned as racial projects seeking to control and reinterpret how race and race relations would be understood and managed across the city's social policy landscape. The expansion of these ideas in education established the dominant conception of race relations in the Detroit Public Schools but did not go unchallenged. The development of the 8 Mile/Wyoming community and 1947 Higginbotham

School protest exemplify how nonhegemonic people came to understand the interaction of repressive civic social policy and educational planning policies in the city.

Chapter 4 Racial Liberalism in Educational Planning: Confronting the Color Line in School Experience and Policy, 1954-1965

Racial liberal idealism dominated school policy setting and planning. The Board of Education sanctioned the production of two interdependent committees that amplified this logic. The first committee charged in 1957[754] with researching school needs and the second committee charged in 1960[755] with researching barriers to equality of educational opportunity. Chaired by corporate liberals, these ‘Citizens Advisory Committees’ represented the district’s awareness of the symbiotic relationship between schooling and the American social order. Yet, the work of these Committees marginalized the grassroots challenge to racial segregation and claims of a historical pattern of racialized policy discrimination in the district. These Committees operated under the organizing logic of racial liberalism, treating symptoms of an inferior educational experience but failing to engage the structural basis of educational oppression. However, nonhegemonic educational critique brought powerful and visible challenges to the espoused aims of the Committees and organizing logic of the district. The composition of these groups signaled consciousness of the relationship between racial segregation, inferior education, and the reproduction of a racialized workforce.

The 1960 Citizens Advisory Committee on Equality of Educational Opportunity (CAC-EEO) forced the district to conduct a racial census of student enrollment and staff hiring practices, revealing the district was marked by a pattern of segregated attendance boundaries and staffing patterns. The CAC-EEO affirmed grassroots claims that administrative practices fostered educational segregation. Optimism surrounding the EEO report, from the district’s perspective, was met with the reality of students’ educational experiences, experiences that were shaped by a century of Black enclosure in Detroit. Conceptualizing race/racism as an attitudinal dilemma could not redress the role of racialized policy discrimination in expanding and legitimizing a geography of spatial racism in the city. Black students were subjugated within a dual, racialized district. Militant educational advocates emphasized the structural function of the schools in producing a racialized labor force, and importantly challenged the cultural deprivation ethos as an ideological construct masking the structural dynamics perpetuating Black underachievement. Whereas the district emphasized an array of factors impacting equality of educational opportunity, militant advocates honed their analysis on the intersection of racial and class oppression as systemic factors fostering educational inequality.

Chapter 5 ‘Why Not Fight for Quality Education for Black Schools in the Inner City’: Community Control of Schools as Strategy, 1966 – 1974

The hegemony of racial liberal idealism failed to ameliorate systemic patterns of racialized education policy discrimination. Further, the development of a broader understanding of the symbiotic relationship of systemic educational inequity and a racialized social order became emphasized by militant students. The 1966 Northern High School Movement argued that the Detroit Public Schools functioned as a dual system: one track for Black students, one track

754. 1957-1958, Citizens Advisory Committee on School Needs.
755. 1960-1962, Citizens Advisory Committee on Equality of Educational Opportunity.

for white students. Northern students decried the differentiated high school curricula offerings reflecting school demographic composition, such as that offered white students at Redford High School, which reproduced a racialized social order. In response to the Northern High School student protests, in 1966 the district met a core demand of the student boycott, removing Principal Arthur Carty from the school. In the aftermath of the Northern High School protests, the district established the High School Study Commission to comprehensively study the high school program. The Commission documented great variation in high school curricula, a general pattern of poor administrative oversight of high school principals, and students' experiences of racial oppression.

The 1967 Detroit rebellion expressed the effects of the normalized contradictions of American society, formal inclusion of racialized minorities through social exclusionary policies. These contradictions became sites of formal analysis by a network of grassroots activists in the post-rebellion milieu, which set the stage for the emergence of Black labor radicalism. The 1968 founding of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, and later the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), established a critique of the American Creed grounded in analysis of capitalist relations of production. Analysis of the formation of the Black Student United Front, a relational organization to the LRBW, excavates how this broader social analysis informed how students described the contours of educational oppression. Black students challenged hegemonic control of Black education as enabled through the ideological domination of school curricula and white electoral control over school governance. Students identified the function of educational oppression as interstitial to a broader system of American racial capitalism and U.S. imperialism. The extension of radical social analysis to education produced a conception of community control as a strategy to seize power in the schools.

As analyzed in these three empirical chapters, from 1943-1974 the development of educational militancy occurs within a local geography of spatial racism that over time matures into radical educational consciousness. Utilizing a relational historical ethnography research design, this study asserts the emergence of radical educational consciousness was informed by a critique of capitalist relations of production and experiential knowledge of a geography of spatial racism. This radical analysis directly challenged racialized administrative control over the school system. In Detroit, a radical conception of community control of schools was articulated as a rejection of both racial liberalism and bourgeois cultural nationalism. By the late 1960s, radical educational consciousness conceptualized educational struggle as a front of broader liberation struggle.

Limitations of the study

I should stress that my study has been primarily concerned with how radical actors imagined the role of education struggle in American society within a specific temporal period of local, national, and global dynamics. I have addressed only the development of radical educational consciousness rooted in political economic analysis focused on the interaction of race and class oppression. I have not attended to the nuances of the interaction of these forces from gendered standpoints. While I utilize narrative data reflective of a variety of race/class intersections, I have not theorized how narrative data is influenced by intersectional identities beyond race and class. I should make clear that I have deliberately included a cross section of narrators as participants in the germination of this study. This study does not purport how any one radical/actor conceived of educational struggle but offers an analysis of the historical-social

process which led to the emergence of radical educational consciousness in Detroit. My findings cannot be read as evidence that any member of a radical social movement organization in Detroit conceptualized education in the exact terms that are developed through this study. My data does not allow me to determine whether radical educational actors were successful. My data does suggest a relationship between the objective conditions of racial capitalism and the struggle to transform the reproductive function of education in U.S. society.

Implications

By engaging the political economic analysis of racialized people in Detroit, this study illuminates the contours/structures of American capitalism. In the process of this study, we learn that American capitalism is co-constituted by racial and class contexts of oppression. Examining how this analysis evaluated the function of schooling illuminates an educational project that attends to the underlying system of oppression that continues to enable racial capitalism in American society. This is important for the field of education, and more broadly for concerned social actors, who have a will to work toward the development of non-oppressive forms of educational practice.

Engaging a settler colonial analytic in relation to the maturation and development of racial capitalism as enacted through the theft and exploitation of Black people, this dissertation de-naturalizes the myth of education, as conceived in racial liberal terms. In order to understand how race and class are interactive, and indeed co-constituted systems of oppression, I argue for the need to examine social movement formations that center analysis of racial capitalism regimes. Contemporary educational movements, from the Journey to Justice movement, to the Detroit Independent Freedom Schools, to grassroots education resistance to neoliberalism in Oakland, New Orleans, New York and beyond, have provided inroads to effectively unpacking the relationship between racial capitalism and educational oppression in their actions and analysis.

Suggestions for future research

My findings offer several suggestions for future areas of research. These suggestions emphasize scaled analyses of the development of educational consciousness. For example, comparative analysis of the educational ideas of grassroots organizations in Detroit merits its own lines of research. This area of research could offer insight into the nuanced positions of wartime/postwar Detroit grassroots groups such as the organizations I highlight in Chapter 3, the Carver Progressive Club and the Better Schools Association. The interaction, debate, and tensions among ‘established’ groups such as the Detroit Urban League, Detroit branch of the NAACP, and more militant groups, such as the Nation of Islam, Detroit Black Panthers, and League of Revolutionary Black Workers, would also yield relevant and timely analysis. Lastly, if a particular school constellation and community were selected for in depth analysis, as I have somewhat broached in my repeated engagement of the Higginbotham Elementary School community, this would enable a longitudinal case study that could offer much in terms of the localized effects of spatialized racism in and beyond educational contexts.

Positionality and conducting research

Much of what we know about the history of urban education systems is the narrative of the school administration, civic governance officials, and corporate/philanthropic actors. Readily accessible are the archival documents of civic organizations and school district departments. When I made the decision to explore the development of radical educational consciousness in Detroit, I endeavored to draw on the embodied knowledge I carry with me, as a graduate of the Detroit Public Schools. As a graduate I carry with me questions and puzzles about my own educational experiences in the city. I also recognize that my experiences in the district are a form of knowledge that can help illuminate what schools do. My research questions, though historical, are relational to my own experiences in Detroit. I do not come to this work from a pretense of objectivity, nor am I interested in perpetuating this conception of education research.

In "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Committees", Eve Tuck argues that research practitioners often engage in 'damaged-centered research' that "...intends to document peoples' pain and brokenness to hold those in power accountable for their oppression"[756]. Tuck challenges researchers to both engage the effects of oppression as a site of analysis, but to also, importantly, consider the long-term effects of research that largely casts us as broken. Katherine McKittrick, Christina Sharpe, and others, have similarly cautioned against the reproduction of research approaches that dwell in the numerical violence committed against oppressed bodies. Further, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Patricia Hill Collins, and others, have brought insightful emphasis to the politics of knowledge production processes. These analyses have illuminated how some communities have been cast as research objects yet are excluded as architects of research design and knowledge production/excavation processes.

Throughout doctoral study, and the dissertation process, I have faced and embraced these dynamic assertions head on. In my research, I have been encouraged in the use of oral history and archival methods, departing from a decolonial framework, as a method to intentionally build a collaborative and iterative research practice. In my work, I have been direct in my approach to the site of my study. In fact, I have argued that a commitment to understanding place and space in my work supports a more grounded understanding of what is both unique to Detroit as a socio-historical formation but also what might be learned, or generalizable, to other contexts confronting racial capitalism. While research is imagined as an objective enterprise, in my research design I have intentionally engaged in practices with the intent to, at the very minimum, do no more harm.

Awareness of the wider social and political context

My research study formally occurred over a 2.5-year period of living in Detroit as an active participant in daily life. Throughout this time, I engaged in daily social activities, as I would have otherwise. But I also sought out new experiences and interactions. Throughout this time, I was able to develop my understanding of the contemporary dynamics shaping the objective conditions underlying social conditions in the city. These dynamics further emphasized what Ruth Gilmore has described as the fatal coupling of power and difference[757], in that

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756. Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities", *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 3, (2009): 409.
757. Ruth Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography", *The Professional Geographer*, 54 no. 1 (2002): 15–24.

"Racism functions as a limiting force that pushes disproportionate costs of participating in an increasingly monetized and profit-driven world onto those who, due to the frictions of political distance, cannot reach the variable levers of power that might relieve them of those costs"[758]. Throughout data collection I have actively reflected on the interplay of power, privilege, responsibility, and my own positionality.

Detroit has been the site of multiple U.N. delegation visits, probing the effects of mass foreclosures and displacement. Mass water shut-offs have created an ongoing public health crisis. The Detroit Public Schools, studied herein, no longer functions as an educational system but exists solely as a mechanism to pay off debt, replaced by the newly established Detroit Public Schools Community District. I have often reflected, this may be the worst time to conduct educational research in the city. I have learned from this process of reflection that academic research has specific purposes, particularly in the context of graduate education. I have learned that these purposes are often in contrast to the needs/desires of the research site. These considerations have I believe, made me a more conscientious researcher.

The role of the narrator as collaborators in knowledge production

Drawing from the notion of place discussed by McCoy, Tuck, and McKenzie[759], my dissertation research proposes that we conceptualize place through engagement with the peoples and institutions and contradictions that make/create the "where" of research. I believe a deeper sustained engagement with place in qualitative research can inform new ways to imagine the purpose of educational research. Again, oral history methods encouraged development of a collaborative, iterative research design. Communicated within the oral history interview are both the recollections of particular historic encounters in Detroit's educational history, but also the social relationship that existed/exists between a particular person/community/social formation and the city schools. In my research, utilization of oral history interviews supported exploration of both what Detroit is/has been imagined/struggled over to be, and what factors have shaped its educational policies and practices. From this perspective, I attended to how narrators' interactions with the social world shaped their consciousness of their objective and subjective position in society. This in turn enabled examination of the racial and class contexts of oppression, that are at core, social relationships that structure histories and futures.

Relationship to previous research

In terms of my overarching research question, my findings are broadly in line with scholarship that examines the rise of educational radicalism in K-12 as well as college level education contexts reviewed within the body of the dissertation. Educational experiences at the intersection of race/class are documented factors in the development of counter hegemonic conceptions of education in U.S. society. The findings of my study build upon literature that examines the role of hegemonic education in structuring educational experiences, and also, the processes by which hegemonic educational practice becomes internalized and normalized by students and the broader community. My findings in Chapter 3 demonstrate the role of political economic interests as a key factor in the development of the district's management of race and

758. Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference", 16.
759. Katie McCoy, Eve Tuck, and Marcia McKenzie, *Land Education: Rethinking Pedagogies of Place from Indigenous, Postcolonial, and Decolonizing Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

racism through educational experimentation. These findings are consistent with previous research that analyzing the role of the broader political economic and social context in which urban educational systems are situated.

My findings in Chapter 4 illuminate how racial liberal idealism and the containment of Black students within specific school constellations, were relational processes. This finding is also consistent with previous research that examines the differential experiences of racialized students within urban educational systems, and the historical development of public education more broadly. However, my findings also challenge a widely expressed assertion that achievement outcomes are the prime indicators of equality of educational opportunity. In Chapter 4, I excavate the basis on which militant educational actors illuminated the systematic exclusion of Black students from access to skilled labor apprenticeship programs. This assertion emphasizes a relationship between the function of schools and the reproduction of a racialized American social order. In this way, my findings suggest the need to engage educational protest critique as a metric of equality of educational opportunity.

Although my findings are generally compatible with scholarship concerning urban education history and race in education literature, there are several areas in which my study's findings offer a different perspective. In Chapter 5, my findings suggest that educational radicalism was rooted in a specific critique of capitalist relations of production and the corresponding organization of the U.S. social order. This seems to challenge strong educational research conventions that emphasize issues of educational choice, school curriculum, and parental involvement, as a priori issues impeding equality of educational opportunity. Another finding from Chapter 5, concerning conceptualization of community control as a political strategy, excavates how radical actors made sense of the relationship between school governance, educational experience, and achievement outcomes. In this way, radical actors emphasized what previous scholarship has identified as the reproductive function of schooling in society, however my findings build upon and extend this analysis. My findings suggest radical social analysis informed the conceptualization of community control, unmasking and asserting a linked fate analysis of school governance and educational outcomes. This finding seems to counter existing perspectives that frame school governance as a *politicized* issue, rather than framing the development of school governance structures as relational to political economic dynamics in U.S. society.

Final words

Undertaking this research has empowered me to reckon with my own personal and scholarly shortcomings. This experience has also affirmed my own capacities to carry out respectful relationship-centered research. I am overjoyed at the relationships formed with my narrators. I am humbled and forever grateful for the impact of their narratives as a guiding light in this process. I hope to in some small way, honor their courage and experiences by continuing the struggle for a more equitable society. I have also gained tremendous insight into the rigors of academic research just as I have deepened my commitment to community-based research projects that emphasize grassroots needs and desires. I began this process searching for greater meaning in the oppressive conditions that I inherited as a 80's born Detroiter. I excavated, through this study, a rich history of radicalism, of rebellion, of a commitment to survivance. I am certain that the challenging lessons and benefits received from this process will carry me for

many years to come. These lessons and benefits have made me both a more careful and competent researcher and a more responsive steward of community.

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Appendix A

Interviews

1. Alonzo Chandler, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
2. Bill Wylie-Kellerman, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, July 2017.
3. Daniel D. Alter, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2016.
4. Darryl Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, August 2017.
5. Delores Guye, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2016.
6. Gregory Hicks, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.
7. Guadalupe Villegas, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2016.
8. Ignacio Gonzalez, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016.
9. James Wright, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, September 2017.
10. Jesus Tabares, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, August 2016.
11. John Telford, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2016.
12. Mary Luevanos, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2016.
13. Michael Hamlin, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, December 2016.
14. Robert Midgett, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, January 2017.
15. Sister Consuelo Alcalá, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, May 2015.
16. William Mitchell, oral history interview by Bianca Suárez, April 2018