

“Who Speaks for Chicago?”
Civil Rights, Community Organization and Coalition, 1910-1971

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Fig. 1. Bernard J. Kleina, 1966

This Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts
In the Department of History at Brown University
Thesis Advisor: Françoise Hamlin
Friday, April 8, 2016

I am writing this thesis as a Black, biracial, woman of color. My Black paternal grandparents spent most of their lives on the South Side of Chicago, my father grew up there, and I grew up in Waukegan, Illinois, a mixed-income suburb fifty miles north of the city. This project is both extremely personal and political in nature. As someone working toward a future in academic activism and who utilizes a historical lens to do that work, the question of how to apply the stories and lessons of the past to the present, both as an intellectual project and a practical means of change, is always at the forefront.

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Acknowledgments

First, I must thank my many academic advisors and mentors for their help and thoughtful advice throughout this process. To Ethan Pollock, since the beginning of this process I have been so grateful for the patience with which you guided my colleagues and me through the prospectus-writing project. You had to deal with me at my least organized, trying to work through entirely incomplete ideas, and unsure of if I even wanted to write a thesis at all. Your words of wisdom to the effect of, “Write the thesis you want. Whether or not you get honors you’ll have done something you are proud of,” ran through my head on many occasions as I questioned why I was doing this work. Thank you for driving me to take risks and write something I truly am proud of. Also, thank you for making me appreciate that the honors thesis is less about the final product and more about the process. I will take that lesson with me far beyond graduation I am sure.

Françoise Hamlin, you have taught me more over the last four years than I could have ever imagined. Without you, your “Black Freedom Struggle since 1945” class, the Tougaloo spring break trip my freshman year, and the many conversations and emails exchanged since then, who knows where I would be (probably in the political science department.) You have seen my academic interests broaden and then focus over time. You have *finally* taught me what the passive voice is and, more importantly, why it matters. You have single-handedly made my writing infinitely better, but even more you have helped me gain confidence in my own abilities and value, not only as a budding scholar, but also as an individual.

I also have to thank my high school American history teacher, Josh Bill. It has now been five years since I was in your classroom in the basement of Waukegan High School, but this project was born in that room. It started with a local history of a Black community in Waukegan

that grew into a project on the Waukegan “race riots” and eventually became this thesis.

Mentoring me through a second and stressful year of History Fair, you allowed me to delve into a topic that was both personally and academically fulfilling. I attribute my love of history, my interest in telling untold stories, and my critical eye for primary source materials to you. Thank you for encouraging me to find my passion and follow it beyond the border of Waukegan.

I would not have been able to complete this research without funding from the Karen T. Romer Undergraduate Teaching and Research Award (UTRA). This funding allowed me to pursue research in Atlanta and Chicago the summer before senior year. The archives in these two locations provided the foundations for this thesis. The ability to spend the summer researching and writing instead of worrying about paying the bills made the thesis writing process more enjoyable and spreading out my research allowed for a more thoughtful process altogether.

I also could not have finished this thesis without my friends. I am truly grateful for the long hours in the library, for bringing me snacks and coffee, and, most importantly, for reminding me that my thoughts are valuable and I have important things to say. I would especially like to thank my very best friend Vaki, who held my hand through many “Thesis Thursday” workdays and fielded hundreds of insecure text messages with patience and love. For accepting me on days I thought my thesis was terrible and on days I thought I was a genius, I have the deepest appreciation.

To my parents, thank you for putting up with my all of my nonsense, in the past two years and in the past twenty-two. Mom, thank you for letting me borrow your car to do research in Chicago and take over your office to write during summer and winter breaks. Dad, thank you for answering all of my questions about Chicago geography and sharing your own recollections of Black life in Chicago. I know you always wanted to be a Black Panther, keep dreaming.

Finally, I wrote this thesis for my dad's parents, grandma and grandpa Johnson, proud residents of the South Side for most of their adult years. Though I never got to know them well, fond memories of Tootsie Rolls in the fridge and dancing on the apartment porch are held near and dear to my heart. Growing up biracial, but only really knowing one Black family member, my father, I often felt disconnected from my own history. As I continue to work through my personal sense of identity, I also work to rediscover my family history. On many afternoons, after writing all morning, I found myself searching the census and historical newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* in an attempt to place my grandparents into this history. Although I have no historical or personal evidence of their direct involvement in any of the Chicago movements, they were there and opinionated, I am sure. From the Great Migration to the struggle for civil rights and urban renewal, this was their history. I may never have asked them for their own stories, but this is my attempt to reclaim their history, if only for myself. I know they would be proud of all I have accomplished, I can only hope I have done justice to their stories.



This if for y'all!

Introduction

“For a hundred years or more, Chicago has been a symbol of hope for thousands of black men and women who fled first from the cruel yoke of slavery, and then again from the lawlessness and brutality of segregation in the Deep South,” said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in front of thousands of Chicagoans at Soldier Field.¹ They were attending a rally to celebrate the soon-to-be-signed Voting Rights Act and to address the issues of civil rights in Chicago. As King said, Black Americans had spent the years since Emancipation looking to Chicago as one of the urban promised lands, but that promise had only resulted in deep disappointment as they faced segregation in the ghettos, mass unemployment, and extreme poverty. In the years leading up to this 1965 rally Chicago’s mass movement had focused on improving and desegregating schools, but throughout the period 1910 to 1971, Black Chicagoans organized around and in opposition to many other issues including fair housing, fair employment, ending slums, and voter registration. These issues were not unique to Chicago, however, and the local movements during this period were very much in conversation with a national civil rights agenda. For example, fair housing was addressed nationally when the Supreme Court deemed racial restrictive covenants unconstitutional in 1948; schools were addressed after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954; and voting became a focus as Black Power rhetoric moved toward fair political representation, from rural Alabama to Black urban centers of the North. Chicago’s civil rights struggles did not happen in a vacuum and contextualizing Chicago’s battles in a long narrative of

¹ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “An Address by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the March on Chicago,” July 26, 1965, Chicago, IL, Papers of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1954-1968, box 8, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA.

civil rights complicates the history and also deepens our collective understandings of what constitutes civil rights and community organizing historically and in the present.

This thesis aims to challenge the conception that the civil rights movement in Chicago was a failure. Much of the mainstream literature about the mass civil rights movement, as well as the seminal works on Chicago's struggle, *Confronting the Color Line* by Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering and *Northern Protest* by James Ralph, focus on King's year-long "End Slums" campaign, as though that year unilaterally represents Chicago's longer organizing traditions. Re-situating that campaign within a much longer narrative of civil rights organizing, from 1910 to 1970, allows for a better understanding of gradual change over time and the development of several organizing techniques within the city. This thesis does not answer the question, were the civil rights movements in Chicago successful? Rather it answers the question, what were the successes and failures of civil rights organizing in Chicago? Working from the primary assumption that success is not only legislative but also involves improvement and change of circumstance, this thesis argues that there were many successes in the long narrative of Chicago's civil rights movements. This study looks to connect those successes and failures to answer the primary question: how are Black community organizing movements in Chicago from 1910 to 1970 intertwined?

Though by no means an exhaustive study of civil rights in Chicago, as there are seemingly an endless number of community organizations that each could warrant their own work, this thesis recovers some of the lost connections in the broad narrative. A fundamental part of that narrative is the development of modern community organizing techniques that blended labor union organizing with nonviolent civil rights to mobilize and organize individual neighborhoods within the larger Black community. What started with Saul Alinsky, a Jewish

community organizer in Chicago's stockyards in the 1940s, developed into coalition building, headed in the late 1960s by the Illinois Black Panther Party. That same Black Panther coalition building would turn into the "Rainbow Coalition" which was responsible for the election of Harold Washington, Chicago's first Black mayor, in 1983. Understanding the genealogy of community organization and then linking that history to the story of national civil rights, not only deepens our overall understandings of the civil rights era, but also challenges Chicago's place as footnote in that history. It recognizes that Chicago organizers played an important role in developing much of what we think of as community organizing today. It allows us to see that de facto segregation, once viewed as a subtle and relatively benign form of racism, was neither subtle nor harmless. Most modern racism more closely resembles Chicago's de facto segregation of the 1960s than it does the Jim Crow bigotry activists battled in the Southern states. Chicago still has a long way to go in the fight for racial justice, but understanding the history is one step in moving toward a more equal Chicago.

Sources and Methodology

Primary Sources

Civil rights history is ubiquitous in American popular culture, but the popular account sanitizes and omits some of the most powerful pieces of that narrative. The typical "Montgomery to Memphis" narrative overlooks significant examples of community organizing and civil rights activism. The sources used for this thesis complicate much of the mythology around the civil rights movement, and also expose aspects that were previously forgotten or understudied.

Most of the traditional civil rights narrative took place only 50 years ago, thus there is a wealth of knowledge still untapped. In some locales, the archaeological work of developing the

archives has not even begun. For some topics, the archives remain in the basements and garages of former activists and their children. In other instances, as in Chicago, historians have already completed that archaeological work and organizational archives have been established in historical societies and other institutions across the country. Due to constraints of both physical location and time, my archival research took place in only two locations, Atlanta and Chicago.

The Research Center at the Chicago History Museum holds the records of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which provided evidence to explain the organizing efforts of CORE as well as discuss the concerns of Black Chicagoans in the 1950s. This collection also housed a great deal of research completed by organizations other than CORE, particularly surrounding the issues of school integration, and those reports, many by the Chicago Urban League, served as the foundations for understanding exactly what organizers were working toward during the fight for better schools in the early 1960s.

The University of Chicago holds the papers of Alvin Pitcher, administrative assistant to Al Raby, one of the leaders of the Chicago civil rights movement in the 1960s. These papers included meeting minutes, memos, and internal organizational notes that provided insight into the inner-workings of the Chicago schools movement and, later, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) Operation Breadbasket. These papers also included research reports done by various Chicago organizations, which provided factual, often data-driven insight, into the problems facing Black Chicagoans.

In Atlanta I accessed the Emory University Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library and the archives at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. Emory holds a portion of the SCLC records, and I looked specifically at the Operation Breadbasket records, which included press releases, speeches, and a few fascinating letters sent between

leaders of the SCLC, largely documenting the shift in Breadbasket leadership in Chicago. The King Center holds the most extensive collection of the SCLC and King's papers, but also records for many other civil rights organizations' records. At the King Center I looked especially at the records of CORE, the Chicago Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, the King Papers, which largely consisted of speeches, and the SCLC papers on Chicago and Operation Breadbasket. These organizational archives played the most critical role in forming this thesis.

Newspapers also proved useful in putting together information for topics for which I did not have access to other archival materials. Newspapers were also useful in building a timeline of events. There were also often editorial debates between civil rights leaders and local government officials and journalists themselves, which provided even more insight into the thoughts of civil rights leaders. I used Black newspapers, like the *Chicago Defender*, to get a feel for the overriding opinions of Black Chicagoans and newspapers like the *Chicago Tribune*, to better understand the perspectives of White Chicagoans and political figures.

The primary sources available in these archives and supplemented with archival materials available online, make up the foundations for my thesis. It is through these archive materials that I was able to pull out parts of the story of civil rights organizing in Chicago that were untold in other secondary sources. Even when looking at the same archives as other scholars, when placed in the context of a long narrative, rather than a narrower understanding of the civil rights movement, I asked different questions of the materials to build a lineage through the 20th century. Oral histories are missing from my research. Where possible, I utilized interviews conducted by other scholars, but due to my own lack of personal contacts in the communities I wrote about, as well as travel constraints, I was unable to conduct any oral history interviews myself. There is certainly room for oral history interviews in this kind of study and value in

collecting those stories while participants are still healthy and well. With a longer research period and more access, collecting oral histories would certainly be the next step in continuing my research on Chicago's Black freedom struggle.

Secondary Sources

Existing histories of the civil rights movement leave out Chicago's movements almost entirely. Where they are not entirely forgotten, they occasionally come up as a footnote to the more common story of Southern struggle. Chicago is usually portrayed as the backdrop of King's failure to successfully implement Southern nonviolent tactics in the North. It was that seemingly incomplete account that drove me to first look into Chicago's civil rights struggle. As a Chicagoan, I searched for local connections to the organizing tradition that has been and continues to be so important to the American landscape. I categorize the secondary sources I used in four categories: the classic narrative of civil rights, local organizational histories, the two seminal works on Chicago's civil rights organizing history, and contemporary works that attempt, as I do, to complicate the narrative of civil rights in Chicago as a failure.

Classic Narratives of Civil Rights

Most of the classic narrative is King-focused, and as such I look to those texts to showcase the lack of information on civil rights in Chicago. These accounts of the mass civil rights movement in the United States are too constrained, generally confined to the years between Montgomery, Alabama and Memphis, Tennessee, 1955 to 1968 and geographically confined almost entirely south of the Mason-Dixon line in the former confederate states. Even in narratives which expand the history beyond just King and the SCLC's work, such as those that

look at SNCC or CORE, most do not recognize the struggles for civil rights in the Black urban North.

Two extensive biographies of King function to tell the story of civil rights. While they are inherently King-focused and constrained to his time as symbolic leader of the Black freedom struggle, they also serve as indicators of the popular narrative of civil rights history. David J. Garrow's *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*, published in 1986, is one of the most extensive singular biographies of King. Garrow writes of King's work from 1955 in Montgomery with the bus boycott, until his death in 1968. Chicago is included in two chapters, "Chicago and the 'War on Slums,' 1965-1966" and "The Meredith March, 'Black Power,' and the Chicago Open-Housing Protests, 1966." These two chapters successfully situate King's Chicago campaign within the larger context of the Black urban ghetto. They also situate the Chicago campaign within the larger national movement, including the South, Black Power, and the Watts uprisings. Though Garrow does provide some context within the longer narrative of civil rights organizing in Chicago, these two chapters end, like others, with suggestions that the Chicago campaign was a failure without expanding on the lasting effects of the campaign. Garrow finishes the second chapter on King in Chicago discussing King's own sense that Chicago had been a failure writing, "He was profoundly uncertain of what would come next, terrible vulnerable to doubts where he and the movement were headed, but still he had the strength to go forward."² Focusing on King alone, rather than the larger movement, fails to recognize the legacy of the SCLC's campaign to "End Slums" and the larger context in which King's work was situated.

² David Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Quill, William Morrow, 1987), 525.

In a similar vein, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years, 1965-68* by Taylor Branch, published in 2006, mentions Chicago, but fails to recognize the longer context of Chicago's organizing history. Branch's thesis on SCLC involvement in Chicago is that the campaign to "End Slums" in Chicago saved King from becoming just a regional figure and lifted him to the status of a national figure. Branch writes, "Chicago nationalized race, complementing the impact of Watts. Without King would be confined to posterity more as a regional figure."³ He goes on to write, "Northern expansion had aimed to promote awareness for the nationwide challenge of equal citizenship, and Chicago advanced this understated purpose perhaps too well," explaining that resistance to King in Chicago showcased the threat of de facto segregation so well that it was almost too much of a threat the White American public.⁴ Branch emphasizes King's clashes with Mayor Daley, putting the political conversations of powerful men at the forefront, rather than commenting on the many local community organizations King worked with in Chicago. He also writes about the violent marches through white neighborhoods in Chicago, which drew the most national attention, and support Branch's thesis.

The *Eyes on the Prize* series produced by Blackside, Inc. aired on PBS between 1987 and 1990. This accessible public history again traced the narrative through the lens of King and the SCLC, focusing mostly on King's year in Chicago. The hour-long segment, "Two Societies" sheds light on King's time in Chicago in the first half-hour and the Detroit riots in the second half. This pairing of King in Chicago and northern urban rioting, Watts or Detroit usually, is not uncommon, Branch does the same, and reinforces the perception of nonviolence in the north as a failure. This particular documentary, though some local leaders speak on camera, does not give

³ Taylor Branch, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years, 1965-68* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2006), 523.

⁴ Branch, *At Canaan's Edge*, 523.

context as to King's motivations for choosing Chicago as his destination for a northern campaign and ignores the longer history of civil rights organizing in Chicago. The *Eyes on the Prize* series is extensive in that it covers both breadth and depth of information regarding the Black freedom struggle and is also accessible to the greater public. The series, like Branch and Garrow, represents Chicago as King's northern failure and argues that nonviolent direct action could not work in the urban North.

Local Organizational Histories

The second category of historical writing I consulted in writing this thesis was local organizational histories. These works, written by activists personally involved, often for the sake of analysis following a period of self-reflection in the organization, give critical insight into the successes and failures of local organizations. They function both as primary and secondary sources in that they give distinct historical knowledge of the past works of the organization while also providing insight into the beliefs and biases of the author at the time of publication. Though certainly biased in many ways, most often by the author's own dedication to the organization being analyzed, these histories contain critical information about local organizations not necessarily documented in larger, more extensive works or organizations with limited archival records. Three books in particular exemplify this type of history as it pertains to civil rights in Chicago: *Perspectives on Operation Breadbasket* by Gary Massoni, *Black Self-Determination: The Story of The Woodlawn Organization* by Arthur M. Brazier and *Black Power/White Control: The Struggle of the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago* by John Hall Fish.

Massoni's work, published in 1971, exposes his biases as a close friend of Reverend Jesse Jackson, who led Operation Breadbasket in Chicago, but also provides a critical framework for understanding the organization as a "coordinating center" for Black community

development.⁵ Massoni also speaks, from personal experience, to the tensions between leadership and other problems the organization faced during the late 1960s. Though short, its inclusion in the collection of works, *Chicago 1966: Open Housing Marches, Summit Negotiations, and Operation Breadbasket* edited by David Garrow, recognizes its importance as a critical text analyzing Operation Breadbasket in Chicago. This piece also critically describes Jesse Jackson's relationship with the SCLC after King's death in 1968. Massoni's close connection to the organization serves as one of the advantages of this piece, but also opens the door for a variety of biases.

The two works on The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) give insight into the importance of the organization in the community and are the only extensive studies of TWO. They provide both historical analysis and primary source information based on the involvement of each author. Brazier, former leader of the CCCO and a key leadership figure in TWO, writes primarily with suggestions for the future of the organization, while still documenting the successes and failures he experienced working with TWO prior to 1969. He writes about the people and the problems of those local people in a way that only someone with direct access to the community could. Brazier concludes, "This book has tried to say one thing above all: The black freedom movement must be formulated, directed, and led by black people."⁶ This statement, coming from an activist involved with an organization founded in 1959 that continued through the 1960s and beyond, provides context for the long history of Black civil rights organizing in Chicago that embodied this principle from the beginning.

⁵ Gary Massoni, "Perspectives on Operation Breadbasket," in *Chicago 1966: Open Housing Marches, Summit Negotiations, and Operation Breadbasket*, ed. David J. Garrow (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1989), 250.

⁶ Arthur Brazier, *Black Self-Determination: The Story of the Woodlawn Organization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), 144.

Black Power/White Control by John Hall Fish reinforces many of the themes of Brazier's work. Fish, based on six years of "active participation" in TWO, writes largely in response to scholarly critiques of TWO's effectiveness.⁷ Most influential to my own study was Fish's conception of success in terms of civil rights in Chicago, writing, "This is a study of preliminary success; and a probe both of the possible failure inherent in any success that depends upon the present system of power and the possible success inherent in surviving in the existing system of power."⁸ He poses that success may simply be survival in society that is set on destruction of community organizations like TWO. He concludes that the very strength of TWO in the face of oppression, in 1973, "places TWO and the people of Woodlawn in a good position to continue the struggle. And continuing the struggle may be the best for which to hope."⁹ This conception of success as persistence rather than as measurable legislative progress, challenges the rubric of success used by most other scholars of civil rights history and informed my own measurements of success throughout this study.

Chicago Civil Rights Histories, 1966

Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering wrote the first comprehensive study of the Chicago civil rights movements following their own involvement in the movement itself. Like so many of the early organizational studies, their involvement in the movement brings biases, but also provided unique access to sources that have not been available to other scholars. Anderson and Pickering, though basing much of their work on meeting minutes and other organizational records, also had unique access to oral history interviews and personal archives of local activists.

Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago

⁷ John Hall Fish, *Black Power/White Control: The Struggle of the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), xi, 5.

⁸ Fish, *Black Power/White Control*, 11.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 331.

(1986) looks at the open housing campaign of 1965 and 1966 through longer lens of the 1960s, in particular looking at the creation of the CCCO in the early 1960s and the school boycotts that sparked this wave of civil rights organizing in Chicago. Though they look at a longer narrative, starting with the CCCO, they do not necessarily situate the 1960s within a longer context, including the construction of the ghettos or the political history of Chicago's color line.

Anderson and Pickering completed the archaeological work of finding primary sources, laying out a timeline, and unpacking the events and moments of key importance from 1963 to 1966. This work is crucial to the development of an archive and allows for other scholars, and myself, to build on that information in the process. Ultimately, Anderson and Pickering come to the conclusion that by the summer of 1967, "The civil rights movement had been defeated in Chicago and in the nation. It had lost the hope that it could create change. In place of hope, fear had moved to the fore."¹⁰ That conclusion conceptualizes the civil rights movement primarily as a nonviolent direct action movement meant to push for civil rights legislation. Though I challenge their conclusions, I utilize *Confronting the Color Line* as a backbone for my thesis and rely on their archaeological work to form the timeline and basic knowledge upon which my work is built.

Undoubtedly building on the work of Anderson and Pickering, James Ralph's *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (1993) looks at the civil rights movement through a distinctly King-centric lens. While Anderson and Pickering made a fair attempt to include other leadership and organizations in their study, Ralph looks almost exclusively at King's year in Chicago. Though he used many of the same sources as Anderson and Pickering, Ralph creates a narrative account of the civil rights struggle in Chicago.

¹⁰ Alan Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 336.

This narrative technique allows for a better understanding of the effects of King's campaign on Chicago's community organizing tradition, but still fails to recognize the longer trajectory of civil rights in Chicago that starts in the early 20th century and continues through until the present. Ralph starts to challenge the notion that civil rights in Chicago was a complete failure, writing "When the full extent of the Chicago civil rights movement is surveyed, SCLC is more properly the resuscitator of a dying movement in 1965 rather than as a hidden assassin of 1967."¹¹ He questions the role of the SCLC in Chicago and also writes that Chicago's civil rights movement of the 1960s proved large numbers of Black people in an industrial northern city could be mobilized for nonviolent direct action against mass violence.¹² Ralph concludes that civil rights, specifically the SCLC campaign, may have failed politically, but it was successful in mobilizing and organizing the city. He begins the process of challenging the notion that civil rights failed altogether, and this thesis will push even farther to challenge the meaning of success in the longer narrative of Chicago's civil rights struggle.

Contemporary Urban Histories

More recently scholars looking at the urban Black ghettos have also studied civil rights organizing in those areas. Both urban history and civil rights history have gained popularity in the last twenty years, and the convergence of these ideas have led to more studies of Black organizing outside of the South. Books like Amanda Seligman's *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* (2005) put the Chicago movement in context of citywide political history and the history of residential segregation. *Crucibles of Black Empowerment: Chicago's Neighborhood Politics from the New Deal to Harold Washington*

¹¹ James Ralph, *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 226.

¹² Ralph, *Northern Protest*.

(2014) helped build the longer narrative from a political perspective. Jakobi Williams's *From the Bullet to the Ballot: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago* (2015) provided critical information on the Black Power movement and Black Panther Party in Chicago. Specifically, Williams argues that President Barack Obama's community organizing can be traced to the Illinois Black Panther Party's coalition building, and it was that coalition building that changed electoral politics in Chicago. This argument helps shape my own argument that the long trajectory of Black civil rights organizing in Chicago led to the coalition-building techniques that are so often used in modern community organizing.

Overall, secondary sources on civil rights history still focus on the South as the locus of organization and King and the SCLC as the leadership that drove the movement. Though organizational analyses created during the 1960s and 1970s, and contemporary studies of Black urban ghettos challenge that focus, their narrow focus limits our understandings of the scope of Black community organizing and the long history of civil rights organizing in cities like Chicago. These histories add to the narrative, but focus too narrowly to place their topic within the longer trajectory of civil rights organizing.

The sources available, both primary and secondary, provided a great deal of local institutional and organizational history, but did not connect each segment to the longer, broader narrative of civil rights organizing in Chicago. To write, as through each individual period of community organization exists within a vacuum, would fail to recognize the connectedness of these neighborhoods and people involved in the communities themselves. Building a longer narrative of Black civil rights organizing in Chicago, from 1940 to 1970 and beyond, allows for a

more critical understanding of failure, success, and progress, as well as a more comprehensive understanding of how Chicago interacted with the national mass movement.

Chapter Overview

The first chapter, “Establishing Identity: The Great Migration and Early Civil Rights Organizing, 1900-1960” discusses the beginnings of Black life in Chicago. Starting at the turn of the 20th century significant Black populations moved to Chicago’s South Side looking for a better life than what was offered in the South. For the first time, Chicago’s White communities had to cope with large-scale issues of race, which led to the creation of the South Side “Black Belt” ghetto and the codification of racial segregation in the city. In 1955, Mayor Richard J. Daley took office. Under his rule Chicago experienced the greatest civil rights organizing activity. But from the early establishment of Chicago’s Black community on the South and West sides of the city, Black communities developed their own institutions for community improvement. These institutions included churches and hospitals, but also civil rights organizations like the NAACP, CORE, and local organizations like TWO. Chapter 1 introduces the political and physical landscape of Chicago and also introduces some of the earliest civil rights organizers and organizations, all of which played an important part in developing the civil rights organizing strategies of the 1960s.

The second chapter, “Coordinated Efforts: The Battle for Better Schools, 1960-1965” explains the transition from classical civil rights organizing by traditional institutions, like the Chicago Urban League and the NAACP, to local community organizations and ultimately the creation of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO). The important roles of local block clubs, tenant unions, and parent-teacher organizations in organizing for better

schools and the role of the CCCO as an umbrella organization for those institutions characterizes the Chicago civil rights struggle. During this period, the importance of coordinated effort across the city toward a single goal or in opposition to a single evil was at the forefront of organizing strategy and dominated the challenge against the Chicago Board of Education. This chapter explains how the civil rights organizations founded in the first half of the 20th century came of age from 1960 to 1965. The practice of community organizing and coordinated efforts would characterize Chicago's civil rights movements going forward, including the next fight for open housing.

The third chapter, "End the Slums: Martin Luther King, Jr., 1966 and Mass Movement in Chicago," details the coordinated efforts of King, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the CCCO in 1966 and 1967 when they worked together as the Chicago Freedom Movement (CFM). The CFM coordinated efforts of various grassroots organizations to build a mass movement focused on creating an open city. Their goals encompassed housing, employment and education. The CFM functioned mostly as a mass movement, utilizing grassroots organizations within the goals of a larger campaign. Although the CFM failed to advance civil rights legislation, it exemplifies mass movement in Chicago and showcases the potential for large-scale Black civil rights organizing in the urban North.

Chapter 4, "'Where Do We Go from Here?' Black Self-Determination Post-1966" details the transition from mass movement back to grassroots community organization in Chicago from 1966 to 1971. It also explains the rise of interracial, class-based organizing led by the Illinois Black Panther Party (ILBPP). From the lingering CFM projects to the collapse of the CCCO and the rise of the ILBP, the period of 1967 to 1971 involved self-reflection, reorganization and reassessment for activists in Chicago and nationally. Chapter 4 concludes this study of civil

rights organizing in Chicago, but also suggests that the long-term effects of Chicago's civil rights movements influenced the election of Chicago's first Black mayor, Harold Washington, and perhaps even President Barack Obama's senatorial and presidential campaigns.

As previously stated, this is by no means an exhaustive study of civil rights history in Chicago. The city is too large and the Black population too diverse for even an entire book to fully cover civil rights organizing in Chicago from 1940 to 1970. Instead this is an introduction to the themes and ideas that drove civil rights organizing in the city. It is a study of how Black Chicagoans fought against de facto segregation and an expansion on the more commonly understood history of Chicago's civil rights movement as existing only during King's "End Slums" campaign. Most importantly, this is a study of the development of Black community organizing in Chicago, from early institution building to local community organizing to coordinated efforts across the Black community and eventually to the coalition-building that remains a popular technique in community organization. Building a much longer genealogy of Black community organizing, starting with the arrival of Chicago's Black population during the Great Migration and continuing through the present, also creates a long history of institutional racism. Understanding how those two critical aspects of Black life in Chicago, community organizing and institutional racism, have challenged one another throughout the 20th century empowers contemporary agents in their efforts to challenge the same structural systems in the 21st century.

Chapter 1

Establishing Identity: The Great Migration and Early Civil Rights Organizing, 1900-1960

An old Chicago saying states, “The first white man in Chicago was a Negro.” This short but true statement refers to the first settler in Chicago, Haitian explorer Jean Baptiste Point du Sable. From his arrival in 1790 until the Great Migration of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Black population remained relatively small. The Great Migration brought Southern Black migrants north looking for a better life. During this period, starting in 1890, the Black population in Chicago grew significantly and developed the South Side “Black Belt.” Institution building began on the South Side as Black leaders built hospitals, businesses and established civil rights organizations. As the Black population increased, it soon outgrew the South Side and expanded into historically White neighborhoods. This expansion led to racial tensions and violence throughout the 1940s and 1950s. At the same time, Black civil rights organizing increased throughout the country and in Chicago, where the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and many local organizations developed organizing strategies that would influence activists for the rest of the 20th century. The influx of Black Southerners during the Great Migration and the community building on the South and West Sides of the city from 1900 to World War II set the foundations for Chicago’s civil rights movements throughout the rest of the 20th century.

By the turn of the 20th century, Chicago was a predominantly industrial, working-class city. As such, it attracted many European immigrants. The city, commonly known as the “city of neighborhoods,” touted communities delineated primarily by ethnic makeup. After Emancipation, Black Southerners migrated to the city, dismantling prior conceptions of race in

Chicago. The city, formerly made of up White ethnic immigrants from Poland, Ireland, and Germany, tried to fit Black migrants into the existing structures of ethnic segregation. During the period of Black migration, spanning from Emancipation to the late 1940s, it became increasingly clear that Black migrants would not fit into the makeup of the city as just another ethnic group, due mostly to racial discrimination that other ethnic groups were not subjected to. The racial inequalities between Black migrants and White European immigrants acted as catalysts for racial tensions in Chicago throughout much of the 20th century.

Black migration to Chicago came in several waves over the first half of the 20th century. The first wave, roughly 1890 to World War I, occurred as Black Southerners looked hopefully to the North as a land of economic and social opportunity. From 1890 to 1915, the Black population in Chicago grew from less than fifteen thousand to over fifty thousand.¹³ Still a relatively small community in comparison the overall population of the city, this period of growth led to the development of the South Side Black Belt. This neighborhood, described by historian Allan Spear as “a narrow finger of land, wedged between the railroad yards and industrial plants just west of Wentworth Avenue and fashionable homes east of Wabash Avenue,” provided just enough space for the Black population in 1915.¹⁴ Though at this time the area still held hope for Black Southern migrants, the concentrated Black population would soon fall to slums and extreme poverty.

As the Black population continued to increase pre-WWI, the concentration of Black Chicagoans living in the Black Belt also increased and residents questioned whether the city would ever integrate. Chicagoans also grew increasingly aware of their confinement to their own

¹³ Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 11.

¹⁴ Spear, *Black Chicago*, 12.

neighborhoods, specifically the South Side Black Belt and the growing Black enclave on the West Side. By 1910, over thirty percent of Black people in Chicago lived in predominantly Black sections of the city and over sixty percent lived in areas that were more than 20 percent Black.¹⁵ As the population grew and the concentration of Black people on the South Side increased, a housing shortage plagued the city. Though it would not peak until after World War I, the Black Belt already suffered overcrowding in its poorest neighborhoods. Overcrowding led to an expansion of the Belt east, into a predominantly White, “comfortable” middle-class neighborhood.¹⁶ The expansion led to some of the first widespread instances of violence from White neighbors who rejected the Black “intrusion” into their neighborhoods as well as White protests and attempts to out-bid Black property buyers.¹⁷ This trend of Black expansion (or “intrusion”) followed by White protest and violence repeated many times throughout the first half of the 20th century. Housing and expansion into White neighborhoods dominated discussions around improvement of Black life in Chicago prior to WWI.

As housing tensions grew, a job shortage caused by the drastic population boom between 1890 and 1915 plagued the city. Much of the working-class White population originally came to Chicago for employment in industrial labor, as did the Black population. Newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* and recruiters from Northern companies sold a promise that Chicago provided equal opportunity to jobs and freedom from the economic exploitation of the South. When Black migrants arrived, however, many failed to find jobs, particularly before the surge of war industry. Spear writes, “Most employers were simply disposed against hiring Negroes so long as an adequate supply of white labor was available,” and in Chicago there were still many White

¹⁵ Ibid., 17.

¹⁶ Ibid., 17.

¹⁷ Ibid., 21.

ethnic immigrants and second-generation laborers seeking employment.¹⁸ Black workers faced outright discrimination in hiring processes, but they were also excluded from many of the labor unions and apprenticeship programs in the city. This made it particularly difficult for Black workers without skills to attain them, and those who did have skills, could not join the unions to help them get jobs. Racial tensions fueled Black exclusion from the job market and worsened even further due to the citywide job shortage.

In response to growing racial tensions and inequalities surrounding housing and jobs, the Black community became even more self-contained during this period. In large part due to Black Chicagoan's exploited identity within Chicago's socioeconomic structure, the Black South Side became a nearly self-sufficient enclave. Jobs were the exception, as Black workers still relied on White employment. Even so, Black leadership encouraged self-sufficiency in business. Though this self-help and self-sufficiency rhetoric was often tinged with middle-class privilege stemming from those who had settled earlier in the century, the rhetoric of racial uplift served as the foundation of many social institutions on the South Side. The church, for instance, became one of the most stable institutions in the Black community and provided many social services for residents of the Black Belt.¹⁹ Other institutions developed as well, including Provident Hospital, men's clubs similar to the Young Men's Christian Association, women's clubs, and many other institutions that were often patterned after White organizations of the social settlement movement."²⁰ Many of these institutions treated the Black migrants coming from the South similarly to how White community institutions treated new European immigrants in the preceding decades. They incorporated the new residents into the community and made the

¹⁸ Ibid., 34.

¹⁹ Ibid., 91.

²⁰ Ibid., 103.

transition easier for them. In this aspect, the Black community organizations mimicked European immigrant communities. Despite the population increase and Black institution building, on the eve of WWI, Chicago's Black population still had an uncertain fate.

WWI brought a second wave of Black migrants to Chicago. According to Spear, "Chicago was one of the principal destinations of the World War I migrants. Its location at the head of two major southern railroads, its industrial opportunities, and the fame of its Negro community attracted many of the Negroes who were seeking homes in the North," which exacerbated the housing shortage.²¹ By the end of WWI, Chicago had experienced another significant wave of migration, but the patterns of settlement had not changed.²² The vast majority of migrants coming to Chicago continued to settle on the South Side, though the Black population on the West Side grew as well. This phase of migration led to development of community organizations as well as increased racial tensions across the city as Black neighborhoods expanded and White veterans returned to the city.

Racial tensions reached a boiling point in the summer of 1919, when the Race Riots of 1919 plagued the city. Referred to nationally as, "Red Summer," racial violence broke out across the country, north and south of the Mason-Dixon line. Chicago was not immune to this violence. On July 27, an incident occurred at the 29th Street beach, when a Black teenager floated into the unofficially designated White beach north of 29th Street. Though not defined by law, Chicago's beachgoers understood that street as a point of demarcation for the unofficially segregated beaches. White bathers stoned the teenager and he drowned as White men kept Black help from reaching him. A White police officer at the scene refused to arrest any of the White assaulters. When that news reached bathers at nearby beaches, "a mob of fifty men marched to Twenty-

²¹ Ibid., 140.

²² Ibid., 146.

ninth Street to avenge the death of the boy.”²³ This incident, along with growing tensions across the city and nation, led to a week-long uprising that left 15 Black people dead, 13 White people dead, 500 wounded, and at least 1,000 Black people homeless due to arson. The government handled the uprising with force, mostly defending Black communities against White violence. On the first night, 500 police officers were sent into the main area of violence.²⁴ By the end of the week over 3,000 National Guardsmen had been brought into the city and police leadership gave orders to “shoot to kill any person who endeavored to start a disturbance, white or black.”²⁵ This uprising shook the city and brought issues of race to the forefront of discussion in Black and White communities. Black leadership, largely middle-class professionals, condemned the rioters. A group writing as “leading citizens of the colored race” in the *Chicago Tribune* said:

The colored people especially who stood by the country so loyally in its efforts to establish world wide democracy all the protection the rigid enforcement of law affords, even if it is necessary to call out every state militiaman now available. This is all the colored people of Chicago ask and they pledge their lives to assist the law officers and the good citizens of the state to this end, and we have no patience with colored rioters, and less with white ones. All should be dealt with by the law’s severest and most extreme penalties.²⁶

Black leaders who sought citywide respect had to condemn the Black violence even if they also detested the teen’s drowning and other acts of racial violence. Black leadership made clear that politics, not retaliatory violence, was the solution to race problems not only in Chicago, but also in America as a whole. The Race Riots of 1919 challenged Chicago’s conceptions of their Black communities. Arvarh E. Strickland, a Chicago historian, wrote, “It was not until the riot of 1919

²³ “Riot Sweeps Chicago,” *The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Aug 2, 1919, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/493562238?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

²⁴ “Riot Sweeps Chicago,” *Chicago Defender*, Aug. 2, 1919.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ “Punish all Guilty of Riot, Negroes’ Plea,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), Jul. 29, 1919, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagotribune/docview/174516257/47E14D8EB4E446C7PQ/3?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

that grudging recognition was given to the fact that Negroes should have a larger voice in the economic, social, and political affairs of the city,” that the immediate threat to Chicagoans, White and Black, was the race issue.²⁷ The riots forced Chicago politicians to confront issues of race in the city.

The riots led to an immediate search for a solution to racial tensions. For many White leaders and residents, the answer involved more rigid segregation through various zoning restrictions. Some Black leadership, particularly those with the most influence, shared this belief in segregation as the solution. In 1917, just two years before these riots, an agreement was made between the Chicago Real Estate Board, Black realtors and community leaders. The agreement meant to improve and reconstruct the Black Belt under the auspices that “If improvements could be made to black homes, businesses, schools and churches within the black belt and if good lines of transportation between the black belt and the rest of the city could be developed than blacks would have no reason to move out into white neighborhoods,” and if Black residents did not move into White neighborhoods the tensions would cease.²⁸ The agreement did not actually better the Black Belt, but rather White residents used it as an example of Black support for segregation. White residents then tried to promote policies like racial restrictive covenants as beneficial for Black communities, at least until the Supreme Court banned racial restrictive covenants in 1948. Sociologists St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton describe the period directly following the Race Riots of 1919, in their prolific study of Black Chicago, *Black Metropolis*, as the “first formal codification of Negro-white relations in the Chicago since the

²⁷ Arvarh E. Strickland, *History of the Chicago Urban League* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 261.

²⁸ Cheryl Hudson, “‘The Negro In Chicago’: Harmony in Conflict, 1919-1922,” *European Journal of American Culture* 29, no. 1, <http://search.ebscohost.com.revproxy.brown.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=48219339&site=ehost-live>, accessed Jan. 10, 2016, 56.

days of the Black code.”²⁹ Chicago’s government leaders codified race and defined the color line in reaction to the racial violence of 1919.

WWII, like the First World War, led to another increase in Black population in Chicago. Still strained in the areas of employment and housing from the first two phases of Black migration, Black communities struggled to incorporate these newest migrants into their populations. The Black enclaves on the South and West Sides were overcrowded, but Southern migrants still settled in these places, in part due to housing discrimination, but also because of the many resources available in these communities for recent migrants. Historian Jeffrey Helgeson writes, “In areas where the population was 99 percent black, gross population densities increased from 46,700 to 54,000 persons per square mile, while in the city as a whole the average density increased from 16,000 to 17,000 individuals per square mile.”³⁰ Chicago’s Black slums developed as early 1945, as population density grew and housing continued to physically decay. Meanwhile, racial restrictive covenants remained intact until 1948, and after that redlining continued to keep Black residents confined to these historically Black enclaves of the city.

Unlike the job shortages of the pre-War years, WWII created abundant employment in the war industries in Chicago. Immediately following the end of the war, increased automation and suburban expansion threatened the job market and created another shortage. Particularly challenging for Black communities, many industrial jobs moved farther from the centralized downtown that once employed many Black laborers and distance made employment inaccessible to Black workers. Job shortages throughout the city led to increased racial tensions as labor unions and apprentice programs remained closed to Black migrants looking for work.

²⁹ St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 69.

³⁰ Jeffrey Helgeson, *Crucibles of Black Empowerment: Chicago’s Neighborhood Politics from the New Deal to Harold Washington* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 122.0

As the population increased in Chicago's Black communities, they grew more socially and economically diverse. Divisions between the established middle-class, many of whom had settled in Chicago during the earlier periods of migration, and the more recently settled population, grew more pronounced. Issues of political representation and community organization exposed these divisions, in particular within the Chicago branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Chicago Urban League. Organizations created to help migrants transition to city life floundered and professional leadership in the Black communities increased, though Black migrants living in slums still made up the majority of the population of the Black South and West Sides of the city. Social differences within the Black community exposed many internal divisions post-WWII, but also allowed for professional leadership to gain influence in civil rights organizing, particularly around housing and jobs.

Post-WWII, the country experienced relative prosperity. War industry increased significantly and brought business to the city and surrounding area. Southern migrants, Black and White, moved to the North in search of improved economic conditions. This influx of business and population following WWII brought prosperity to the city (less to Black communities), but also aggravated the housing market. The housing shortage led to expansion of the Chicago metropolitan area to what would become the surrounding suburbs. Chicago expanded in nearly every way, economically, ethnically, and physically, from WWII until the decline in cities nationwide during the 1950s and 1960s, as businesses and residents moved to the suburbs.

Chicago politics and the “Daley Machine”

Chicago’s city politics touched nearly every aspect of residents’ lives. Machine politicians ran the city for most of the 20th century, perhaps most powerfully Mayor Richard J. Daley, who tightly controlled the city from 1955 to 1976. Under his mayoralty, the city, like the rest of the country, went through the turmoil of the 1960s and developed into the city, problems and all, that it is today.

Daley was born in 1902 to a family in Bridgeport, an Irish Catholic neighborhood on the South Side, known for its political influence in the city. Biographers Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor write about political dynasty in their book, *American Pharaoh*, “An old Chicago adage holds that ‘the Jews own it, the Irish run it, and the blacks live in it,’” clarifying that, “If the Irish did not run Chicago—most of the businesses, banks and newspapers were in protestant hands—they did dominate the Democratic machine out of all proportion to their numbers.”³¹ Chicago’s politicians before Daley, and after, were known for their corruption, relying largely on patronage politics to control their electorate. Chicago was a large and diverse city and political control was key to success. Chicago voters avoided innovative politicians, instead promoting politicians who rewarded votes, with jobs or money, and could maintain the status quo.

Daley grew up into the Chicago Democratic machine. In Bridgeport, hub of the political machine, he was well-liked, proven through his presidency of the Hamburg Athletic Club, and “benefited from the premium the machine placed on traditional virtues: discretion, sobriety, plodding hard work, fitting in, and a willingness to follow orders.”³² Cohen and Taylor describe the “tenets of the regular Democrat’s creed:”

³¹ Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor, *American Pharaoh, Mayor Richard J. Daley: His Battle for Chicago and the Nation* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2000), 37.

³² Cohen and Taylor, *American Pharaoh*, 40.

- 1) Be faithful to those above you in the hierarchy, and repay those who are faithful to you;
- 2) Back the whole machine slate, not individual candidates or programs;
- 3) Be respectful of elected officials and party leaders;
- 4) Never be ashamed of the party, and defend it proudly;
- 5) Don't ask questions;
- 6) Stay on your own turf, and keep out of conflicts that don't concern you;
- 7) Never be first, since innovation brings with it risk;
- 8) Don't get caught.³³

These so-called tenets informed Daley's politics as he moved his way up the ranks from precinct captain to mayor. In 1955, he won his first mayoral election with 55 percent of the vote, the narrowest margin in more than a decade, speaking to the tightly controlled and powerful machine politics that dominated the city before 1955.³⁴ The 11th ward in Bridgeport, known as the "Automatic Eleven," won the election for Daley, providing the 125,179 votes necessary to win.³⁵ His political connections to the Irish Catholic South Side proved most beneficial.

Soon after the election Daley changed the power of budget control from the City Council to his own hand, an act characteristic of machine politicians.³⁶ Daley then maintained sole control over the budget, giving him ultimate authority in the city while also removing City Council's most powerful political tool. With this change, Daley also ended the requirement that City Council approve all city contracts over \$2,500 and required that "all requests for favors of any significant size" be channeled to the Mayor himself.³⁷ These two changes made it so that if anything, positive or negative, happened in the city Daley received the credit for it. It reduced City Council's authority, utilizing them as more of an advisory body than a group with real power. In setting up these policies during his first months in office, Daley took the first steps toward building his political machine.

³³ Ibid., 41.

³⁴ Ibid., 140.

³⁵ Ibid., 140.

³⁶ Ibid., 144.

³⁷ Ibid., 144.

Daley's first full-scale crusade in the city, and one of the campaign promises he ran on, involved physically building the city and improving city services. Both of these projects also expanded the patronage system, which allowed Daley to provide favors to companies and communities in the form of building and service jobs.³⁸ Daley also used these two projects to develop bonds with organized labor, an especially important project to him because he had many personal ties to labor unions from family and from his time living and governing in working-class Bridgeport.³⁹ Organized labor was "an integral part of the Democratic machine, and it had played a large role in getting him elected. As mayor, Daley came through generously for the city's labor unions."⁴⁰ All of these building and city service projects brought business to the city and allowed Daley to appease the business community and working- and middle-class neighborhoods that relied on the patronage jobs for employment. They looked good politically for Daley and also allowed him to expand his control across the city.

Daley had a complicated relationship with the Black electorate during his time in office. Daley maintained control over the Black communities on the South and West Sides in two ways: the Black submachine and building public housing projects.⁴¹ The submachine existed for many years leading up to Daley's election, and was led by a Black member of Congress, William Dawson. Dawson, after 1952, aligned himself tightly with the Democratic machine, particularly gaining patronage jobs for his constituents on the south Side. He kept the Black wards under control for much of the 1950s and encouraged the conservative policies of civil rights organizations in Chicago, like the NAACP where he had a great deal of influence. By the end of

³⁸ Ibid., 166.

³⁹ Ibid., 169.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 170.

⁴¹ For more on Black Chicago and machine politics reference William J. Grimshaw's *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

the 1950s, Dawson had taken a larger role in Congress and moved, almost full-time, to Washington. This “self-imposed exile,” left Daley with a hole in the submachine, to be filled with six aldermen, deemed the “Silent Six.”⁴² The Silent Six often refused to offer an opinion on city council business until the mayor told them what to believe.⁴³ They were easier to manage than Dawson, a growing threat to Daley as he became more and more involved in the civil rights struggle, and they were at least somewhat acceptable to their own constituencies. Through this Black submachine, Daley kept the Black communities of Chicago loyal and maintained control, even through much of Chicago’s civil rights movements.

Daley’s second major act of control in Chicago’s Black communities was building public housing projects in the Chicago ghettos. There was a significant housing crisis in Chicago by the 1950s. The Black enclaves were drastically overcrowded and White residents were starting to move out to the suburbs. Particularly dangerous to Daley’s political career was the departure of his White voting base from the city, as more than 77 percent of new homes built in the Chicago Metropolitan area between 1945 and 1959 were situated beyond the city limits and “an average of three and a half blocks per week converted from white to black ownership.”⁴⁴ As a solution to this housing dilemma and to relieve the overcrowding in black neighborhoods, Daley contracted to build huge housing projects on the South Side. Stateway Gardens, completed in 1958, was made up of 1,684 units in two seventeen-story buildings. By 1962, Daley had built the Robert Taylor Homes, at the time the largest housing project in the world. The Taylor Homes housed 27,000 people in 28 identical sixteen-story buildings on the South Side. For Daley, the high-rise housing projects accomplished three goals: they relieved overcrowding, confined Black

⁴² Roger Biles, *Richard J. Daley: Politics, Race, and the Governing of Chicago* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995), 93.

⁴³ Biles, *Richard J. Daley*, 93.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 4, 84.

populations to the historically Black wards under Daley's Black submachine control and maintained segregation, and created more patronage jobs through the building projects themselves.⁴⁵ Daley controlled the demographics of the city through these high-rise public housing projects and could thus maintain the status quo across the city.

The Mayor had a sophisticated understanding of Chicago's political climate. Unlike some Southern politicians who could reveal their support for segregation outright, Daley relied on Black votes too heavily to completely lose their support. On some issues, such as school desegregation, Daley simply kept a low profile to avoid confrontation. In regards to housing, Daley was publically compelled to promote fair policies, but did not actually want to see the White South Side integrated, at least not under his governance.⁴⁶ Integration threatened to push White voters out of the city, and as much as he had control over votes in Black communities, he relied on votes from the White base. This complex relationship with the Black electorate frequently led to broken promises and disappointment in the Black community, but also helped keep Daley in office.

Origins Black Civil Rights Organizing

Chicago's Black communities relied on Black institutions to provide for their communities when the local government failed. The NAACP was founded in 1909 in New York City, and spread nationally during the second decade of the 20th century. The Chicago branch of the NAACP, created in 1910, was dominated by a "biracial patriarchy of men of high

⁴⁵ Ibid., 90.

⁴⁶ Cohen and Taylor, *American Pharaoh*, 171.

socioeconomic status” for the first twenty years until the Great Depression.⁴⁷ During this period of formation, from 1910 to 1932, the Chicago branch held mostly conservative views, leaving activism by the wayside “so as not to foment mass dissatisfaction with the status quo.” During this period the leadership also created distance between themselves and the membership of the organization, reinforcing their own elitist ideologies in doing so.⁴⁸ Until the Great Depression and a reorganization of the branch, the Chicago NAACP floundered as they failed to garner the support necessary to sustain the branch.

Between 1933 and 1957, the branch achieved “primacy in the city as *the* agency of African American protest.”⁴⁹ Gradually the branch grew more inclusive, more middle-class, and more liberal in ideology and activism, though it remained relatively conservative, particularly in regard to activism, until the mid-1950s. As Chicago’s Black population increased, the socioeconomic make-up of the community changed as more people had access to middle-class status. This led to a more democratic branch, as that middle-class element rose to leadership positions within the organization.⁵⁰ Scholar Christopher Robert Reed writes that the most influential change in the organization occurred during the war years when “working class elements joined the leadership and engaged in decision-making for the first time. Labor and left-wing activist participation increased, and the general population more readily accepted the branch as its advocate.”⁵¹ The middle-class leadership, during this period, created a more inclusive branch, more willing to promote and listen to the working-class members of the organization that spoke, perhaps, most closely for Chicago’s Black communities. Opening the

⁴⁷ Christopher Robert Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership, 1910-1966* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 3.

⁴⁸ Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership*, 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

organization to the working-class, as opposed to only the elite, changed the goals and strategies the branch used moving forward into the late 1940s and 1950s.

The Chicago NAACP challenged segregated public accommodations in its first protest campaigns of the 1920s and 1930s. Its first campaign targeted the Tivoli Theater in 1925, after “white ushers assaulted a black man and forced him and his female companion, a Columbia University student and member of the socially prominent Proctor family of Atlanta, to leave their first-class seats for the isolation of the balcony.”⁵² The NAACP, in part due to the prominence of the Proctor family, took up the case in court and won. This particular incident, especially due to the social class of the plaintiffs in the case, speaks to the still elite middle-class nature of the Chicago NAACP. In 1930 the branch led a “Don’t Spend Your Money Where You Can’t Work” campaign, displaying an early example of direct action protest, rare to the branch that focused on litigation as a means of protest and activism. The campaign aimed to secure proportionate hiring for Blacks in jobs in their own neighborhoods.⁵³ After thirteen weeks of protest they successfully secured jobs as counter clerks for at least twenty young Black women.⁵⁴ As a tactic new to the Chicago NAACP, this direct action protest campaign helped to bridge the gap between the middle-class and elite and also showcased the power of the dollar as a tactic to pressure White businesses and government leaders.

As the Black population continued to grow after WWII, housing became the focus of Black civil rights organizations in Chicago. By the late 1940s, the NAACP was recognized as an institution in Chicago unlike any other. It had real authority in Black communities, but also gained access to the government and justice system unlike many other Black institutions. This

⁵² Ibid., 72.

⁵³ Ibid., 81.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 81.

led to the NAACP's important role in the struggle against racial restrictive covenants. Their litigation skills were key in challenging the covenants in courts and the branch ran an extensive program to monitor their use throughout the city, prompting the creation of a fund from the national office to fight the covenants.⁵⁵ While civil rights activists exposed the issues of slums later in the 1960s, these early battles for fair housing and against restrictive covenants maintained the branch's middle-class priorities in focusing mainly on the ability of Black families to move to the growing, predominantly-White Chicago suburbs. Overall, the Chicago NAACP effectively challenged racial restrictive covenants throughout the city and continued to expand their authority as a Black legal institution during this decade.

The mid-1950s brought changes in leadership to the Chicago NAACP and to the city of Chicago. As Mayor Daley took office in 1955, the NAACP elected a new president Willoughby Abner. Abner, unlike other leaders of the branch, developed an "aggressive agenda for civil rights in Chicago, calling for increased employment for blacks, an end to overcrowding and double shifts in black schools and improved police protection in racially tense neighborhoods on the South Side."⁵⁶ But it was not just Abner's targets that made him different, but he also utilized different strategies to challenge them. Abner came to the NAACP with experience, not as a lawyer, but rather as an official with the United Auto Workers. This experience led him to believe more in demonstrations than litigation as the way forward for civil rights in Chicago.⁵⁷ He was the first leader of the Chicago branch to focus on action rather than litigation. Abner "endorsed direct confrontation with the forces of racism, with no holds barred." Historian Christopher Robert Reed describes him, as "extremely ambitious, courageous and

⁵⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁵⁶ Cohen and Taylor, *American Pharaoh*, 205.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 205.

uncompromising, he drew strength from among his supporters based on these personal qualities and his articulate, gentlemanly, persuasive manner.”⁵⁸ Abner changed the purpose of the NAACP in Chicago and, during the late 1950s, created Chicago’s most progressive iteration of the NAACP.

Abner’s first challenge as president involved confronting racial conflict in the Trumbull Park Homes Project, a federally funded housing project on the South Side. Beginning September 1953, the first Black families moved into the formerly all-White housing projects.⁵⁹ This increased racial tensions and violence from the White residents of the Homes. Immediately after the first Black family moved in, violence erupted and the NAACP reached out expressing willingness to take their case to the courts, arguing that the family and other Black families moving in the Trumbull Park Homes needed and deserved protection as Chicago and American citizens. As they went to court, more Black families moved into the neighborhood and were met with White violence. Integration occurred slowly, as the Chicago Housing Authority ordered integration only “when law and order could be maintained.”⁶⁰ As per this order, so long as White violence persisted, the police could not maintain law and order throughout the city, as they were too busy protecting the small Black population in Trumbull Park.⁶¹ Eventually this concern over so-called law and order, led to police closing the streets of the Trumbull Park Homes to Black

⁵⁸ Reed, *The Chicago NAACP*, 62.

⁵⁹ “Negro Tenants to Use Streets in Trumbull Park,” *Atlanta Daily World* (Atlanta, GA), April 11, 1956, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/docview/491084630/FB58EB368E004AC6PQ/8?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

⁶⁰ L.F. Palmer, “Housing Riot Flares Up Again in Chicago,” *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Sep. 5, 1953, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/docview/492831944/FB58EB368E004AC6PQ/20?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

⁶¹ Palmer, “Housing Riot Flare Up Again,” *The Chicago Defender*, Sep. 5, 1953.

people even passing through, and limited movement to the Black residents living there.⁶² This limitation of Black freedom, imposed because the authorities could not control the White residents of the neighborhood, caused great backlash from the NAACP who then called a mass meeting to protest and discuss further action. At the same time, the Chicago Negro Chamber of Commerce planned a march around City Hall to pressure Mayor Daley to make changes.⁶³ The combined efforts of the NAACP and the Chamber of Commerce eventually led Daley to suggest a meeting between Abner and the Police Commissioner to work out an agreement. By November 1955, two violent years after the Homes were first integrated, the Commissioner agreed to open the streets to Black residents.⁶⁴ Despite continued White violence even after the promised police protection, Abner and the NAACP celebrated the successful protest and litigation, particularly touting success in securing the attention of Mayor Daley.

As the NAACP worked on the Trumbull Park situation, they simultaneously took up the issue of schools. Inspired by the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision in 1954, the Chicago NAACP started critically analyzing issues of segregation in Chicago's public schools. They first gathered information on school citywide, as this particular issue had never been studied at any great length. An education committee led by Faith Rich, who would go on to leadership positions in the Chicago's civil rights movements of the 1960s, collected data to

⁶² George Daniels, "Trumbull Park Fiasco: Hoodlums Make Mockery of Law," *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Aug. 14, 1954, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/docview/492827726/1B700048F9EA4737PQ/1?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 8, 2016.

⁶³ "Trumbull Trouble: Chicago Groups Set March on City Hall," *Afro-American* (Baltimore MD), March 20, 1954, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/docview/531830496/FB58EB368E004AC6PQ/27?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 8, 2016.

⁶⁴ "More Freedom for Trumbull Tenants," *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Nov. 12, 1955, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/docview/492890971/FB58EB368E004AC6PQ/26?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 7, 2016.

present to the Board of Education in 1955.⁶⁵ Mayor Daley remained quiet on the issue, while the NAACP lobbied for improved and integrated schools for Black students. Abner challenged the schools on issues like district boundaries, scheduling, the double-shift program and transfer policies, all of which, he claimed, could be improved by creating a more integrated school system.⁶⁶ While Abner and the NAACP at this time did not make a great deal of headway in regards to integrating the schools, their studies influence the larger school desegregation movement of the early 1960s. Importantly, Abner and the NAACP, by challenging the schools on this issue, displayed their willingness to look beyond litigation as a means of protest.

Willoughby Abner's leadership from 1953 to 1957 took place as the mayoral office transitioned to Richard J. Daley's hand. Daley had a powerful Black Democratic submachine working on the South Side, led by Representative William Dawson. Dawson had been a friend of the NAACP up until Abner's leadership. Abner challenged Dawson's dedication to the civil rights, particularly his unwillingness to introduce legislation, and as such, when Daley asked Dawson to oust Abner, he used his power in the Black community to do just that. Abner was a threat, not only to Dawson but a growing threat to Daley, and in 1957 a "political takeover" of the Chicago NAACP changed the dynamics of the organization.⁶⁷ Although Dawson avoided interfering directly with the NAACP election, through his support he influenced votes and forced Abner out of office. His replacement returned the NAACP to its traditional role in mostly litigation, and that remained the primary role of the organization, with some exceptions, for the rest of the civil rights era.

⁶⁵ Reed, *The Chicago NAACP*, 175.

⁶⁶ "NAACP Wants Chicago Schools Desegregated," *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Dec. 15, 1956, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492975524/9848A39C6134FF1PQ/67?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 8, 2016.

⁶⁷ Reed, *The Chicago NAACP*, 190.

For over thirty years, the NAACP maintained their traditional role as a legal arm of the civil rights movement in Chicago, but there was a growing protest movement in need of organization. The first major organization to fill that role was the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which came out of a group of students affiliated with the University of Chicago and James Farmer's idea to apply Gandhian techniques of nonviolence to the resolution of racial and industrial conflict in the United States.⁶⁸ In October 1941, six students and members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a religious pacifist group, formed a race relations cell. The group was interracial, half were Socialists, and all of them favored industrial unions. They also believed ideologically in pacifism and nonviolence.⁶⁹ That dedication to nonviolence as a strategic tactic as well as a way of life made up the principle ideal of CORE. Those six members eventually split their race relations cell into its own organization, CORE.

CORE first and most successfully targeted public accommodations in Chicago. Their method followed Gandhi's strategy, as they would,

Start with an attempt to convert the opponent through negotiations, and then successively move on to more militant actions. Thus, if negotiations failed, agitation was employed to arouse public opinion as a means of putting pressure on the evildoer. Next, if this did not succeed, came parades and other forms of colorful demonstrations, and eventually an ultimatum threatening more radical actions.⁷⁰

They targeted Jack Spratt Coffee House first, a restaurant that refused to serve Black customers. They followed Gandhi's technique, first trying to negotiate with the manager, and then moving on to further strategies. When negotiations failed because the manager claimed, "they could not afford the loss of patronage" serving Black people may cause, CORE suggested she ask her current customers their opinions. She refused. They then suggested she try serving Black

⁶⁸ August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, "How CORE Began," *Social Science Quarterly* 58, no. 4, (March 1969), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42859959>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016, 789.

⁶⁹ Meier and Rudwick, "How CORE Began," 791.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 796.

customers for a month and then have a bookkeeper look at the profit, if indeed she lost money they would make up the deficit and not return again.⁷¹ She refused to negotiate.

CORE left the restaurant and reconvened to plan the next steps. In May 1942, just a few weeks after the first confrontation, Farmer and his cohorts began “the first organized civil rights sit-in in American history.”⁷² According to his account in his memoir *Lay Bare the Heart*, “A group of twenty-eight persons entered Jack Spratt in parties of two, three, and four. In each party, there was one black man or woman. With the discipline of peacefulness strictly observed, we occupied all available seating spaces at the counter and in booths.”⁷³ He goes on to describe White support in the restaurant,

Two whites, who were not obviously members of our group and were sitting some distance from each other at the counter, were served. One, a well-dress middle-aged woman, thanked the waitress when her food arrived, but sitting with hands in her lap, did not touch it. The other, a man, also older, promptly passed his food to the black beside him, who proceeded to eat it.⁷⁴

When the manager tried to remove the CORE activists from the restaurant, she called the police only to find that Farmer had already contacted them to tell them about this situation and assure the authorities could not remove the students from the restaurant without breaking civil rights law.⁷⁵ CORE succeeded and Jack Spratt Coffee House officially changed their policy. Further tests by CORE members proved that the sit-in had been successful. Despite success, the sit-in did not receive much attention in the press. Farmer writes, “If we were lucky, there might be a small paragraph on the back page of the Chicago Tribune saying, in effect, that a few nuts and crackpots sat in a restaurant until they were served, or thrown out, or the place closed—

⁷¹ James Famer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Arbor House, 1985), 106.

⁷² Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 106.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 107.

whichever came first.”⁷⁶ Nonetheless, the protest encouraged CORE membership as the organization spread across the country and nonviolence proved effective.

Their second campaign, integrating the White City Roller Rink in 1944, drew more public attention. CORE used an interracial group of activists to test the rink, which was known to refused admission to Black customers. Rink management claimed that only members of the exclusive “White City Club” could enter, but that club only existed to deny entry to Black customers.⁷⁷ After testing the policy and then unsuccessfully attempting negotiations with management, CORE moved on to the their next step. This involved passing out leaflets, picketing and discouraging Black organizations from holding events in the roller rink’s ballroom, which had previously been used for Black dances.⁷⁸ Between the nine weeks of picketing and the loss of business, which management claimed decreased 50 percent during the protest, the Roller Rink suffered. When CORE took rink management to court the judge upheld the Illinois civil rights law, ordering management to desegregate their facilities.⁷⁹ It took nearly two years for the case to get through the courts, but in 1946 the White City Roller Rink officially dropped their policy banning Black admission and CORE had won yet another public accommodations case in Chicago.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Ibid., 115.

⁷⁷ “Fight to Crack White City Jim Crow Rink,” *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), Sept. 16, 1944, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492760314/2D1A A03874C045B6PQ/1?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

⁷⁸ “Fight to Crack White City Jim Crow Rink,” *The Chicago Defender*, Sept. 16, 1944.

⁷⁹ “Anti-Negro Skating Rink Loses Suit to Halt Pickets,” *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), March 9, 1946, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492667129/D9F1 BB2F2B6048A2PQ/2?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

⁸⁰ “White City Rink Race Ban Dropped,” *The Chicago Defender (National Edition)* (Chicago, IL), June 1, 1946,

Between these two successes and the growth of nonviolent ideology by activists in the South, CORE made a name for itself. In the 1950s they spent most of their energies expanding nationally, though organizing did continue in Chicago as CORE got involved with the school desegregation work led by the NAACP. This movement for better schools would become the biggest civil rights movement in Chicago by the early 1960s, and CORE's strategies of nonviolence would prove useful in the civil rights movements in Chicago and nationally.

At the same time the NAACP maintained traditional civil rights legal strategy in Chicago and CORE organized young college-aged protestors, grassroots community organizing developed in the city, largely based on the principles of community organizer Saul Alinsky. Alinsky, born in 1909, was a Jewish American sociology student and is generally considered the founder of modern community organizing. He outlined his program of community organizing in two published works, *Reveille for Radicals* and *Rules for Radicals*. He developed his program first working in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood, a mostly Eastern European immigrant community. Alinsky's model for community organizing was one of the major influences of Chicago's civil rights movements, particularly in the early 1960s, as Black leaders blended civil rights tactics, such as nonviolent direct action, with Alinsky's grassroots organizing strategies.

Alinsky writes in *Reveille* about the importance of power as the foundation of community organizing and community organization as necessary for any healthy community to thrive. He writes, "The present power age defines and evaluates everything in terms of power. To this common and accepted view the field of organization has been no exception. It is universally assumed that the function of a People's Organization is similar to that of any other kind of

<http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492779380/D9F1BB2F2B6048A2PQ/3?accountid=9758>, accessed Jan. 9, 2016.

organization, which is to become so strong, so powerful, that I can achieve its ends.”⁸¹ But important to this concept is how Alinsky defined a People’s Organization as, “Whatever program the people themselves decide. It is a set of principles, purposes, and practices which have been commonly agreed upon by the people.”⁸² In *Reveille for Radicals* and *Rules for Radicals*, Alinsky condemns those who move into communities and impart on them their own improvements and policies without asking the community itself what they would like to see done. He writes, “Too often the program is not a people’s program at all, but the product of one person, five persons, a church, a labor union, a business group, a social agency, or a political club—in short, a program that can be traced to one or two person or institutions, but not to the people themselves.”⁸³ While he accepts the importance of these agencies as powerful bodies within many communities, he also recognizes their weakness in failing to actually speak for the people whom they claim to serve. The Alinsky model thus works to develop leadership from within, which is similar to models used in later during the civil rights movement in the South by those like Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker. Indigenous leadership and the power of organizing were the key aspects of Alinsky’s model that influenced Black leadership during Chicago’s civil rights movements.

Alinsky first developed this model in 1939 in the Back of the Yards neighborhood, while working on a sociological study. He organized the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, applying labor-organizing techniques he had learned working with the Congress of Industrial Organizations to the slums in this neighborhood. Back of the Yards was the notorious neighborhood described in Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*, and Alinsky aimed to organize so that

⁸¹ Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 53.

⁸² Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals*, 54.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 53.

“The most oppressed and exploited elements in the country could take control of their communities and their own destinies.”⁸⁴ He organized the slums and ghettos into their own unions to negotiate and improve conditions in the neighborhood in ways that the city council and social service agencies could not and would not. Alinsky saw that both city council members and social service, New Deal agencies with the best of intentions could never fully understand the weight of the problems because:

The fights for decent housing, economic security, health programs, and for many of those other social issues for which liberals profess their sympathy and support, are to the liberals simply intellectual affinities. They would like to see better housing, health, and economic security, but *they* are not *living* in the rotten houses; it is not *their* children who are sick; it is not *they* who are working with the specter of unemployment hanging over their heads; they are not fighting their *own* fight.⁸⁵

That view of liberals and liberal institutions brought Alinsky to conclude that the model of the “People’s Organization” was the most effective means of organizing. The Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, after seeing success in improving conditions through negotiating with the city, became the Industrial Areas Foundation, a national organization that worked to organize communities across the country.

During the 1950s, Alinsky expanded his work to include Black communities, most successfully in Woodlawn on the South Side. In 1959, with Alinsky’s organizing help, several Black clergymen in Woodlawn developed The Woodlawn Organization (TWO). TWO would be the most influential grassroots organization during the early 1960s Chicago civil rights movement, and the grassroots community organizing model used by Alinsky and TWO would be replicated in numerous organizations across the city. For TWO, in particular, leadership organized tenants’ unions to harness the power of the residents such that they could more

⁸⁴ Ibid., 72.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 134.

effectively negotiate with landlords and the city to improve the slum conditions in which they lived. The model proved effective. Alinsky condemned the model of internal colonialism that the White power structure used to maintain the Black slums writing:

This welfare-colonialism policy helped to assuage our guilt so we could congratulate ourselves on being honest, moral, and democratic while being dishonest, immoral, and anti-democratic. Furthermore, ours has been a zoo-keeper mentality of keeping the animals quiet or, to make it sound nicer, of maintaining law and order. We have not only shafted the blacks, but insisted that it was for their own good and that they must also like it!⁸⁶

Alinsky created his model for community organization to serve a White ethnic community and, as discussed, Black migrant communities were fundamentally different, but Alinsky insisted and proved with organizations like TWO that the model is just as effective in Black neighborhoods so long as the organizing is driven by the people of that community. Alinsky's model emphasizes the fact that Black people do have power, particularly collectively, and can function in their own communities as a sort of union to negotiate and demand change, often using pickets, rent strikes and boycotts, to reach those goals. TWO successfully asserted itself as the voice of Woodlawn's residents because it was made up of local leadership working for the problems the people wanted solved. Alinsky's model of community organizing combined with the civil rights strategies, like nonviolent direct action, made up the foundation of Chicago's civil rights movement throughout the 1960s.

The country experienced great change in the period from World War I to 1960. In many industrial cities, the Great Migration significantly increased Black populations, often creating racial tensions that had been relatively quiet to that point. Black migration led to designated Black slums on the South and West Sides of the city and a more clearly defined pattern of segregation across the city. This pattern extended into housing and jobs as well as education and

⁸⁶ Ibid., 212.

living conditions. With the development of a Black South Side, came a period of institution building, the creation of churches and hospitals, as well as civil rights organizations like the Chicago Urban League, the Chicago branch of the NAACP, and CORE. All of these organizations worked, at times together and sometimes separately, to define housing and employment as the greatest challenges to Black life during this period and challenged the status quo with various protests and legal battles. While housing and employment remained steadily on the agenda going into the 1960s, the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, which deemed segregated schools unconstitutional, also brought de facto segregation in Chicago Public Schools to the forefront as the primary issue starting in 1960.

Chapter 2

Coordinated Efforts: The Battle for Better Schools, 1960-1965

By 1960, Chicago's Black activists appeared ready to mobilize around the issues of de facto segregation in Chicago Public Schools. The Chicago branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) already maintained a small group of dedicated activists. As these groups grew throughout the 1950s, so did the national and local mass movements. De facto segregation in education eventually became the cause that mobilized the masses. The NAACP and CORE played an important role in the earliest days organizing for better schools, but any smaller community-based organizations proved equally useful in this battle with the Board of Education. These smaller groups worked in the years leading up to 1960 to improve their individual schools on a case-by-case basis. 1961 brought about the Operation Transfer Project and the *Webb v. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago* case which, in tandem, targeted Chicago's segregated schools. These two projects gave the NAACP and CORE the opportunity to mobilize the masses in opposition to segregated schooling, the Board of Education, Mayor Richard J. Daley, and Superintendent Benjamin Willis. Using Willis as the single identifying enemy in the schools issue, Chicago's civil rights leaders rallied Black communities across the city. Willis acted as the perfect target for an already activated community to mobilize against. The combination of strong organizing agents and strategic timing made the Chicago Schools movement in the early 1960s a key turning point in the history of grassroots civil rights organizing in Chicago, and proved that Chicago's many local organizations could effectively come together to battle a single enemy.

Large national groups like CORE and the NAACP occupied important positions in mobilizing Black communities in Chicago in the late 1950s and 1960s, but smaller, grassroots community-based organizing was also critical to the movement. Chicago, at this time the second-largest city in the United States, housed many different Black communities with different individual needs.⁸⁷ Even within the distinctive West and South Side Black communities, issues varied by neighborhood. As a result, much of the organizing of the 1950s and 1960s utilized block clubs, tenant unions, parent-teacher associations, and other smaller, more targeted groups that could focus on the unique needs of each small area.

As early as September 1960, parents at the Gregory School along with the Gregory Block Clubs Committee and the NAACP, picketed the Board of Education and Superintendent Willis, demanding a solution to overcrowding at the school. As reported by the *Chicago Tribune*, the school was built to hold 1,680 students, but actually housed more than 4,000.⁸⁸ The school also utilized a double-shift program, which still left an average classroom size of 49 students.⁸⁹ The Block Club and parents group garnered support from the NAACP education committee, but the vast majority of school-related civil rights organizing, like at the Gregory School, took place on a school-by-school basis. Parents and organizations searched for solutions particular to that school instead of across the district. For example, the Gregory School parents suggested busing to four under-capacity, predominantly White schools nearby, which served as a specific solution to their specific problem.⁹⁰ This bussing solution was economically infeasible on a district-wide scale.

⁸⁷ Chicago was second in population size only to New York City. "Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1960," US. Bureau of the Census, released June 15, 1998, <https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab19.txt>.

⁸⁸ "Rage Over Crowded School." *Chicago Daily Defender (Daily Edition) (1960-1973)*, Dec 19, 1960. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/493909970?accountid=9758>.

⁸⁹ "Rage Over Crowded School" *Chicago Daily Defender*.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Although Willis and the Board of Education refused to meet the demands of the Gregory School parents, this exemplifies one way small neighborhood groups organized in Chicago and would continue to organize throughout the decade.

While individual neighborhoods carried out their own assaults on overcrowding and other problems within their local schools, the NAACP coordinated larger, citywide efforts. In September 1961, following the *Taylor v. New Rochelle Board of Education* decision in New York, the first case in which Northern school segregation was successfully challenged in the courts, the Chicago Branch of the NAACP crafted a plan to challenge overcrowding in schools by testing the pre-existing transfer system.⁹¹ The NAACP launched “Operation Transfer” with support from 14 neighborhood organizations on the South and West Sides of the city. Over 160 parents and their 225 children demanded transfers out of overcrowded, double-shift predominantly Black schools into less-crowded, single-shift white schools located nearby.⁹² When these children and parents arrived at the 11 white schools, each principal denied them entry.⁹³ Organizers and parents expected principals would deny their transfers. These refusals proved to organizers that racism and segregation, not the more benign conception of general overcrowding, was actually at fault.⁹⁴

⁹¹ John A. Hannah, *Civil Rights USA: Public Schools, Cities in the North and West*, (Washington, DC: United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1962).

⁹² Olivia W. Filerman, *A Summary of An Equal Chance for Education (Preliminary Edition)*, (Chicago: Chicago Urban League Research Department, 1962), 5.

⁹³ Adolph J. Slaughter, "'Operation Transfer' Hits Chicago School Bias," *Chicago Daily Defender (Daily Edition) (1960-1973)*, Sep 07, 1961. Accessed Dec. 7, 2015 <http://search.proquest.com/docview/493847151?accountid=9758>.

⁹⁴ Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 84.

Earlier challenges to the Board of Education seemed to have focused on the issues of overcrowding, but this larger protest showed the Board of Education and Superintendent Willis' hesitance to integrate the schools. This slight shift of focus from overcrowding to racial segregation, clarified the issue was one of race and the failure of Willis to desegregate. Operation Transfer is an example of an early coordinated effort amongst local groups to challenge segregation in schools. The Chicago movement utilized this strategy of uniting smaller community organizations to work together in large-scale, focused citywide efforts throughout the rest of the 1960s.

Following September 1961's Operation Transfer, parents and community leaders decided to take their challenge to the courts, citing the failed program as proof of deliberate segregation in Chicago Public Schools. Coinciding with the Operation Transfer challenge, the NAACP brought Attorney Paul Zuber, who had worked on a similar case in New Rochelle, to work in Chicago.⁹⁵ The Operation Transfer case, *Webb v. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago*, was one of the first major courtroom challenges regarding segregation in the Chicago Schools system. Sixteen parents of forty children who were denied transfer asked that the courts prohibit Superintendent Willis from continuing the overcrowding in predominantly Black schools.⁹⁶ The Board of Education insisted on settling out of the courts, while the plaintiffs demanded a judge hear the case. The Board of Education tried to appease Zuber and his plaintiffs by suggesting various integration proposals, but they refused to settle out of the courts. Despite these proposals

⁹⁵ *Taylor v. Board of Education of City School District of New Rochelle* was the first court-ordered school desegregation in the North. In 1962 the U.S. Supreme Court determined the district boundaries forced school segregation. For more information reference full court decision, <http://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/195/231/1524480/>.

⁹⁶ "Ready to File Negro School Transfer Suit," *Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963)*, Sep 17, 1961, accessed Dec. 7, 2015 <http://search.proquest.com/docview/183010605?accountid=9758>.

and in-depth study on the issue of segregation in Chicago schools, the plaintiffs were skeptical that they would solve any problems or be effectively implemented, and thus wanted a judge's ruling to force the issue.

Ultimately, the federal court dismissed the case after the plaintiffs and the Board of Education agreed to have a panel of experts study school segregation in Chicago. This settlement was controversial in the Black communities most affected, as residents had little faith in the panel to solve the problem without any defined enforcement measures. Despite the lack of court-enforced integration, the *Webb* case is important because it directly confronted the problem of de facto segregation. Zuber said to the *Chicago Defender*, "Down home bigots come in white sheets. Up here they come in Brooks Brothers suits and ties," while speaking about the ways racism can be less visible and subtler, yet pervasive in the North.⁹⁷ Many Chicagoans held the common belief that because of the subtlety or less violent appearance of Northern racism, it was somehow less harmful; Zuber worked in courts in various major cities to disprove this notion and draw attention to the real issues of Northern racism. The *Webb* case is an example of the NAACP attempting to use their traditional method of test case and lawsuit, to challenge school segregation. Though they did not achieve the policy changes they had hoped for, there was some success in getting the Board of Education to commission a study on race in Chicago school. Even more important than the report, Operation Transfer proved that Black parents could be mobilized across schools and communities.

As the movement for school integration continued to grow throughout the early 1960s it became clear to organizers that the target of the movement, Superintendent Benjamin Willis, was

⁹⁷ "Paul Zuber: New Kind of Racial Militant Fighting Northern Bias." *Chicago Daily Defender (Daily Edition) (1960-1973)*, Aug 23, 1962. Accessed Dec. 7, 2015 <http://search.proquest.com/docview/493901866?accountid=9758>.

a symbolic enemy. Aiming at one openly racist leader helped concentrate efforts and gave the movement a single unifying goal. So, while each neighborhood had a battle to fight for their own schools and issues pertaining to those individual schools, they also worked together to oust Willis and question Mayor Daley's role in the schools situation. Daley was known for his machine politics and to many Black activists for making promises that were never actually implemented in any substantial, sustainable policy. The movement ultimately wanted Willis to resign and held Daley responsible for his position as Superintendent in the first place. Al Raby, convener of the Chicago Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCCO), a civil rights umbrella group, said:

Chicago's school crisis began in your office, Mr. Mayor, because it is here that the members of the Board of Education were appointed. It is for this reason that the Mayor's office has been the target of our marches and protests. You, Mr. Mayor, have the same obligation in education as you do in every other part of your administration. We reject the argument that the Mayor cannot make demands of the Board of Education when the Board fails in its responsibilities.⁹⁸

The close relationship between Mayor Daley and the Board of Education was undeniable and the Chicago Schools Movement would use both targets to their advantage.

Emphasizing one or two very public targets was key to successfully uniting citywide efforts. Leaders focused energies against a symbolic evil that was easier to fight than an idea or a seemingly unsolvable problem. Activists and parents wanted to remove Willis, and were willing to do whatever they could to achieve that end. Operation Transfer and the *Webb* case were two moments crucial to activating the movement in Chicago and mobilizing the population. The schools issue became a turning point in the Chicago Civil Rights Struggle and also provides an

⁹⁸ Albert Raby, "Opening Statement by Albert A. Raby, Chairman of Delegation from CCCC and Cooperating Organizations, Meeting with Mayor Daley on Monday, June 28, 1965, 3pm at City Hall," Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 2, folder 14, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA.

example of how organizing would continue throughout the 1960s and beyond. It shows how neighborhood groups in Chicago would work together to take down larger targets while continuing to work for their individual communities. Activists did not lend loyalties to individual organizations, but rather were loyal to issues, neighborhoods, and communities.⁹⁹ People cared less about the organization they affiliated with and more about the cause for which they fought.

Because Black communities were spread out throughout the city, block clubs and other neighborhood organizations that promoted social change in their individual communities were crucial to the larger Chicago Movement. Connecting these groups in a coordinated organization made strategic sense for citywide goals. Chicago leaders recognized the importance of coordinated efforts and the creation of some sort of coalition during the early years of the schools movement. This need eventually resulted in the formation of the CCCO in 1963. The umbrella organization formed the foundation and driving philosophy behind the civil rights movements in Chicago throughout the rest of the 1960s and worked as the local organizing body with Dr. King's SCLC in 1966 with the Chicago Freedom Movement. The CCCO drove much of the work of the 1960s, often deciding which direction the city-wide movement would go, while still allowing some autonomy amongst its member organizations, which could still each choose their own tactics and means by which they would address local issues.

Chicago organizers were not the first civil rights activists to coordinate their efforts across multiple organizations. CCCO leaders likely took their inspiration from the Council of Federated Organization (COFO) in Mississippi. In February 1962, just one year before the official creation of the CCCO, leadership from the NAACP, CORE, and SNCC came together to

⁹⁹ Françoise Hamlin, *Crossroads at Clarksdale: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Mississippi Delta after World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

build COFO into an organization “incorporating all national, state, and local protest groups operating in the state.”¹⁰⁰ COFO directors Robert Moses and David Dennis understood that COFO’s influence came from black Mississippians wanting “to have the feeling that all of their organizations were working together,” and the same could be said for organizations working in Chicago.¹⁰¹ In Mississippi the physical isolation of some Black communities led to lack of cooperation and COFO helped to bridge that divide. In Chicago, the physical barriers were lesser, but groups still worked in isolation for the most part. COFO successfully sponsored Freedom Summer in 1964, a huge organizing project across the state. This project brought volunteers from the North, including Chicago, to Mississippi and is partially responsible for spreading civil rights organizing strategies across the country. It is likely that many people working in Chicago would have known about COFO’s coordinating work before 1964 and many probably volunteered during Freedom Summer. This exchange of knowledge was not uncommon during the civil rights era and supports the idea that unity between civil rights organizations was key to large-scale success.

The exact details of the CCCO’s founding remain somewhat unclear. However, this umbrella group played a critical role in the boycotts and protests of Chicago Public Schools in the early 1960s and its leadership served as the face of the Chicago movement. Even before major protests started in the fall of 1963, the CCCO already included 50 member organizations on its roster. With a very successful school boycott in October of that year, the group gained even more affiliate organizations, and by the end of 1963 they were at the forefront of the movement. In many ways, the CCCO acted as the glue that unified the civil rights movement in

¹⁰⁰ John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 119.

¹⁰¹ Dittmer, *Local People*, 119.

Chicago through 1963, one of the most important years of the 1960s as far as creating and building a movement.

Throughout 1963, the CCCO brought together more than 100 groups to work toward fighting for better schools for Black students. The focus on the issue of schools galvanized the mass movement. Organizing in Chicago not only involved smaller groups working separately within their own communities, but also working together toward one larger goal. This meant that protests mobilized thousands of people, instead of hundreds, and the sheer numbers of people working together could challenge the system more effectively than each organization could alone. Certainly the individual smaller groups were still important to the movement as a whole, and in their communities they were still key players, but together the CCCO could command attention. Having one singular organizing body meant it was easier for the press to build a story and one leader meant that attention could be more focused. Similar to how the schools movement gained strength when they decided to target one issue in schools and one man in Benjamin Willis, the focusing of the movement around one umbrella group with one leader also increased their power and influence. The foundations for a mass movement were already established in communities across the city, but the CCCO united the organizing community and coordinated, directed, and focused their action.

Albert Raby, CCCO convener, was a dynamic leader, described by the *Chicago Defender* described as “a selfless leader,” “fearless but not reckless.”¹⁰² A former schoolteacher, he came first to the CCCO as a delegate for one of the member groups, the Teachers for Integrated

¹⁰² “The Raby Resignation,” *Chicago Defender* (Chicago, IL), September 25, 1967, accessed March 9, 2016, <http://search.proquest.com.revproxy.brown.edu/hnpchicagodefender/docview/494305061/FDC66887792C420APQ/4?accountid=9758>.

Schools.¹⁰³ He came into the role of convener when Arthur M. Brazier stepped down in order to spend more time working with The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), a local organization on the South Side. Information about Raby is scarce, as he shied away from the spotlight, instead sharing the public eye with other leaders. He “saw the struggle for justice and equality through the prism of the democratic process” and as such the CCCO thrived as an organization that allowed for many voices and opinions to drive the work.¹⁰⁴ Within the CCCO, Raby did not lead by making outright decisions on his own, but first consulted and took into account the needs of local organizing groups in neighborhoods throughout Chicago. He coordinated the various organizations across the city into one unified movement. Strength in numbers was the goal and it was through the coordinated organizing of the CCCO that the civil rights movement in Chicago was able to break new ground in the early 1960s.

Raby and other civil rights leaders founded the CCCO in 1963, but did not finalize the CCCO Constitution until 1966. In this document the stated purpose of the CCCO is “to strengthen and serve the civil rights movement in the Chicago area by providing an instrument for the coordination and mobilization of the activities and resources of all groups which have a major interest in eliminating racial injustice and which embrace the principles of the CCCO.”¹⁰⁵ The principles referred to in this statement of purpose are “interracial cooperation, non-violent action and democratic process,” all three of which were also principles of the larger national movement.¹⁰⁶ CORE’s influence in the CCCO likely played a part in the inclusion of these

¹⁰³ Lewis, James S. “The ‘Unknown’ Behind Civil Rights Headlines Here.” *Chicago Daily News* (Chicago, IL), June 14, 1965.

¹⁰⁴ “The Raby Resignation,” *Chicago Defender*.

¹⁰⁵ “Proposed Revised Constitution of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, November 1966,” King Center Archives, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/ccco-draft-constitution#>.

¹⁰⁶ “Proposed Revised Constitution of CCCO.”

principles, as the founding principles of CORE are very similar. The CCCO strived to function as a true umbrella group, allowing its member organizations to drive the movement while still working to organize and coordinate those efforts so they could be most effective. This strategy would become particularly important, as the movement grew larger and even more once Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Chicago with the SCLC in 1966.

As the CCCO settled into its role as the primary civil rights umbrella organization in Chicago, they researched school demographics, neighborhood demographics, employment data, and other information critical to the formation of a strong civil rights agenda. The CCCO worked with their member organizations to produce research documents that were used most often in presentations to the Board of Education. The CCCO also used these documents internally to inform the many organizations under the umbrella group of the status of various situations throughout the city. Most importantly, they used the research to educate people living on the South and West Sides of the city. The CCCO mailed information sheets out to Black neighborhoods in an effort to mobilize community members and so that they understood the problems better and how the CCCO planned to help organize around solutions. The information sheets were also available at churches, parent-teacher organization meetings, and mass meetings. Through all of this research, the CCCO and its member organizations, in particular the Chicago Urban League, clarified the problems in Chicago schools and made clear that the issue of overcrowding was an issue of race. Throughout the summer of 1963 the CCCO used this research to define their position and prepare for mass protest that fall. With several months of research work supporting their position, the CCCO and its member organizations prepared for a large-scale citywide school boycott that would shock the city into paying attention to their demands.

As the CCCO produced this research and worked toward action on the issue of schools, the civil rights question came to the national forefront. In April 1963, King and the SCLC set forth on a massive direct action protests in Birmingham, Alabama. It was through that series of protests that King was arrested and wrote his famous, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." Even more important than just the arrest, however, was the incredible violence aimed at young students, specifically the use of police dogs and firehoses against peaceful protesters. These scenes of violence, documented in photographs and on television, brought major national attention to the mass movement. On the federal level, President John F. Kennedy brought troops into Birmingham, but these images came through televisions into the living rooms of everyday people as well.¹⁰⁷ For many Americans, this televised violence was their first exposure to the virulent racism Black Americans confronted everyday. This national attention added to the already building momentum toward mass protest that would finally find expression in Chicago in the fall of 1963.

At the beginning of the new school year in September 1963, parents, students, teachers, and community organizations readied for action. The research phase had waned and it was now to time to respond and expose the issues: overcrowding and unequal conditions in mostly Black schools in the city. On August 29, 1963, just one day after the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the plaintiffs in the *Webb* case settled out of court with the Board of Education.¹⁰⁸ This agreement appeared to be a step in the direction of school integration, but as would occur throughout the Chicago Freedom Movement, the agreement was more of a symbolic act than an

¹⁰⁷ The Birmingham Police Department, led by Eugene "Bull" Connor used particularly violent tactics against young protestors during the 1963 Birmingham Campaign. This violence included firehoses, tear gas, and letting lose police dogs. For more on Birmingham confrontation reference Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁸ Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*, 116.

actual effort to integrate schools. As part of the settlement, the Board of Education appointed a panel of experts to recommend a plan for integration and the removal of inequalities. They also agreed to produce a “racial head count” of pupils in the system and agreed to a transfer plan that would allow the top 5 percent of students in high schools without honors courses to transfer to high schools with those courses.¹⁰⁹ These changes did not satisfy the majority of parents and failed to truly address some of the larger issues of overcrowding, school conditions, and lack of resources in majority Black schools.

Controversy over the implementation of the transfer program ensued and the blame for the failure of the transfer plan, in particular, fell on Willis. All of this controversy, along with growing pressures from Black aldermen and civil rights organizations, led to Willis’ resignation on October 4, 1963. However, with the support of many powerful businesspeople in Chicago and various parents’ groups in white neighborhoods of the city, the Board voted not to accept his resignation. In this moment, for one of the first times, White Chicagoans organized in direct opposition to school integration, knowing that keeping Willis as Superintendent would produce no changes to the city schools. This is an early example of the influence white Chicagoans had to keep Willis in his position despite the power of organizing in Black communities. Although Willis remained as Superintendent, this moment empowered the Chicago movement even more against Willis specifically, not just against the segregation in schools. This political mobilization allowed for a much larger protest movement to develop.

Plans for a massive school boycott accelerated after the Board of Education settled on a reconciliation deal with Willis on October 16, 1963. When it became clear to Black leadership that Mayor Daley would not intervene in the Willis situation, the CCCO and its member

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 117.

organizations knew it was time for a larger protest. The CCCO organized a Freedom Day Committee and recruited churches to serve as Freedom Schools during the boycott. Raby and the CCCO published a list of demands before the boycott that included the immediate removal of Superintendent Willis and twelve other demands related to racial segregation and overcrowding.¹¹⁰ The Board of Education refused all of their demands and the struggle for integrated schools faced a standstill.

On October 22, 1963, 224,770 students boycotted the Chicago Public Schools.¹¹¹ Mayor Daley and other public figures critiqued the boycott. Many journalists, including those working for the *Chicago Tribune* and the local television station, WBBM-TV, criticized the boycott and argued that it does no good to take children out of school; that the protests did more harm to the children by taking away a day of learning. However, many of these students took part in Freedom Schools organized by the CCCO and held in churches and other community centers. The lesson plans at these freedom schools, similar to the freedom schools of COFO's Mississippi Project in 1964, focused on an empowering story of Black history since slavery and emphasized the meaning of the word "freedom," instilling in these students, if only for one day, that freedom is "the right of everyone to a decent home, school, food and clothing, and a job."¹¹² In an editorial piece presented on the television show *Standpoint* on local news channel, WBBM-TV, the Chairman of Freedom Day, Lawrence Landry of the CCCO said, "the day out of school will help take the onus of failure in the mind of the Negro child off of himself and place it where it

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 118.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 119.

¹¹² "A Guide for Freedom School Leaders- Freedom Day October 22, 1963," Chicago, IL, prepared by Teachers for Integrated Schools, box 2, folder 8, Chicago History Museum Archives, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL.

belongs, on the school system.”¹¹³ The Freedom Day was as much about proving a point to the Board of Education, as it was empowering the community.

This boycott was the first mass direct action protest of its size in Chicago with over 200,000 students and their parents mobilizing around the issues of school inequality. It set the foundation for years to follow. In the months leading up to the school boycott, Chicago activists developed a strong and well-organized protest movement around the issue of school segregation. The settlement of the *Webb* case, formation of the CCCO, research, and the resignation and then reinstatement of Willis all led up to this mass protest.

Following the October 1963 boycott, the CCCO fell into a tangle of negotiations. Each failed to produce any new policy from the Board of Education. They also fell into a series of personnel disputes, including the dismissal of Landry as chairman of the Freedom Day Committee. Internal strife plagued the organization for two months until finally, in December 1963, the CCCO began talking more about the disappointing outcomes of the boycott, in particular the lack of action from the Board of Education. Willis maintained his posture trying to appease White segregationists in the city and remained unwilling to work with Black civil rights advocates. The CCCO could not convince the Board of Education to negotiate on the demands offered in October before the boycott and remained on the periphery when it came to actually producing significant change with the Board of Education’s involvement.

Despite this perceived failure, the school boycott drastically expanded the civil rights coalition in Chicago. Leading up to the October boycott, the CCCO was still growing and much of the significant power amongst civil rights organizations still stemmed from the offices of

¹¹³ Lawrence Landry, “Rebuttal to Madigan,” *Standpoint: The Editorial Voice of WBBM-TV Chicago*, 11/6/1963, box 2, folder 9, Chicago History Museum Archives, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL.

CORE and the NAACP. As the school boycott fell into the hands of the CCCO, the organization gained more influence and took hold of the civil rights agenda in Chicago. After the boycott, the civil rights agenda in Chicago was more unified and a single organizing body, albeit made up of member organizations, coordinated and drove that agenda. The boycott also mobilized local groups and churches, all of which added to the growing CCCO coalition. Even more importantly, the boycott mobilized the average person in Chicago and gave them an outlet for their frustrations; it gave the average Black Chicagoan a voice. Most of the protest to this point involved a small group of dedicated individuals affiliated with groups like CORE and the NAACP; the boycott involved thousands across the city. It solidified support for the CCCO and spread the word that there was a movement happening in Chicago. The boycott produced a mass movement and the city paid attention.

At the beginning of 1964, the CCCO, in a somewhat disorganized state and with new leader Al Raby at the helm, decided to reinstate the Freedom Day Committee, again with Landry in charge. Landry planned another boycott similar to that of October 1963. This boycott lacked support even within the CCCO, as many leaders said it was too soon and felt they had lost their momentum. The fact that nothing significant had changed in the schools is obvious in the list of demands presented to the Board of Education before this boycott, which included “equal education now, the removal of Ben Willis, a completely integrated school system including top-level Negro official and the addition of a third Negro on the Board of Education.”¹¹⁴

Nonetheless, February 25, 1964, brought about another school boycott, this time with 175,000

¹¹⁴ “Freedom Day II Tuesday February 25,” Advertisement in Chicago Defender, Feb. 1964, Congress of Racial Equality Records, box 2, folder 9, Chicago History Museum Archives, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL.

absences.¹¹⁵ Although organizers would have considered this turnout a huge success for the first boycott in October, it was almost a 25 percent decrease in participation from the first boycott and a disappointment to the CCCO leadership already split on support for this protest. In response to this second boycott, Mayor Daley asked, “what did they prove?”¹¹⁶ This question hung over the heads of the CCCO and other organizers for months following the protest. Whether or not the second boycott was necessary, strategically wise, or effective would be debated over and over in meetings, but it did prove the battle was still not over. As H.B. Law, president of the Chicago Urban League said, the boycotts “grew out of the fact that Chicago created a situation in which something like this just had to happen.”¹¹⁷ Law admits that the boycotts may not have been timely or legal, but that the boycott more importantly spoke to a significant population in Chicago advocating for their needs and demanding change. Following the 1963 boycott, promises were made and few changes actually occurred, and this February boycott was a reminder that the Board of Education could not appease Black communities with false promises of desegregation.

On March 31, 1964, just one month after the February 1964 boycott, the school report commissioned as part of the *Webb v. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago* settlement was presented to the Board. This report, *Integration of the Public Schools- Chicago*, created by a panel headed by Philip M. Hauser, a sociologist at the University of Chicago, informed the Board of Education on how to improve the school situation. Officially the panel and the report were meant:

¹¹⁵ Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*, 133.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹¹⁷ H.B. Law, “Crisis In the Classroom, remarks of H.B. Law (President, Chicago Urban League) to the annual meeting of the Chicago Urban League,” March 5, 1964, Congress of Racial Equality Records, box 2, folder 10, Chicago History Museum Archives, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL.

To analyze and study the school system in particular regard to schools attended entirely or predominantly by Negroes, define any problems that result therefrom, and formulate and report to this Board as soon as may be conveniently possible a plan by which any educational, psychological, and emotional problems or inequities in the school system that prevail may best be eliminated.¹¹⁸

Hauser and his colleagues tried to analyze the situation and provide suggestions for improvement. Some viewed the limited desegregation plans that came about because of this report as reactions to the document and the settlement of the *Webb* case, not as a result of mass protest across the city. This attempt by city officials to legitimize the legal battles of the *Webb* case instead of the boycott undermined some of the power of the mass protest movement.

The Hauser Report included research on the current state of school segregation and suggestions for improvements. It corroborated the research conducted by the CCCO and provided the Board of Education and Willis the data to precisely define the problems in schools. For example, Hauser found that, “of the 148,000 Negro students in the elementary schools (grades 1 to 8 minus students in special education and elementary schools designated as upper grade centers), 90 percent were in Negro schools, and 10 percent were in integrated or white schools” and “of approximately 17,000 Negro students in the upper grade centers, 97 percent were in Negro schools, and 3 percent were in integrated or white schools.”¹¹⁹ These numbers proved that there was a problem with school segregation in Chicago. A contested part of the argument made by Hauser includes that white flight made integration more difficult as there were simply too few white students to truly integrate in any sort of 50:50 ratio.¹²⁰ He also

¹¹⁸ Philip M. Hauser, *Integration of the Public Schools* (Chicago: Advisory Panel on Integration of the Public Schools, 1964), vii.

¹¹⁹ Hauser, *Integration of the Public Schools*, 14.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

recognized that residential segregation was the primary cause for the segregation in schools given the reliance on neighborhood schools in the residentially segregated city.¹²¹

Recommendations to Board of Education included changes to open enrollment, utilization of space to address overcrowding, location of schools and school boundaries, integration of faculties, teacher education, in-service education, learning resources, improving achievement in basic skills, counseling and guidance, saturation program, school-community relationships.¹²² Although Hauser gives few specific suggestions, he does state, “The effective and orderly translation of the recommendations into specific actions, however, cannot be achieved by the Board of Education and school officials alone. Each neighborhood must be carefully and skillfully prepared for the prospect, with the help of all the available resources in the community—religious, civic, business, labor, and fraternal organization as well as government agencies.”¹²³ Hauser and the panel recognized that the integration of Chicago schools required far more than just a change in policy, but also community relations and a new understanding of the color line in the city.

The major suggestion Hauser made in the report was that since schools are based on neighborhoods, expanding “neighborhoods” could create more integrated schools. In late spring 1964, Willis and the newly appointed Board president, Frank M. Whiston, presented the Willis-Whiston plan, which rejected Hauser’s expanded neighborhood definition in exchange for a transfer plan in which students could apply to transfer from an overcrowded school to an underused one.¹²⁴ Organization across the city critiqued this plan as one that removed the

¹²¹ Ibid., 15.

¹²² Ibid., 25.

¹²³ Ibid., 40.

¹²⁴ Amanda I. Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago’s West Side* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 135.

responsibility of integration from Willis and placed the onus on parents. The Willis-Whiston plan was still not a citywide solution to the problem, but rather a direct response to the *Webb* case that demanded transfer. The plan failed to integrate Chicago Schools whatsoever. The Board made amendments to the Willis-Whiston plan over the course of the summer, ultimately adopting more of Hauser's suggestions, but nothing came of the plan in regards to implementation. The Board of Education refused to fund mass transfers and with that, the Hauser report failed to desegregate Chicago Public Schools.

Civil rights leadership spent much of the summer of 1964 in negotiations with the Board to amend the Willis-Whiston plan. The CCCO also spent the summer developing its leadership, organization, and strategy. Following the October 1963 and February 1964 boycotts, and then the Willis-Whiston Plan, the CCCO had not yet effectively defined its role within the larger movement.

CORE also launched a Summer Project in 1964 that placed some of the focus on residential segregation, rather than directly on schools, and that in and of itself took up much of the organizing energy of the city. The CORE Summer Project, in some ways, acted as a precursor to the End the Slums campaign of 1966. On June 21, 1964, the CCCO held a massive rally for civil rights at Soldier Field that included a speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This major event drew crowds of seventy-five thousand and celebrated the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The rally brought attention to civil rights in Chicago, but it was also perceived as a marker that with the Civil Rights Act the movement was finished. Organizers understood that legislation was not the end of the story, but momentum still declined. Heading into the fall, much of the organizing in Chicago was caught up in the momentum of the 1964 election, as Freedom Democratic Clubs advocating for the support of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, were

the main organizing focus.¹²⁵ 1964 was in most ways a transitional year for the Chicago movement. Organizing and protest continued, but they accomplished little. Mirroring the national movement, the Chicago Movement found itself in a position to celebrate some victories, but still look forward and keep developing new strategies. Chicago has a growing, umbrella group at the center, a mobilized public, and, perhaps most importantly, a population of Black citizens demanding change.

1965 was, for the most part, another year of development and strategic planning. Following the underwhelming legislative accomplishments of the 1963 and 1964 school boycotts, the Chicago movement found itself searching for underused tactics. In June 1965, the NAACP with limited support from the CCCO, tried to hold a third school boycott. The Black communities they hoped would participate expressed limited support, as they had seen two previous boycotts fail to produce tangible change in the form of school desegregation or even a functional transfer plan. Ultimately the CCCO withdrew support from the boycott due to a lack of community support. However, as the CCCO watched to see if the NAACP and the community would support this boycott, the Board of Education stepped in with a city injunction to stop the protest entirely. This, the first governmental action to stop an organized protest in the city, required some sort of reaction from the Chicago Movement bodies, specifically the CCCO.

Raby and the CCCO planned a march for June 10, 1965 from Soldier Field to City Hall. This one march sparked a series of daily marches that continued throughout the summer. These marches, particularly when they first started, received significant support from the Black

¹²⁵ The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) sent delegates to the Democratic National Convention in August 1964 to be seated in place of the delegates of the racially exclusionary Democratic Party. Despite their demands, the Party did not compromise. For more information on MFDP reference Charles Payne's *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

community and also got substantial media attention. As the summer went on, the marches dwindled in size, but still received some support, in large part due to the fact that Dick Gregory, a popular comedian and activist, led nearly every march. Gregory showed his support throughout the movement and was even arrested several times. On July 24, 1965, Martin Luther King, Jr. came to Chicago for a rally in an attempt to gain white support for the Chicago Movement, which to this point had failed to attract significant White involvement. His rally at the end of July came at a time when the daily marches continued to shrink in size, but his visit brought attention back to the question of civil rights. The daily marches of summer 1965 generated media attention for the Chicago mass movement. They were pervasive in the news and although most of the media coverage focused on the arrests, it nonetheless assured that the movement stayed relevant.

As the summer continued, the country turned its attention to the West Coast and the uprisings in Watts, August 11-17, 1965. These uprisings, and increasingly frequent violent incidents across the country, changed how the America viewed civil rights from that point forward. No longer was the civil rights movement one of nonviolent protest, marches, and sit-ins, but it now also had a violent, frustrated presence which reignited White Americans worst fears. While this this uprising occurred in California, a smaller instance of violence on the West Side of Chicago led to similar White fears surfacing within the city and distracting from the work of the daily marches that continued throughout that summer. These violent eruptions certainly did not fit with the nonviolent mass movement, but they did generate some positive outcomes, in particular drawing attention to the racial injustices outside of the South. Prior to these urban disturbances, most of the national attention focused on Jim Crow violence in places like Birmingham and Selma. The Watts uprising called attention to the fact that racism was not just a

Southern issue. In particular, Martin Luther King, Jr., following the uprising, turned his focus to finding a location for a campaign in a major Northern city.

Chapter 3

End the Slums: Martin Luther King, Jr., 1966, and Mass Movement in Chicago

Following several Black uprisings in urban centers, especially Watts in August 1965, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) took their work to the North. In 1966 and 1967, King and the SCLC paired with the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO), to form the Chicago Freedom Movement (CFM). Together they worked to “End the Slums” and create an open city in Chicago. This campaign encompassed housing, employment, and education. The historiography of King’s time in Chicago generally describes the campaign as King’s greatest failure, or as proof that civil rights failed in the North. However, within a longer context of civil rights activism in Chicago, the CFM connects grassroots community organizing to a mass movement, demonstrates how this relationship can bring attention to an issue and then ultimately shows how a mass movement can collapse back into a grassroots-based movement again.

The SCLC faced many questions in moving out of the South, including whether or not local residents and leaders would welcome their presence in any given city, whether their strategies would work outside of the South, and whether or not the larger mass movement would support civil rights in the North. After violent uprisings in places like Watts, it was clear to King that he had to find a way to connect with people outside of the South. He recognized significant differences in issues important to people in the rural South compared to people living in the urban ghettos and also recognized that in order for the mass movement to maintain relevance, leadership had to respond to the notion that much of the national legislation to this point had a relatively small impact on Black life in the urban ghettos. The Voting Rights Act of 1965

marked some legislative progress, but in Black communities that could already vote, more was needed to secure justice and equal rights. After King toured Watts in 1965, he wrote about Black communities in Northern urban ghettos, “As long as people are ignored, as long as they are voiceless, as long as they are trampled by the iron feet of exploitation, there is the danger that they, like little children, will have their emotional outbursts which will break out in violence in the streets.”¹²⁶ As a proponent of nonviolence, not just as a protest tactic but also as a way of life, King disdained this type of violent outburst, particularly when he viewed nonviolent protest as a clear alternative to the violence. The Watts uprising moved King to bring his work north to organize in the Black ghettos that may have been ignored by the mostly southern movements thus far. He recognized that segregation in the North was not all that different from the problems he addressed in the South and took the first steps to move his work and the SCLC to a Northern city.

King considered Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Chicago as locations for his next campaign, as they were all industrial cities with large Black population from the Great Migration. Black leadership in these cities had also been receptive to King and the SCLC in the past. The most important factor to King and the SCLC in deciding where to move their work was an invitation from organizations in that city and their willingness to work with the SCLC.¹²⁷ King did not want to redirect an already existing movement nor did he plan to take over movements that were already established in their locale. Albert Raby of the CCCO said that King came to Chicago because of the “sustained activism, familiarity with the leadership, and

¹²⁶ Martin Luther King Jr., *Where do we go from here: Chaos or community?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967) 120.

¹²⁷ “Draft of Statement on Civil Rights activities in Chicago,” February 1, 1966, Chicago, IL, Papers of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1954-1968, box 10, 1.

confidence in what was going on.”¹²⁸ King had traveled to Chicago for rallies in 1964 and 1965 where he was received well by local leadership and Black residents. Most Black people in Chicago, because of the Great Migration, had some familial ties to South and King felt confident that he would be able to come into Chicago and utilize the same kind of communication he used in the South.¹²⁹ He planned to use large Black churches as spaces of resistance and he also could rely on the relatively large, liberal academic community in Chicago to support his work.¹³⁰ These characteristics that made King confident in his reception in Chicago were based on the assumption that his Southern strategy would translate in Chicago. He also had the assurance of knowing that he was backed by the CCCO who knew the city well, knew the organizing and political climate of Chicago, and would help him hone his tactics as his strategies changed.

Therefore, King identified two clear reasons why he chose Chicago for his 1966 campaign in the North: there was already a movement in Chicago focusing on the problem of de facto segregation in public schools and because, as the second largest city in the United States, King and the SCLC had a “moral responsibility to identify with and support the movement.”¹³¹ King only went where he was invited, he looked for an already mobilized community, and found in the CCCO an already well-organized, united front. Al Raby and the CCCO connected various groups around the issue of school segregation and King saw that the CCCO already did the hard work of finding and uniting Civil Rights groups from across the city. The CCCO’s eagerness to

¹²⁸ Al Raby, interview with James Ralph, “Bringing the Battle North: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference’s Decision to Come to Chicago, August- September, 1965,” Kale Williams Papers, 1950-2008, box 11, folder 113, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL, 3.

¹²⁹ Robert Lucas, interview with James Ralph, “Bringing the Battle North,” 12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹³¹ “Segregation is not just a Southern problem,” North Shore Communities, July 28, 1965, Chicago, IL, Papers of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1954-1968, box 8, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 4.

work with King meant that the SCLC not only had one ally in the CCCO, but also the many groups affiliated with the CCCO.

Even before King's arrival, the decision to invite him into the city proved controversial amongst Chicago's Black community leaders. To this point, King had not focused specifically on school segregation and some leaders expressed concern over whether his tactics would work to desegregate schools in Chicago. The CCCO had organized a large, though legislatively ineffective, mass movement and some members of CCCO leadership feared King's shift in focus from schools to housing would derail that movement. Some involved in the movement also felt that King was doomed from the start in the North. They felt that he did not and could not understand the issues of the Northern ghetto and thus would not act effectively in that space. Even in Chicago, where King did have significant support, there were groups within the CCCO that did not support his arrival.

The decision proved controversial, but ultimately the CCCO looked to King to save a fading mass movement. According to Chicago Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) chairman Robert Lucas, the CCCO ultimately extended the invitation to the SCLC because they thought they had failed. He said, "We thought we had failed. We had tried marches and sit-ins, and demonstrations, and kneel-ins. We had tried virtually every tactic in the book in terms of demonstrations and we hadn't really gotten any place and so we decided that maybe King can make a difference. So that's why we invited him."¹³² The Chicago Movement was in a state of flux by the end of 1965, so when King looked for Northern cities and Chicago came on his radar, the Chicago leadership saw an opportunity to revive a movement that had lost some of its steam in the years following the October 1963 school boycott. Inviting King to work in Chicago was a

¹³² Robert Lucas, interview with James Ralph, "Bringing the Battle North," 27.

strategic move for the Chicago Movement; they knew that King would not come to Chicago to stay, and hoped that his presence, even only for a summer, could return energy to the city.

History of Residential Segregation

Since at least the 1940s, Black community leaders challenged residential segregation in Chicago, but public policy and private discrimination had nonetheless created a clearly defined color line. No signs dictated where people could or could not eat, live, or work, but many barriers stood in the way of equality. Segregated housing, in particular, plagued the city and influenced most other issues of racial inequality including education, unemployment and poverty. Chicago had a long history of residential segregation and a history of resistance to that segregation. Racial restrictive covenants were challenged earlier in the 20th century, but there was also a history of local organizing for open housing, against slum conditions, and to generally improve the lives of Black people living in Chicago, for whom much of life was dictated by where they lived. School desegregation campaigns led by the CCCO sparked the mass movements of the early 1960s, but with the arrival of the SCLC energies would shift to housing discrimination and open housing.

Chicago is famously referred to as a “city of neighborhoods,” but those neighborhoods exist to perpetuate segregation. The conditions that built these segregated neighborhoods go back historically to the late 19th century when it was mostly White ethnic immigrants settling in Chicago during the industrial revolution. By the Great Migration, local government had implemented legislation to keep Black people confined to certain neighborhoods in Chicago. One of the most significant of these legislative policies was the system of racial restrictive covenants, “legally enforceable provisions of deeds prohibiting owners from selling or leasing

their residences to members of specific racial groups.”¹³³ These covenants and deed restrictions allowed White people to sign a contract that promised they would not sell their homes to people of color or other undesirables. As these covenants grew more popular, more of the city became inaccessible to Black migrants from the South and Black middle-class families looking to move out of the slums. By 1939, according a report by Chicago Housing Authority vice-chairman Robert Taylor, an estimated 80 percent of the Chicago’s land area was covered by racial restrictive covenants.¹³⁴ Both opponents and proponents of the covenants challenged that number, suggesting it was too high, but even the lower estimate from a later report stated that 50 percent of the city’s residentially zoned land was restricted by over 700 covenants.¹³⁵ In the 1940s, somewhere between 50 and 80 percent of residential property in Chicago was inaccessible to Black people.

While these covenants were not the only means by which White residents kept their neighborhoods exclusively white, violence being another strategy, covenants were legally enforceable and thus could be challenged in courts. In 1940, the *Hansberry v. Lee* case proved Black residents could successfully challenge racial restrictive covenants in court. Though the courts did not rule that all covenants were unconstitutional, the courts did void that particular covenant and set precedent for Black people to challenge segregation. The United States Supreme Court decided in the 1948 *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision that it was unconstitutional to enforce racial restrictive covenants, making all covenants ineffectual. While this was a significant success for those opposed to housing segregation, the court decision could not reverse

¹³³ Wendy Plotkin, “‘Hemmed In’: The Struggle Against Racial Restrictive Covenants and Deed Restrictions in Post-WWII Chicago,” in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94, no. 1 (2001): 39, accessed March 5, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40193534>.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

the damage done before 1948. Chicago was already divided and if anything, the *Shelley v. Kraemer* case, by removing one means of legal segregation, encouraged White Chicagoans to look for other tactics such as violence. Many White Chicagoans tied their sense of community to race, and removing that commonality threatened the community. Some White neighborhoods turned to other methods, such as homeowners' associations to perpetuate racial exclusion. The threat of open housing also added to the increased movement of White families to the suburbs.

While these legal battles worked their way through the courts, grassroots organizers also fought against residential segregation in the Chicago. CORE challenged segregated housing around the University of Chicago in 1942, with their creation of the Fellowship House. CORE, an interracial student group, adopted the Fellowship House as an "interracial men's cooperative" meant to allow for interracial living near the University of Chicago campus in the south side neighborhood of Hyde Park.¹³⁶ CORE also had other white members of the organization rent Hyde Park apartments that were covered by racial restrictive covenants and then had interracial groups move into these apartments as well. When landlords tried to evict them, the courts denied the evictions, proving a successful tactic for challenging residential segregation in that area.

In the early 1960s The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), a grassroots organization on the South Side, also challenged segregated housing, specifically challenging an urban renewal plan that threatened to destroy their community and replace all of the affordable housing in the area with upper-middle-class housing.¹³⁷ The University of Chicago asked the city to declare Woodlawn an urban renewal area because the school needed housing for (White) students and faculty. Founded in 1959, TWO organized residents using Saul Alinsky's model of community organizing. Alinsky's model relied on principles of finding and cultivating local leadership

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹³⁷ Elinor Richey, "The Slum that Saved Itself," *Progressive* (Madison, WI) October 1963, 26.

instead of relying on trained leadership and also focused on what local people wanted instead of telling people what they needed.¹³⁸ TWO empowered Woodlawn's Black residents to fight against the system of urban renewal. Ultimately they defeated the urban renewal plan in an agreement with the city to implement a more gradual process of demolition and relocation. While the Woodlawn community remained in a constantly threatened state, TWO serves as an example of community organizing around issues of residential segregation. While most of Chicago's grassroots organizing throughout the early 1960s followed the mass movement and focused on issues of school desegregation, TWO challenged housing segregation in a similar fashion to how King and the Chicago Freedom Movement would challenge the same issues of residential segregation several years later.

Define the Problems

Prior to 1966's CFM, the CCCO focused on school desegregation, and when the SCLC formed the CFM, they were unwilling to entirely let go of the schools issue. There had been no major improvements in school conditions so far and the battle to desegregate the schools ensued. Schools, along with jobs, slum conditions, and open housing, were all included in the CFM's fight "to end slums."

The CFM's goal was to make the city an "open city." This encompassed the entire project including schools and jobs, but it mostly referred to opening the housing market. To this point, the Real Estate Board had almost total control over the housing market and benefitted from segregation. The CFM saw the solution to all of the problems of the Black Chicagoan as related to the housing issue. If only Black people could move out of the ghettos, they would have equal

¹³⁸ Ibid., 27.

access to schools, jobs, and facilities. That is not to say that moving out of the slums would solve all of the problems of racism in the city, but it would make equal access to resources that much more of a reality. Residential segregation kept Black Chicagoans in a state of second-class citizenship, and only through the opening up of housing in the city would equality be possible. Housing and the issues of slums encompassed all aspects of life for Black Chicago communities, and only through improvement of the ghettos and making the ability to move out of the ghetto more of a reality could they ever expect to improve their conditions.

The CFM defined the slum as an all-encompassing plight. King wrote in the *Chicago Defender*, “A slum is any area which is exploited by the community at large or an area where free trade and exchange of culture and resources is not allowed to exist.”¹³⁹ This focus on the exploitation of slum-dwelling people and internal colonization emphasized the idea that the slums negatively affected every part of life for Black people living in the urban ghetto. Racism and internal colonization made it nearly impossible to break out of the slum and that is what the CFM intended to fight against. They worked to free the Black people of Chicago not only from the physical conditions of the slum but also from the slum mentality that kept them tethered to that condition.

Slum conditions also affected education for two reasons: the quality of the educational system within the slums kept students from having academic opportunities to get out of the slums and the “neighborhood schools” plan meant that so long as Chicago remained residentially segregated, the schools would be segregated as well. The CFM altered the way the Chicago Movement more broadly fought to desegregate schools. King’s agenda focused on the issue of

¹³⁹ Martin Luther King, Jr., "My Dream," *The Chicago Defender*, February 19, 1966, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/493197653?accountid=9758> (accessed November 19, 2015).

open housing, and with the ability to move into majority white neighborhoods with majority white schools, the schools would have to integrate. If the CFM's campaign to "end the slums" succeeded, then the schools would be forced to integrate under its own rules. The CFM shifted the target from the Board of Education and Superintendent Willis to open housing as a means of addressing unequal education in the city.

As far as jobs and unemployment, the CFM recognized several problems. One issue was that the lack of education in the slums that kept Black people from pursuing viable careers and forced them into menial labor. Another problem was the inequality in hiring for jobs; even if a Black man and a white man were equally educated or otherwise qualified, most employers hired the White man. The third problem the CFM saw in employment was spatial mismatch, which limited access to jobs. Due to a lack of transportation in the slums and ghettos of Chicago, Black people were forced to work the jobs that they could get to and from on a daily basis. This meant that nearby employers could exploit Black employees and pay lower wages. Even if there were better jobs available and employers who were willing to hire Black people, if those jobs were located across town or in the suburbs poor Black people in Chicago could not reasonably work there. This limited access made Black slum-dwellers particularly vulnerable to exploitative practices put in place by employers.

Define the Goals

Put clearly in the *Program of the Chicago Freedom Movement*, a programmatic plan written in July 1966, the CFM aimed to "wipe out racism, slums, and ghettos" in Chicago. Doing so was a complicated process, but ultimately the CFM targeted those three broad areas. The CFM planned to "open the city" and "end the slums," which, for them, entailed improving

conditions in just about every aspect of Black life in Chicago. Their goals, however, targeted schools, employment, and housing, both improving conditions within the slums and opening up housing in the city. The three goals stated in the *Program of the CFM* were 1) to bring about equality of opportunity and results, 2) to open up the major areas of metropolitan life of housing, employment and education and 3) to provide power for the powerless.¹⁴⁰ The first of these goals was likely a reaction to the fact that on paper most policy in Chicago secured equal opportunity, but with the realities of racism and urban segregation, there was limited equality of results. The most important of these three goals is the second, which directed the movement into its three major targets: housing, employment and education. King and the CFM recognized the interconnectedness of these issues, and also planned to target each separately from the other. The third goal, “to provide power for the powerless,” summarized the goals of the Chicago Freedom Movement, and, perhaps more broadly, the Black freedom struggle. Particularly given the increased focus on Black Power, this phrasing demonstrates recognition that they are returning power to communities in Chicago. The CFM was not just a movement in which Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC came into Chicago and solved all the problems of racism and segregation, but rather the CFM aimed, from the beginning, to organize people in Black communities into lasting institutions of change. Giving “power to the powerless” did not only mean King and Raby leading negotiations with Mayor Daley, but also meant organizing tenant unions and block clubs. The CFM, in large part because of the alliance with the CCCO and its thirty-six member organizations, recognized the importance of sustainable organization and worked to coordinate and create such organizations.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ “Program of the Chicago Freedom Movement,” July 1966, Box 576, Folder 21, SCLC Records 1964-2012, 4.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

The CFM targeted three key areas: education, employment, and housing. According to the *Program of the CFM*, “in education our program is based on proposals that all schools should have at least the same expenditures as the best suburban public schools. Racial separation should be broken down by such new ideas as educational parks and city-suburban educational cooperation.”¹⁴² The CFM did not necessarily have the same goals as the Chicago schools movement led by the CCCO in 1963 and 1964. The CFM saw the problem as one of suburban vs. urban, rather than interdistrict equality. While the movement in Chicago prior to 1965 focused on transfer programs, overcrowding, facilities, and the resignation of Benjamin Willis, the CFM saw the problem as more broadly based and aimed to improve Chicago Public Schools such that they were competitive with better-funded, whiter suburban schools. This slightly different goal removes some of the direct references to the problem as a racial one, as it emphasizes that Chicago schools in general need to be improved, not just the majority Black schools. The CFM likely took on this broader goal in order to garner more white support and also to directly draw the lines between residential segregation that kept Black people out of the suburbs and inequalities in schools.

In regards to employment, the CFM made proposals that called for fair employment by the elimination of all forms of job bias and of all measures that screen out minority groups.¹⁴³ Broadly, the CFM demanded an open job market for Black people in Chicago, one in which community organizations could challenge employers if their records showed a disproportionate number of Black employees. The CFM also demanded full employment at decent wages by the creation of tens of thousands of new jobs in rebuilding our city and in new subprofessional positions in health, education and welfare and effective job training and retraining with the

¹⁴² Ibid., 7.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 7.

provision of a job at the successful completion of the program.¹⁴⁴ The CFM not only demanded that businesses within the Black communities of Chicago hire Black employees, but also demanded creation of more jobs for which Black people were qualified in Black communities. They wanted training programs to target Black people who, because of the slum culture and slum education, were under-qualified for good jobs. As with other racial injustices in the North, the job inequalities were often dismissed as irrelevant because Black people were “unqualified” for better jobs. Rather than considering the institutional system that perpetuated the under-qualification of Black employees, city officials and others blamed Black communities for their own unemployment. The CFM challenged this conception of Black laziness.

The CFM implemented a two-part plan to improve housing. They wanted to improve conditions in the slums for the poor Black people of Chicago and they wanted to open up housing in the city, by targeting the Real Estate Board. This system was meant to decrease residential segregation in poor Black areas and increase mobility for middle-class Black Chicagoans. The CFM demanded adequate financing and programs for redevelopment of slum and deteriorating housing and for the elimination of exploitation by slumlords.¹⁴⁵ They also called “for the humanization of the present public housing projects” and the development of a vastly increased supply of decent low and middle-cost housing.¹⁴⁶ The CFM challenged the Real Estate Board and the city to improve housing conditions for all Black Chicagoans.

The Program of the Chicago Freedom Movement specifically targeted the issues of Black communities in Chicago, but King also hoped that exposing Chicago’s housing crisis would lead to national housing legislation. This legislation would be the first civil rights legislation to affect

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 7.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 7.

the Northern urban ghettos. King, in a statement on Chicago, said, “Just as the victory in Birmingham resulted in national legislation and affected the entire South I believe we may force Federal action in Chicago as well as Municipal action. And beyond that, if Chicago like Birmingham can be modified in a positive direction no slum in any city will be secure.”¹⁴⁷ He hoped to use a similar tactic as those used in Birmingham and Selma to pass national legislation. Ultimately, this legislation would not come directly out the Chicago movements, but the Fair Housing Act of 1968, passed just months after King’s assassination, was influenced by his work in Chicago.

Define the Strategies

The SCLC and the CCCO worked cooperatively to formulate strategy during the period of the CFM. The SCLC had a tactical plan that had proved successful in the South. This plan largely involved going into already active communities, provoking confrontation with the local powers, including police and government officials, using white bodies to dramatize the situation, getting national attention for these violent confrontations on television, and then, with that attention, the federal government had to respond. Before the SCLC’s arrival, the CCCO utilized nonviolent demonstration as a means of attracting attention to issues like school segregation. None of these actions produced violent confrontation and that violence did not seem to be the goal of the CCCO. Rather, they attracted attention to force city officials into negotiations. The CCCO also coordinated efforts of civil rights organizations across the city. When the SCLC and the CCCO came together to form the CFM, combining strategies was at times difficult.

¹⁴⁷ “Draft of Statement on Civil Rights activities in Chicago,” February 1, 1966, Chicago, IL, 1.

Not only was deciding on a tactical strategy challenging, but the power dynamics at play between the groups was also somewhat of an issue. Describing these dynamics, King's press secretary in Chicago, Don Rose, said,

Well, in theory it was supposed to be a shared power, but obviously, you know, what Dr. King wanted to do would be more equal than others. And the structures that were set up, the Chicago Freedom Movement was set up with a joint body, which I believe was called the Agenda Committee. And that consisted of you know, the top-level heads of the organizations. Raby and King were co-chairmen.¹⁴⁸

Throughout the early 1960s, the CCCO served as a coordinating body wherein no single group had significantly more power than any other affiliated group. The formation of the CFM, as a larger mass movement, demanded more of a leadership structure, which put King and Raby at the head of the table, and other organizations lower down the ranks. This caused some tension within the larger CFM, in particular because some did not have much faith in Raby's abilities to lead such a large movement. Bringing a name like King and an organization like the SCLC into Chicago certainly had its benefits, particularly in regards to gaining national attention, but it also challenged the structures of Black activism in Chicago.

Once the CCCO and the SCLC settled on the structure and goals of the CFM, they strategized. King said in a press statement announcing the Chicago plan that "There are two possible ways to concentrate on the problems of the slum: One would be to focus on a single issue, but CCCO and SCLC chose to concentrate all of our forces and move in concert with a nonviolent army on each and every issue."¹⁴⁹ The CFM took on slums as an all-encompassing project including schools, housing, and employment. Schools, for the most part, fell to the

¹⁴⁸ Don Rose, interview with George Pickering, "The Birth of the Chicago Freedom Movement: The Forging of a Coalition and the Campaign to End Slums," Kale Williams Papers, 1950-2008, box 11, folder 113, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL, 23.

¹⁴⁹ Martin Luther King, Jr., "Statement announcing the Chicago Plan," January 7, 1966, Chicago, IL, Papers of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1954-1968, box 10, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 5.

wayside as the CFM developed strategy throughout 1966 and 1967. While individual local organizations continued to organize around issues at their individual schools, the larger CFM lost some momentum on the issues of school integration, instead targeting housing more closely.

The CFM's project to improve housing came in two parts. The first, which started before the official CFM kick off in July 1966, was the Union to End the Slums. This was the first effort by the CFM to get local people organized and improve conditions in their communities. They aimed to organize the "West Side slums of Chicago into a union structurally similar to labor the organizations."¹⁵⁰ The dominant narrative of the civil rights movement emphasizes the importance of nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience, but the Union to End the Slums was an act of Black self-determination.

CFM organizers encouraged everyday Black people to organize into tenants unions, more powerful than any one individual, so that they could use their negotiating power against slum landlords and city officials. The union made it so that,

Tenants of apartment building and homeowners would be card carrying, dues paying members of a union. They would belong to one of 11 locals, and would be represented by a block or building steward on the Local Council, which would in turn send representatives to the strategy committee. The highest body would be the steering committee. In addition committees would be created at both the local and steering committee level to handle special areas of concern to union members, such as education, health, cooperatives, and action.¹⁵¹

By organizing slum tenants into unions, they had more negotiating power and could utilize the fact that the law was not explicitly against them, necessarily. Much of the organizing work in the slums had less to do with changing the law, and more to do with empowering people in those slums to stand up for their rights and speak up within the constraints of the existing legal

¹⁵⁰ Maria S. Pappalardo, "Chicago Report," American Friends Service Committee, November 22, 1966, Kale Williams Papers, 1950-2008, box 11, folder 114, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL, 6.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

structures. Creating tenant unions gave slum residents space to “confront the power structure from a position of strength whenever they seek redress.”¹⁵² The creation of tenant unions gave formerly unrepresented people the skills and strength to negotiate, and empowered them to organize rent strikes, for example, when landlords refused to negotiate or improve their living conditions. Organizing in this fashion gave people power and mobilized communities literally building-by-building.

The second part of CFM’s housing strategy was Project Open Housing, which kicked off in July 1966 as part of the CFM’s Project Open City. Project Open Housing was the CFM’s attempt to utilize strategies that had worked in southern cities. They first went into ten neighborhoods within the city to use as targets where they could test the realtors. They sent in Black and interracial couples interested in looking for a house and were told they had limited options. They would then send in a white couple, this an example of one reason they needed white support in Chicago, who were usually given many options as to where they would like to live. To the CFM, this proved that the realtors and the Real Estate Board worked together to limit Black housing options so that they could charge Black people more rent for poorer housing. These test cases went on for weeks in these ten neighborhoods, each exposing the same problem.

After they proved the reality of the problem, the CFM gained local and national attention by marching in these all-white neighborhoods. Despite the overwhelmingly common belief that northern racism was subtler than the southern variety, the CFM marchers were met with horrific violence in two neighborhoods on Chicago’s Southwest Side, Gage Park and Marquette Park. The march in Marquette Park on July 31, 1966 in particular, gained national headlines as marchers were pelted with rocks and cars were set aflame or pushed into the park’s lagoon. King

¹⁵² Ibid., 7.

commented on the difference between the violence in Chicago and the violence in the South, saying “I have seen many demonstrations in the South, but I have never seen anything so hostile and so hateful as I’ve seen here today.”¹⁵³ The White resistance that created such violence at the marches in Gage Park, Marquette Park, and Cicero surprised King, but also worked within his strategy to expose the problems of Northern racism. While the marches made national headlines, the pressure that occurred in other cities when the police and government officials supported White violence did not happen in Chicago. In other cases, when King marched in the South, the police were part of the violence against him and the other marchers. In Chicago, Mayor Daley ordered the police to protect the marchers from the violent White mobs. Mayor Daley and the City of Chicago could not be held directly responsible for any of the violence nor did they impinge on the CFM by stopping any of the marches. They put injunctions in place not to stop the marches, but rather as a means to maintain safety and ensure that they could have police protection on hand, at least that is how it seemed in the media.

As the city erupted around these marches, Mayor Daley responded with poise and support for the CFM marchers. This response forced King into a position to acknowledge that the model for success in the south may be as successful in a place like Chicago. His reliance on violence to dramatize the situation and attract pressure from the federal government did not go as planned, and King and the CFM ultimately had to turn to negotiations with Mayor Daley to come to any conclusions on the issue of open housing.

Regarding the issues of employment in Chicago, the CFM was notably successful. When King moved the SCLC to Chicago in 1966 he brought with him Jesse Jackson and the

¹⁵³ “Dr. King Is Felled by Rock,” *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 6, 1966, <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1966/08/06/page/1/article/dr-king-is-felled-by-rock>, accessed November 22, 2015.

organization's plans for Operation Breadbasket. Highly influenced by the self-determination ideologies of Black Power and Black Nationalism, Operation Breadbasket (OBB) acted as an economic arm of the CFM. OBB challenged businesses to hire more Black employees, they negotiated with businesses and banks, and they planned successful boycotts of businesses, pressuring them into employing more Black people in Chicago. OBB, though controversial, was arguably the most successful project of the CFM's 1966 campaign.

When the Chicago Freedom Movement kicked off in July 1966, the leadership team laid out a program that included a detailed strategic plan. This plan, which changed throughout the movement, laid the groundwork for the coalition between the CCCO and the SCLC. The strategy included:

- 1) Organize a series of direct actions which will make the injustices so clear that the whole community will respond to the need to change
- 2) Organize people in every sector of the ghettos—in neighborhoods, in schools, in welfare unions, in public housing, in hospitals, to give the strength of numbers to the demands for change
- 3) To strengthen the institutions which contribute to the goals of a just and open society and withdraw support from those institutions—banks, businesses, newspapers and professions—which drain the resources of the ghetto communities without contributing in return
- 4) Demand representation of the organizations of the ghetto community (Chicago Freedom Movement) on decision-making bodies at every level of government, industry, labor, and church, affecting the lives of people in the ghetto
- 5) Promote political education and participation so that the needs and aspirations of Negroes and other oppressed minorities are fully represented¹⁵⁴

This list of five strategic plans helped to form a strong foundation and plan for the CFM. It combined the SCLC's established tactic of dramatizing injustice with the CCCO's emphasis on creating sustainable movement in Chicago. Edwin "Bill" Berry of the Urban League described this relationship as one where he had to explain to King "the difference between the way you

¹⁵⁴ "Program of the Chicago Freedom Movement," 5.

proceed in a community where you're going to stay for a while and one you visit and leave."¹⁵⁵

From the beginning King planned to stay in Chicago for a full year, longer than many of his other campaigns. As such, he changed his tactics to fit that length of time. The SCLC normally came into a town for a few months, dramatizing the situation and garnering national attention, and then left. In Chicago, King and the SCLC committed to a longer stay and thus worked more to create a sustainable movement alongside the CCCO's pre-existing work. The CFM's strategy shows the flexibility of civil rights organizing and emphasizes the importance of differences between localities.

Outcomes

Historians James Ralph and David Garrow write about the Chicago Freedom Movement as one of King's failures. They measure success of the CFM primarily through the lens of the national civil rights era, 1955 to 1968, rather than in the context of the longer Chicago freedom struggle. Placing King and the summer of 1966 at the center of the civil rights narrative in Chicago allows the framing of CFM as a failure. It did not significantly influence legislation nor did it match King's other successes in places like Birmingham and Selma. Within the longer narrative of civil rights activism in Chicago, however, the CFM is more of a burst of mass movement within a longer story of grassroots organizing.

Perhaps one of the most significant challenges the CFM faced was Mayor Daley's political control. The SCLC had never gone up against a force quite as manipulative as Daley, particularly in the ways he controlled the Black community. Every decision Daley made was a strategic political decision. While some politicians in the Southern arena blocked courthouse

¹⁵⁵ Edwin "Bill" Berry, interview with George Pickering in "The Birth of the Chicago Freedom Movement: The Forging of a Coalition and the Campaign to End Slums," 34.

doors because they personally believed in segregation, Daley never allowed his own opinions and emotions to get in the way of clear decision-making. For example, when he chose to send police to protect King and the other marchers in Gage Park, it was not because he felt some great sympathy for them, though he may have, it was more likely because he knew what would come of his popularity in the city if White violence got out of control and a scene of horrible violence were to break out, much less if something serious were to happen to King in his city. He understood the political game that the CFM, heavily influenced by King and the SCLC, played, and had a counter-move to their every move. Daley never came across as a true bigot or proponent of the segregation in Chicago, but he also was not sympathetic to the CFM.

As a Democrat, Daley relied on White votes, and knew that he had to play a balancing act to keep that voting base intact. He also needed Black votes, but they were less important as they were a much smaller number in proportion to the White voting base. Daley had massive power over the Board of Education, housing, police, and schools; every aspect of the city was under his control. Even Black aldermen, who were voted into office by Black constituents, for the most part did as Daley said because they knew their offices and livelihoods were on the line if they challenged him. The entire system was set up to keep the Black community and the White communities at odds and Daley maintained that tension under his careful watch.¹⁵⁶

In August 1966, the CFM and Mayor Daley's office came together for a summit, during which they produced a 10-point agreement on how to solve the issues of residential segregation in the city of Chicago and end the slums. This agreement between the city and the CFM promised fair housing and was the start of the joint project between the CFM and the City of Chicago titled, "Project Open City." This agreement was controversial in Black communities in

¹⁵⁶ Robert Lucas, interview with James Ralph, "Bringing the Battle North," 28.

Chicago. The organizing community, particularly the member organizations of the CCCO, questioned why King was so involved in the negotiations with Mayor Daley since he was leaving the city soon after. King would not be a part of the enforcement of any agreement policies. Some, even more critical of King, believed he only agreed to the negotiations because he wanted a way out of the city and this was his only option. With the agreement came a promise that the CFM would stop their marches and essentially signing this agreement forced King to pull out of Chicago almost entirely.

The popular critique of the agreement focused on the lack of enforcement measures. City Council made many promises and Daley assured the CFM that improvements would be made on the grounds of fair housing, but he did not specify within the agreement how those improvements would be enforced or by whom. This left Black communities across the city wondering what had actually changed after all of their organizing. After all, Daley had promised improvements for years leading up to the CFM and nothing ever improved. Black Chicagoans had no reason to trust his enforcement of this agreement either. Even one year after signing the agreement, King recognized the lack of enforcement and threatened to return to Chicago if nothing changed.

While the Summit Agreement failed to produce large-scale change within the City of Chicago, the overall tone of organizing in the Chicago was heavily influenced by the CFM's involvement from 1966 to 1967. The CFM mobilized huge numbers of people throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. Not only were people working within their communities on the South and West Sides of the city to integrate housing and improve the slums, but they also organized in the suburbs North and West of the city to integrate housing as well. The housing marches in Gage Park and Marquette Park brought significant national attention to northern segregation. Most importantly, the CFM allowed Chicago's organizing culture to define the way small

community organizations relate to larger mass movements. Throughout the time King and the SCLC were involved with the movement in Chicago, small community organizations continued to work throughout the city. From tenant unions organized as part of the Union to End Slums to the local school groups continuing to work for integrated schools, small community organizing never completely collapsed.

In 1967, in an attempt to encourage grassroots organizing, the CFM started the School of Community Organization to “train and place 20 to 30 new organizers in the city every three months. Trainees will be recruited from the ghettos and will remain working, living, and organizing within their communities for at least one year.”¹⁵⁷ The School used the resources of the CFM, both strategic and financial resources, to train future organizers and continue the effort to create a sustainable organizing culture in Chicago. The plan, perhaps as a reaction to the loss of community organizers after King moved out of the city, developed “leadership and more effective organizers among those people who have the most at stake in a mass movement against poverty and exploitation.”¹⁵⁸ They based the school on Saul Alinsky’s principle of community unions and local community organization. As the School of Community Organization moved into a neighborhood, taught people how to organize, and then left, they hoped to leave behind a motivated, educated group of activists to continue organizing in that neighborhood. Though it is somewhat unclear how long the school was open, its very existence speaks to the spirit of grassroots organization that came from the CFM and the Open Housing Movement and starts to

¹⁵⁷ “Real Power,” *CCCO News Newsletter*, vol. 1, no.5, June 2, 1967, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Papers, 1964-1968, box 4, folder 22, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL., 3.

¹⁵⁸ “To Change a City!” booklet by School of Community Organization, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Papers, 1964-1968, box 4, folder 22, Chicago History Museum Research Center, Chicago, IL.

connect Alinsky, the CFM, and grassroots organizing as a longer narrative of struggle in Chicago.

The Chicago Freedom Movement exemplifies the potential for grassroots community organizations to work within a larger context of a mass movement. The CFM wisely utilized the CCCO's coordinated organizations to work on many fronts throughout the city. Ultimately, the CFM failed to produce much enforceable legislation, which is why it is often written into history as a failure, either of King or of civil rights in the North. However, the CFM activated a second mass movement in Chicago. The city's first experience with mass organizing, the Anti-Willis boycotts of 1963 and 1964, proved that Chicago was capable of mass organizing, and the CFM, taking on an even larger goal of ending the all-encompassing slum, also proved Chicago's organizing capacities. Both mass movements eventually collapsed, but the grassroots organizations that developed during the mass struggles continued to work within their individual communities to promote civil rights.

Chapter 4

“Where Do We Go from Here?”

Black Self-Determination Post-1966

Chicago’s organizing tradition developed in several phases from the 1910s through the 1960s. The first phase involved institution building, testing the establishment, and bringing test cases to the courts, which involved mostly traditional groups like the Chicago National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and later the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Through the 1950s these groups led the Black freedom struggle in Chicago. In the second phase, the first half of the 1960s, activists worked toward school desegregation and improved the quality of education in Black schools. This primarily involved grassroots organizations that grew out of the institution building of the 1950s. One of the most significant developments of the first years of the 1960s was the creation of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCCO). Under Raby’s leadership, the CCCC provided direction and brought together the masses to work on school issues together. They also legitimized and encouraged grassroots organizing. The third phase began when Martin Luther King, Jr. brought the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to Chicago in 1966 to “End Slums” in cooperation with the CCCC as the combined Chicago Freedom Movement (CFM). The CFM mobilized huge numbers of people, helped to build even more small grassroots organizations in neighborhoods across the city, and brought the struggle in Chicago to the attention of the national media. When King left Chicago, following the 1966 Summit Agreement, he left many Black Chicagoans disappointed by the lack of change, but still locally organized throughout the city. The fourth phase of Black organizing in Chicago was based largely on self-determination,

Black Power and community self-help, principles that were gaining popularity in Black communities across the country and would continue to do so through the late 1960s and into the 1970s. Self-determination had always influenced Chicago organizers, but grew in popularity after King's departure and the dissolution of the CFM.

Just as King did not bring the movement to Chicago, the movement did not leave when he moved out of his South Side apartment. Following the Summit Agreement, King left Chicago to work on campaigns in the South. In the years following the Chicago campaign and leading up to his assassination in 1968, King organized the Poor People's Campaign, an attempt to build a coalition between poor Southerners, Black and White. The mid-to-late 1960s were a time of transition for King and the SCLC, looking beyond their traditional strategies of organization to new strategies based on building interracial coalitions. They also redefined their identity within a growing activist culture of Black Power that, in some instances, tried to push King and the SCLC, along with other more traditional, integrationist organizations, out of the spotlight. In Chicago, Black Power and self-determination proved particularly influential because there had always been a strong culture of grassroots, community-based organizing in the city.

The Black Power movement in Chicago grew out of dissatisfaction with the CFM. From late 1965, when the CCCO partnered with the SCLC, to 1967's final disbandment, the CFM had failed to produce substantive change in the city. The most successful SCLC program in Chicago, Operation Breadbasket, continued to thrive after King's departure, in large part due to elements of self-determination and its strong leadership. The last program of the CFM, the School of Community Organization, also speaks to the self-deterministic ideologies of the late 1960s. The CCCO failed to regain momentum after King's departure, and ultimately collapsed, but the member organizations remained relevant. The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), in particular,

exemplifies sustained grassroots organizing in Chicago from the 1959 through the 1960s. As the Black Power movement gained support nationally and the Black Panther Party grew in cities across the country, the Chicago chapter of the Panthers proved particularly important, ultimately developing a successful model for coalition building. This model played an important role in Chicago and national politics through the 1980s and beyond. The Black Power movement, which grew alongside the civil rights movement, thrived in Chicago as a result of dissatisfaction with the failure of civil rights movements to create real change against the Daley political machine and because self-determination ideologies had always influenced Chicago's organizing culture. Black self-determination, and eventually interracial coalition building, would prove highly effective in politics and grassroots organizing.

Remnants of an "Open City"

King's departure from Chicago in January 1967 signaled a shift in momentum for the city's mass movement. The CCCO found itself in a position of deep self-reflection, and tried to determine the next step after the CFM housing campaigns. Al Raby, in a report to CCCO delegates in 1967, emphasized the importance of cooperation following the disbandment of the CFM. He wrote, "If the CCCO was born out of the necessity of cooperation and self-protection that the school boycotts Chicago's inferior schools demanded, how much more necessary to strengthen and reinforce our organization at all levels as we strive to abolish the interlocking system of slumism Chicago," recognizing that Chicago must remain organized together despite perceived failure of the CFM.¹⁵⁹ Raby, as leader of the CCCO, had a responsibility to the cooperative tactics used in the early 1960s and he desperately looked to his member

¹⁵⁹ Albert Raby, "To: CCCCO Delegates, From: Al Raby, Convenor," Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 1, folder 17, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

organizations to maintain cooperative efforts. In response to accusations made during 1966 campaign, which claimed the CCCO failed to adequately support member organizations, Raby proposed an increased budget for staff and support.¹⁶⁰ Most important to Raby, however, was that the CCCO redefine their goals and objectives, writing “The most pressing overall need at the moment and a continuing one—is the focusing of specific objectives around which all the forces in this city dedicated to ending slums can mobilize.”¹⁶¹ Raby looked to return the CCCO to its original strategies: focused goals and cooperative organizing around one issue. Attempts to mobilize and organize a large-scale movement across the city never succeeded as they had pre-1967 until Harold Washington’s mayoral campaign of 1983.¹⁶² Despite attempts to keep the coordinated efforts together, battle fatigue and waning resources ultimately led to the dismantling of the CCCO. In September 1967 Raby resigned as convener of the CCCO, and with that the organization officially disbanded, although member organizations stayed committed to their individual causes.

At the end of 1966 King left Chicago in the hands of local organizers, city officials, and the Summit Agreement designed to hold them accountable. That agreement created a government body called the Leadership Council of Metropolitan Open Communities (LCMOC), meant to oversee implementation of the Summit Agreement, in particular open housing issues. The LCMOC was meant to assure all bodies associated with open housing complied with the ordinance that came as a result of the Agreement. In a public statement on March 28, 1967, Raby stated that the CFM viewed “the formation of the Leadership Council of Metropolitan Open

¹⁶⁰ Raby, “To CCCO Delegates,” 7.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁶² For more on Harold Washington’s campaign mobilization during Harold Washington’s mayoral campaign in 1983, Abdul Alkalimat and Doug Gills, *Harold Washington and the Crisis of Black Power in Chicago: Mass Protest* (Chicago: Twenty-First Century Books and Publications, 1989).

Communities as an important achievement. It brings together for the first time an unprecedented and wide-ranging alliance of interests which have committed themselves to open occupancy in principle and in fact.”¹⁶³ In this statement Raby called upon state and national legislators to pass stronger laws, saying, “Chicago’s Ordinance is only minimal, virtually nothing has broken the basic pattern of housing segregation in Chicago.”¹⁶⁴ Raby fully supported the LCMOC, but also called upon real estate brokers to embrace full compliance of the Chicago ordinance. He also asked for improvements in the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, Department of Urban Renewal and the Chicago Housing Authority. Raby, in this statement, recognized the LCMOC as a legitimate body capable of enforcing the Agreement and had hope that they would take the necessary steps.

In a private letter from April 1967, Raby expressed the more popular belief that the LCMOC would not enforce these measures and the status quo would continue. He writes, “I am dissatisfied with the work of the Leadership Council to date, as is Dr. King. I feel that they are taking the slowest means possible to implement Open Housing in the city and surrounding areas. As you know, the members of the council represent many people who do not want things to change and although I feel that the Leadership Council could make an important contribution to open housing, I am not sure they will.”¹⁶⁵ This doubt in the LCMOC is a reaction to the continued failure of the Chicago city government to actually respond to the needs of Black residents. There was a long history of Daley and the City reacting to civil rights protest with policy but no enforcement. Raby, and many others, saw the Summit Agreement and the LCMOC

¹⁶³ Albert Raby, Edwin C. Berry, John A. McDermott and Kale Williams, “Statement: Chicago Freedom Movement,” March 28, 1967, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 1, folder 17, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

¹⁶⁴ Raby, Berry, McDermott, Williams, “Chicago Freedom Movement,” 2.

¹⁶⁵ Mrs. E.H. Appelman, *Appelman to Albert Raby, April 4, 1967*, letter, Coordinating Council of Community Organization Records, box 1, folder 3, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

as just another appeasement. The communities' suspicions about the LCMOC and lack of faith in the intentions of the city government led to talks of bringing King back to Chicago. He never returned for long campaign, but local groups across the city continued to fight housing segregation.

The LCMOC was not just an oversight committee meant to enforce the ordinance through other governing bodies, but they also developed their own programs. "Project: Good Neighbor," launched June 4, 1967, acted as a community outreach program "designed to stimulate discussion and action in neighborhoods throughout the Chicago metropolitan area."¹⁶⁶ Most Black Chicagoans already supported open housing, so Project: Good Neighbor targeted White communities that did not. The stated goal of the program was "to have the total community come to grips with a key phase of our number one domestic problem of our time, and move toward a solution."¹⁶⁷ The LCMOC, in this effort, asked White residents to welcome Black residents to their neighborhoods. The television program aired discussions led by local groups, ministers, priests, rabbis, and others around issues of open housing, hoping to normalize the conversation. They also used trade unions, educational institutions and human relations organizations to normalize the conversation about housing. They brought conversations about race and the realities of open housing to people's living rooms. Without viewership information it is difficult to measure the success of this program, but the program shows at least one attempt by the LCMOC to normalize open housing as an inevitable reality. It also shows one method used to promote civil rights in Chicago's White communities. Nevertheless, the LCMOC, like the Summit Agreement, failed to enforce open housing or promote much change. The Real

¹⁶⁶ Leadership Council of Metropolitan Open Communities, "Project: Good Neighbor," n.d., Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 3, folder 16, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

¹⁶⁷ LCMOC, "Project: Good Neighbor," 1.

Estate Boards, in particular, successfully maintained the status quo. Daley and the city's failures led to maintained activism and in Chicago's Black communities through the end of the 1960s.

CFM's Final Campaigns

Despite King's departure, the CFM followed through on programs planned for 1967. One of these programs, a voter registration drive, tried to increase the number of registered Black voters in time for the 1967 local elections and the 1968 presidential election. This drive drew from the organizing tradition in the South, where Mississippi Freedom Summer volunteers registered voters across the state. The drive also spoke in conversation with Black Power sentiment that included increased Black political power. The CFM saw voter registration as an issue of the slums, not only because many slums still had White political leadership, but also because they saw the primary reason people were not registered as ineligibility due to an unofficial address change. Hosea Williams of the SCLC, in charge of the drive, said in a December 1966 press conference, "The constant neighborhood mobility of Negro citizens means that while a person may be listed as registered, he is not eligible to vote at his new address until an official change of address is filed" and went on to explain that the drive would emphasize change of address, which must be done door-to-door by signing a post card and having it recorded with the Judges of Election Office.¹⁶⁸ The barriers to voting were different in Chicago than in the South, but the change of address due to the vulnerability of slum housing was the most significant reason voters were ineligible.

¹⁶⁸ Hosea L. Williams, "Dept. of Voter Registration and Political Education. Proposal and Budget for 60 Days- December 10 to February 10, Chicago, IL," December 7, 1966, SCLC Records, box 171, folder 18, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

Williams also spoke on several occasions of the drive as a means of opposing the Daley political machine. He said, “Since the future of Black people in Chicago depends on representative government, we cannot possibly understand how any self-respecting Black person can possibly vote for any machine candidate.”¹⁶⁹ He challenged the “undue number of white aldermen, white ward committeemen, and white precinct captains, even in, and, in fact, throughout the Black ghetto,” trying to encourage Black voters to vote for Black candidates even if that meant voting for themselves.¹⁷⁰ For years Chicago’s Black voters supported Daley and his machine candidates and the CFM presented alternatives to break that cycle. Following the drive, voter registration increased in Black neighborhoods following the drive, but results were limited at the elections. This disappointing turnout could be attributed in part to the weather, low voter turnout in a cold February election in Chicago is not all that surprising, but also to a lack of momentum surrounding alternative candidates. The drive failed to challenge the political systems in Chicago and was yet another disappointing effort by the CFM.

In June 1967 the CFM organized their final mass protest. Black communities in Chicago largely saw that the CFM had failed to produce real change in their communities and demanded continued action. Most did not see the entire movement as a failure, but rather recognized that the Chicago’s political machine did not respond to the CFM with any real change. With this understanding of failure in mind, the CFM planned a “tent-in” to protest the development of the proposed Weston Atomic Energy Commission project in the nearby suburb of Warrenville, Illinois. The tent-in dramatized the housing issue, which was pertinent to the Weston site because Illinois still refused to pass a fair housing law. As per Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, there

¹⁶⁹ Hosea L. Williams, “SCLC-CCCO,” February 27, 1967, SCLC Records, box 171, folder 17, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA., 2.

¹⁷⁰ Williams, “SCLC-CCCO,” 2.

was to be “No racial discrimination in projects financed by federal funds. To give the green light to the Weston project after the state has refused to pass a fair housing law will make a mockery of Title VI.”¹⁷¹ The CFM aimed to put pressure on the state government to pass a fair housing law by exposing this contradiction. The tent-in tactic, in particular, dramatized the fact that Black people could not even live in area surrounding the plant and “the benefits from this project will be for whites only.”¹⁷² Title VI ensured equal opportunity to jobs, and taking federal funds for this project without securing equal opportunity to jobs through a fair housing law, protestors claimed, lacked integrity. At this point in 1967, only 20 states had fair housing laws in place, and there was no precedent for Title VI to act as impetus for open housing. Due to this and the lack of media attention, pressure from the CFM tent-in failed and the legislature approved funding.

Black Self-Determination and Black Power

1967 was a transition year for the civil rights movements in Chicago. The CCCO was in a period of self-reflection, deciding how to move forward once the SCLC officially withdrew at the end of year. Organizers across Black Chicago also reflected on their own work, realizing that their efforts throughout the 1960s failed to produce any large-scale, governmental change toward open housing, despite the many promises of the Summit Agreement and the LCMOC. Overall, decreased faith in the establishment to change housing conditions led to frustrations with old protest tactics and interest in new strategies. Self-determination and community self-help as strategies that did not rely on White institutions to improve Black quality of life came to the

¹⁷¹ Albert A. Raby, “Press Statement,” June 20, 1967, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 4, folder 27, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 3.

¹⁷² “Why We Are Here: Tent-In Site, Warrenville, IL,” Chicago Freedom Movement, June 22, 1967, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations Records, box 4, folder 27, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 1.

forefront following the disbandment of the CFM proved to be the strongest strategies for the rest of the 1960s and into the 1970s and 1980s. This move toward Black Power and self-determination followed the national trend toward these ideologies and represent, not a break from Civil Rights entirely, but rather a shift in ideological and tactical focus.

School of Community Organization

One of the first programs to develop from this new movement toward self-determination was the School of Community Organization. In the summer of 1967, one year after CFM's official kick-off, the remaining members of the SCLC and CCCO started the school to "train and place 20 to 30 new organizers in the city every three months. Trainees will be recruited from the ghettos and will remain working, living, and organizing within their communities for at least one year."¹⁷³ The School used the resources of the CFM, both skills and financial resources, to train future organizers and continue the effort to create a sustainable organizing culture in Chicago. The plan, in part a reaction to the loss of community organizers after King moved out of the city, worked to develop "leadership and more effective organizers among those people who have the most at stake in a mass movement against poverty and exploitation."¹⁷⁴ Their work utilized Saul Alinsky's principles of community unions and local community organization. As the School of Community Organization moved into a neighborhood, taught people how to organize, and then left, they hoped to leave behind a motivated, educated group of activists to continue organizing in that neighborhood. The thrust of this movement was to encourage and develop indigenous leadership in areas across the city. In reaction to the CFM's failures, they

¹⁷³ "Real Power," *CCCO News*, June 2, 1967, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations records, box 2, folder 11, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA, 3.

¹⁷⁴ "To Change a City!" booklet by School of Community Organization, Coordinating Council of Community Organizations records, box 4, folder 22, King Center Archives, Atlanta, GA.

recognized that the most important step in creating a sustainable movement was developing leadership from within the communities, rather than bringing in organizers from outside. It is somewhat unclear how long this School of Community Organization ran, but the program exemplifies how the CFM's attempts to bridge the gap between traditional organizing methods and the emerging principles of community self-determination, Black Power, and Alinsky's model of grassroots organizing.

Operation Breadbasket

While the CFM disappointed the Black community in many respects, its economic arm, Operation Breadbasket (OBB), demonstrated huge success. Many viewed this program as the true success of the CFM. Breadbasket dismantled the existing economic structure of the slum, opening up jobs in companies that otherwise only hired white employees, pushing for fairer hiring practices, picketing stores, and implementing a "don't buy where you can't work" campaign. All of these efforts built OBB into a strong model for economic improvement. In a city where the overall rate of unemployment was 3%, but 10% Black unemployment, the economic situation was of the utmost importance.¹⁷⁵ Under the leadership of Rev. Jesse Jackson, described in a 1966 *Newsweek* article as "a handsome, 25-year-old Negro minister," OBB bargained for economic equality well into the 1970s.¹⁷⁶ OBB also brought clergymen into a new role in Chicago's organizing community, which to that point had never really utilized the Church. OBB combined traditional models of economic negotiation with emerging conceptions

¹⁷⁵ Alvin Pitcher, David Wallace, and Lorraine Freeman, "The Breadbasket Story," Alvin Pitcher Papers, box 1, folder 2, University of Chicago Special Collections Research Center, Chicago, IL, 1.

¹⁷⁶ "Civil Rights: Power of the Dollar," *NewsWeek*, December 26, 1966, Alvin Pitcher Papers, box 1, folder 1, University of Chicago Special Collections Research Center, Chicago, IL. *Newsweek*, December 26, 1966. Civil Rights: Power of the Dollar

of Black self-determination and community self-help to build a stronger Black business community and secure fair employment throughout the city.

OBB began as an SCLC program based in Atlanta designed to bring better jobs and more income to the black community.¹⁷⁷ The program proved successful in Atlanta as a selective buying program and Chicago, which had a history of other selective buying programs in the past, welcomed OBB to the community. It started with a group of clergymen getting together to discuss the importance of economic power in the city. Jackson then contacted Black businessmen and other local Black leadership. This group of clergymen, businessmen, and other Black community leaders challenged businesses in hopes of improving their hiring practices. They first targeted producers and distributors, making agreements with Pepsi-Cola and Coca-Cola, which required each to hire at least thirty new Black employees.¹⁷⁸ After winning those, they moved on to grocery chains. Unlike many other civil rights challenges, OBB followed a clearly defined procedure. It included five stages:

1. Information is requested by a small team of ministers who visit the target company and ask for figures on the company's total number of employees, the number of Negroes employed, the job classification, in which all employees are located, and the salary range within each classification.
2. The information is evaluated and a recommendation is made by the Steering Committee. The recommendation is transmitted as a request to the employer to hire or upgrade a specific number of 'qualifiable' Negroes within a reasonable period of time. This request is based on the ministers' belief that the Negro population of Chicago should be proportionately represented on the employee rolls of all businesses, but especially on those of businesses servicing the ghetto.
3. The ministers try to educate and negotiate with the company on the job request. They meet with officials of the company and begin by explaining to them their understanding of the moral issue—that it is wrong for a company to make profits from Negro consumers while at the same time excluding them from jobs. If pointing out to the company its own deficiency in this area and showing it how it contributes to the suffering of the Negro

¹⁷⁷ James R. Ralph Jr., *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 67.

¹⁷⁸ Ralph, *Northern Protest*, 200.

people does not lead to a favorable conclusion of the negotiations, the ministers then move to the fourth stage.

4. Economic support of the company's product by black people is withdrawn. Breadbasket ministers go to their pulpits and to other available communications media and ask all Negroes and sympathetic white people to stop buying the uncooperative employer's product or patronizing his stores. Clergy-led picket teams dramatize the dispute to ghetto inhabitants by picketing the stores where those products are sold. When people stop cooperating with the evil of job discrimination, the company's management comes to realize the value of the Negro market to their institutional life. At that point, it is in the self-interest of the company to redeem itself with the Negro community.

5. Reconciliation is now possible. The ministers can now honestly anticipate respect from the company executives. New decisions are possible when the company and Breadbasket meet as mutual 'whole' powers. The vital relationship between the producer and the buyer can be restored, and men are truly reconciled when they have no need to fear or to bow to another.¹⁷⁹

These steps successfully challenged producers, distributors, and retailers, and effectively involved nearly every member of the community. Ministers led OBB, sat at the negotiating table and led their congregations in boycotts and pickets, but OBB also involved employees and businessmen. In some instances, only phases one, two, and three were utilized because companies were willing to negotiate and come to a resolution. In others, OBB led pickets and boycotts for weeks before the companies came to the bargaining table. In every challenge, however, OBB was successful in eventually getting the company to agree and sign a covenant promising jobs and fair hiring processes. After five months, OBB had gained more than two hundred new jobs and within the first fifteen months they were up to 2,000 new jobs that were worth at least \$15 million a year in new income to the Black communities.¹⁸⁰ OBB provided tangible, relatively quick results, unlike many of the other programs implemented by the CFM in 1966.

In their second year, OBB shifted their focus from increasing jobs to business development within the Black communities on the South and West Sides. Since the beginning

¹⁷⁹ Pitcher, Wallace, and Freeman, "The Breadbasket Story," 1.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 1.

they had held Saturday meetings of Black businessmen, and with success those meetings grew. Participation was OBB's only form of membership, and it was increasingly valuable for Black businessmen to join OBB for the sake of shared resources and increased sales.¹⁸¹ In a May meeting, the group of businessmen created a list of regulations for businesses wanting to join OBB. The list included: bank at a Black bank, organize a consumer club, participate in the program of "Movement Advertising," and share in some regular program of contributions to the SCLC.¹⁸² These regulations created a more dedicated group of Black businessmen interested in working cooperatively to promote Black-owned businesses in Black communities.

OBB also created Consumer Clubs to better engage the community in their work. Consumer Clubs primarily acted as word-of-mouth campaigns to advertise and sell more Black products. They aimed to put Black products at the top, so that if a consumer needed a product they would have some familiarity with the Black-owned product options rather than perhaps the more popular mainstream (White) product.¹⁸³ As member businesses had to organize their own consumer clubs, they effectively involved large groups of people in the work of economic improvement.

As a ministerial and business-led organization, OBB remained male-dominated. In an attempt to remedy this, in 1968 OBB created the Women's Steering Committee. The purpose, as stated in the proposal for the committee, "In building black identity and freedom we as women of the black community find it necessary to react to any situation which we as a body find harmful or detrimental to our isolated community. We act on our ability to cut off or supply a

¹⁸¹ Gary Massoni, "Perspectives on Operation Breadbasket," in *Chicago 1966: Open Housing Marches, Summit Negotiations, and Operation Breadbasket*, ed. David J. Garrow (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1989), 214.

¹⁸² Massoni, "Perspectives on Operation Breadbasket," in *Chicago 1966*, 215.

¹⁸³ "Why Operation Breadbasket Consumer Clubs," Alvin Pitcher Papers, box 4, folder 1, University of Chicago Special Collections Research Center, Chicago, IL.

need, that is, on a power relationship to build or community.”¹⁸⁴ The committee worked primarily to promote selective buying campaigns amongst other women in their communities. Interestingly, this group was mainly made up of the wives of businessmen involved in the other arms of OBB, in particular those who regular attended the Saturday morning meetings.¹⁸⁵ Despite this committee, OBB remained a male-dominated, middle-class organization, particularly once it shifted focus from fair employment to business development.

OBB did not to demand absolute separatism, only economic independence. They viewed the economic conditions of the slum and the Black man in Chicago as a type of economic colonialism, “the systematic economic exploitation of black men by white men.”¹⁸⁶ It was this economic colonialism, or internal colonialism, that OBB worked to defeat. The community critiqued OBB for being too much of a middle-class organization, alienating much of the community who did not own their own businesses. In the early days of the program the focus on gaining jobs for Black people directly improved lives of not just middle-class men, but of all people in Black communities. As the group grew more and more business-oriented, they lost connection with those most affected by the economic conditions of the slums. This and internal tensions between Jesse Jackson and his half brother, Noah Robinson, ultimately led to the dissolution of OBB as an official SCLC program in 1971. Jackson continued with a similar program re-titled Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), which continues today as the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, though it now encompasses many more social justice issues.

¹⁸⁴ “Women’s Steering Committee, Purpose and Structure Statement,” January 8, 1968, Alvin Pitcher Papers, box 1, folder 13, University of Chicago Special Collections Research Center, Chicago, IL.

¹⁸⁵ “Women’s Steering Committee.”

¹⁸⁶ Pitcher, Wallace, and Freeman, “The Breadbasket Story,” 1.

Operation Breadbasket was not a perfect organization nor Rev. Jesse Jackson a perfect leader, but OBB successfully created jobs in the Black community, an easily defined and tangible success. OBB also acted as a bridge between the SCLC's tradition of nonviolent direct action protest, with its boycotts and pickets, and emerging Black Power self-determination that drove the business development portions of OBB's programs. Even more, OBB connected economic and political power. It drew from older conceptions of money as power and honed in on the importance of Black economic power as a bargaining agent in gaining Black political power. The primary goal of OBB was to gain Black economic independence, and they were largely successful despite the institutional oppressions standing in their way.

The Woodlawn Organization (TWO)

On the South side of Chicago, The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) serves as a case study of the grassroots organizing tradition in Chicago from the late 1950s through the 1960s. TWO exemplifies the importance of self-determination, even before that term was applied, during the civil rights era in Chicago. Much of their grassroots organizing utilized Saul Alinsky's community-based principles of organizing, which were similar to what would become Black Power ideologies of self-determination. For TWO, the most important of these principles was the emphasis on indigenous leadership, empowerment of the community, and commitment to individual localities. TWO was one of the most successful member organizations of the CCCO, in large part due to its community-based nature and is worth studying as an example of grassroots community organizing.

Woodlawn's primary issue was housing. The neighborhood was a densely packed slum area, described by Arthur Brazier, one of TWO's leaders, as "a square mile packed with human

beings.”¹⁸⁷ As the community grew, absorbing many Black migrants from the South, housing continued to deteriorate. By the 1960 census, almost 27 percent of housing units in the neighborhood contained more than one person per room, compared to 12 percent in the rest of city.¹⁸⁸ Of those cramped units, fifty percent were dilapidated, deteriorated or deficient in basic plumbing facilities.¹⁸⁹ Woodlawn had a housing crisis, so in 1959 four pastors came up with “The Woodlawn Cooperative Project” to improve the quality of living in Woodlawn. This project grew into The Woodlawn Organization.

The basis for TWO was the power of the neighborhood as an independent community, not just as political or economic agents within the larger context of Chicago politics. Brazier writes, “The basis for the Woodlawn Organization was people united for their own self-interest—a strong, politically independent community organization which would concern itself with the self-interest of people, to develop the kind of political sophistication that would bring to these people the power to make basic and fundamental changes in their lives here in their own neighborhood.”¹⁹⁰ The founding goal of the organization was community independence, an ideology that would not be articulated on the national agenda for several more years. Brazier also emphasized the value of Black people, writing, “There are two sources of power in the body politic of this country: money and people. The ghetto has no money; but it has people, and people are more important than money. So in the ghetto there is power, raw power—plenty of people.”¹⁹¹ TWO focused on the value of people and the inherent power Black people in this

¹⁸⁷ Arthur Brazier, *Black Self-Determination: The Story of the Woodlawn Organization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), 11.

¹⁸⁸ Brazier, *Black Self-Determination*, 10.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

particularly community had if only that energy and power were focused. TWO came into being to garner that energy and focus the efforts of the community.

TWO organized around issues. The first step for TWO was to talk with people in the community and find out the things they were concerned about.¹⁹² As an organization dedicated to the power of the community, they worked to solve the problems the community wanted solved, not necessarily the problems the leadership saw as most immediate. For the community, the most salient issue was the slum, in particular the slum landlord. In 1961 and 1962, TWO started mobilizing the community around slum issues and conducted the first rent strike in the nation.¹⁹³ TWO was first met with hesitance when approaching residents. Already Black residents were in vulnerable positions, and they feared repercussions of a rent strike, but it was the group power that kept those repercussions from coming to fruition. As the organized entire buildings for rent strikes, they proved more successful. But TWO refused to be a “problem solver,” insisting, “If the tenants in a building don’t want to do their own picketing, we are not interested in them.”¹⁹⁴ TWO worked where they were wanted and organized people who were ready to mobilize around issues. As individual buildings organized and succeeded in improving their conditions through rent strikes and tenant union negotiations, others saw these successes and started to organized throughout the community. TWO’s success improving housing came from the community itself and their willingness to organize and empower that community.

During the height of the CCCO’s influence in Chicago, 1963 to 1967, TWO proved one of the most influential member groups under the umbrella organization. Leader of TWO, Arthur Brazier, was even the first convener of the CCCO before Al Raby took over in 1963. Throughout

¹⁹² Ibid., 31.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 43.

¹⁹⁴ John Hall Fish, *Black Power/White Control: The Struggle of the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), 97.

that period TWO continued organizing in Woodlawn around housing, schools, and political representation. The main thrust of the organization, besides organizing around these issues, was finding legitimation as a spokesman for the Woodlawn community. To this point there was no community authority in Woodlawn, and establishing TWO as the legitimate spokesperson for the needs and issues proved challenging. TWO had to “win its role as spokesman,” and did so by improving the lives of residents through community organization, block-by-block.¹⁹⁵ A real threat to TWO as the spokesman for Woodlawn were youth gangs, in particular the Blackstone Rangers and the Eastside Disciples. The Rangers especially had a certain authority over young people in the area and challenged the TWO as spokesman, claiming they did not actually speak for the problems of young people. Interestingly, The Rangers had been involved in King’s campaign, protecting the open housing marches in Gage Park and Cicero. TWO saw success in incorporating the Rangers into their program, as well. They developed a youth program, led mostly by Rangers, to speak for the problems of young people. This program was short-lived, as it received federal funding and threatened the Chicago political machine.

As TWO grew, it became more program-based than issue-based. It is nearly impossible however, to organize around programs, and TWO grew less radical in the 1970s. Though it was less radical and less based on organizing by this point, TWO successfully administered programs and continued to thrive into the 1970s. TWO’s succeeded in the Black Power era unlike many civil rights organizations. Whereas more traditional civil rights organizations, the SCLC, for example, struggled to transition into the era of self-determination, TWO anticipated the importance of self-determination strategies from the beginning. TWO understood the importance of power and that power comes from the community, not from outside organizers and not from

¹⁹⁵ Fish, *Black Power/White Control*, 68.

the city government. John Hall Fish, a TWO organizer, writes, “the root issue underlying poverty, power and race in Chicago is self-determination,” and in focusing the power of Woodlawn’s residents TWO successfully harnessed their power within their own communities.¹⁹⁶ TWO understood the issues of Woodlawn as ‘not “medical,” but ‘political;’ that is, they stem from the arrangements by which power is acquired and exercised.”¹⁹⁷ Before TWO, residents of Woodlawn were completely excluded, but TWO’s organizing returned power to the community. Arthur Braziers described Woodlawn as

A neighborhood where streets still hold last winter’s salt and last fall’s leaves in the gutters, where boarded-up shop windows speak to the residents of the white man’s racism, where spray-paint graffiti on buildings and fences remind everyone of the explosive mixture of hope and suppressed rage to be found in every young person who roams the streets.¹⁹⁸

TWO succeeded because it harnessed and refined that rage and hope into power.

Illinois Black Panther Party

Operation Breadbasket and The Woodlawn Organization focused their efforts on the South Side, but the Illinois Black Panther Party (ILBPP) found a home on the West Side. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP) in 1966 in Oakland, California. Largely historicized as a violent, militant organization characterized by weapons and berets, the BPP actually had a much more complex set of programs, including the Free Breakfast for Children program and free health clinics. These “Survival Programs” were crucial to the communities they served and were just as important, if not more important, than the more militant programs also sponsored by the BPP.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 88.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 22.

¹⁹⁸ Brazier, *Black Self-Determination*, 11.

By September 1968, Chicago had two Black Panther factions vying for national BPP recognition, one on the South Side and one on the West Side.¹⁹⁹ Under the leadership of spokesman Fred Hampton, the West Side faction won and then founded the ILBPP. Hampton, described as a charismatic leader by all accounts, had a nuanced view of Black Power.²⁰⁰ He was, at this point, still a member of the NAACP, a more traditional civil rights organization, “considered himself a black nationalist” and “regarded racial unity as fundamental and poor whites as adversaries.”²⁰¹ This interest in building interracial coalitions would prove particularly successful for the ILBPP, but also threaten Daley’s political machine and ultimately lead government attacks and ultimately destruction of the ILBPP.

The ILBPP appealed to a group of people that had otherwise been ignored by the major civil rights organizations in Chicago. Movements to this point had been led mostly by adults with family responsibilities and careers to worry about. Some organizations like TWO incorporated youth in their organizing, but ILBPP emerged as an organization for Chicago’s young people. Most of ILBPP’s members were high school or college students or were affiliated with grassroots community and national political organizations.²⁰² Despite the overall youth of the ILBPP, “Many Illinois Panthers were also activists before they joined the Party which contradicts popular perceptions of the groups as made up of thugs and criminals.”²⁰³ The ILBPP was made up of young, motivated, educated youth and was led by smart, well-spoken Fred

¹⁹⁹ Jakobi Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 63.

²⁰⁰ *The Essence of Fred Hampton* ed. by William E. Hampton and Rini Templeton, 1995.

²⁰¹ Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot*, 62.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 89.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 89.

Hampton. No other large, successful organization in Chicago had harnessed youth's energy in this way.

The Chicago Panthers targeted three "levels of oppression." These targets were not particularly unique to their organization and Black organizers had worked against these targets before. What was new to the conversation was their specific use of radical language that had not yet developed in Chicago. Fred Hampton writes that these targets were, "1) the 'greedy, exploiting, rich avaricious businessman' who took advantage of the black community; 2) the 'misleading, lying, tricky demagogic politician' who played upon the community's woes; and 3) the 'atrocious, murdering, brutalizing, intimidating, fascist, pig cops.'"²⁰⁴ Capitalism, exploitative politicians, and police were not entirely new targets, but the use of radical language to describe these targets was new and radical.

In cities across the country the BPP implemented Survival Programs. In Chicago, the most popular programs were the Free Breakfast for Children and free medical research health clinics.²⁰⁵ These programs connected with the community and put into action the Black Power theory that drove the BPP. Hampton writes about this connection between theory and action, "Our Breakfast for Children program is feeding a lot of children and the people understand our Breakfast for Children program. We sayin' something like this—we saying that theory's cool, but theory with no practice ain't shit. You got to have both of them—the two go together."²⁰⁶ The Survival Programs were key to the ILBPP's success because they served the community. Much like TWO had to earn its position as spokesman for the Woodlawn community, the ILBPP also had to prove its legitimacy as an authority in the Black community. Survival Programs

²⁰⁴ Fred Hampton, "You Can Murder a Liberator, but You Can't Murder Liberation," in *The Black Panthers Speak*, ed. Philip S. Foner (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970,) 138-144.

²⁰⁵ Williams, *Bullet to the Ballot*, 93.

²⁰⁶ Hampton, "You Can Murder a Liberator," 139.

helped to prove this legitimacy. A unique aspect of Chicago's Survival Programs was the way they interacted with churches. Most BPP Survival Programs relied on individual communities, but not necessarily the churches. In Chicago, "they wouldn't have been successful without the churches" because the churches gave donate space, food, and other resources.²⁰⁷ This alliance with the churches is particularly notable given the limited church involvement in Chicago's civil rights organizing. Survival Programs were the cornerstone of the ILBPP and established their legitimacy in Chicago, proving that the Panthers could provide for Black communities what the government would not.

The other unique tactic that set the ILBPP apart from other chapters of the BPP and from other civil rights organizations in Chicago was their dedication to interracial coalition. In 1968, Hampton and the ILBPP created the Rainbow Coalition to coordinate organizing efforts based on class, not just race. This racial coalition bonded in "opposition to the Daley Democratic machine's perceived political corruption, police brutality, urban renewal, and gentrification."²⁰⁸

The Rainbow Coalition brought together:

Various elements of the black community (religious, community, and civil rights/black power), confederate flag wearing Appalachian white migrants (Young Patriots), Puerto Ricans (Young Lords), poor white ethnic groups including Jews (Rising Up Angry, JOIN Community Union, and the Intercommunal Survival Committee), students (Black Student Unions on various campuses, and Students for a Democratic Society), and the women's movement led by female members of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party who left other black organizations because the chapter was the only male-dominated group to take the woman question seriously.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot*, 93.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 126.

²⁰⁹ Jakobi E. Williams, "The Original Rainbow Coalition: An Example of Universal Identity Politics," *Tikkun*, accessed Dec. 27, 2105, <http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/the-original-rainbow-coalition-an-example-of-universal-identity-politics>; Amy Sonnie and James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists, Urban Race Rebels, and Black Power: Community Organizing in Radical Times* (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2011).

This coalition was the first time that Chicago's Black leadership led a group of poor White and other marginalized people in an effort "to teach communities how to empower themselves via grassroots organizing, and to develop a classless society."²¹⁰ Groups involved in the coalition developed their own Survival Programs, mimicking the success of the ILBPP, to improve their own communities. From the beginning, police repression hindered the ILBPP and Rainbow Coalition.²¹¹ Daley and the Democratic political machine dismantled this coalition violently when the police, in a raid of ILBPP headquarters, assassinated Fred Hampton in his apartment in 1969. Hampton's murder only strengthened the coalition and mobilized the coalition in attempts to dismantle the Daley machine that was responsible for his murder. The ILBPP disassembled, with many other BPP chapters, in 1971, but the Rainbow Coalition remained.

In the years following the end of the ILBPP, the Rainbow Coalition mainly existed as a means of political organization. Famously, the Rainbow Coalition's Harold Washington was elected the first Black mayor of Chicago in 1983 and created what he called his "Rainbow Cabinet" made up of founders of the original Rainbow Coalition.²¹² In 1984 and 1988 Jesse Jackson, who was not involved in the original coalition but was inspired by Washington's success, co-opted the Rainbow Coalition name for his presidential campaign. Jakobi Williams, a historian writing about the ILBPP, traces Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign to the Rainbow Coalition, as well. Williams writes that Jackson and Obama exploited the ideals of the original Rainbow Coalition, saying, "The original Rainbow Coalition was a grassroots movement that helped people to build bridges in spite of their differences. It helped common people to actually see their commonalities and humanity," and that using this idealism to garner

²¹⁰ Williams, *Bullet to the Ballot*, 126.

²¹¹ Sonnie, *Hillbilly Nationalists*.

²¹² Williams, "The Original Rainbow Coalition."

votes obscures the values of the original coalition.²¹³ The Rainbow Coalition that grew out of the ILBPP is most successful as part of grassroots movements, but that is not to say that it cannot also function on a broader-scale or for other purposes.

The period 1967 to 1971 was a period of redefinition for the movements in Chicago and nationally. Following the disappointing results of the open housing campaign of 1966, the CCCO returned to its roots as a true umbrella organization meant to support smaller, local community organizations. Eventually the CCCO disbanded altogether, but the bonds made between organizations and the local groups themselves remained as an important part of the organizing landscape of the city. The period of mass movement had passed, but the community work passed relatively gracefully back into the hands of grassroots organizations. The direct descendent of the SCLC's work in the CFM, Operation Breadbasket, led to way in bridging the gap between traditional civil rights activism and the emerging self-determination Black Power sentiment. TWO, more locally in Woodlawn, also bridged that gap in their own neighborhood, though they had adopted ideologies focused on self-determination nearly from their founding in the late 1950s. Finally, in 1967, the Illinois Black Panther Party developed on the West Side of Chicago, merging Black Power rhetoric and practice with cross-racial coalition building. While the Panthers dissolved in 1971, the importance of coordination, coalition and cooperation, in particular class-based cooperation, proved the broadest, longest-lasting legacy of the long Black freedom struggle in Chicago.

²¹³ Ibid.

Conclusion

Success as Persistence in the Face of Adversity

From local histories of grassroots organizations to political histories to biographies of various leaders, there are seemingly endless methods by which to study civil rights organizing in the United States. The dominant historical narrative of civil rights would suggest the story starts in 1955 with Rosa Parks in Montgomery, Alabama and ends with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in Memphis in 1968. Per this narrative, most Americans likely have been taught the civil rights movement only happened in the Southern states where outwardly racist politicians and the Ku Klux Klan worked together to enforce Jim Crow policies. While Black southerners certainly played a particularly important role in the Black freedom struggle, civil rights were not only an issue south of the Mason-Dixon line. The dominant narrative that places civil rights within the confines of the south from 1955 to 1968 fails to recognize the many people who fought for civil rights outside of the South before and after that time period. This thesis challenges that mythologized narrative by examining how Chicago's own civil rights movements developed throughout the 20th century.

The foundations of my research on Chicago's Black freedom struggle are the archival records of several civil rights organizations in Chicago from 1940 to 1970. There is also a wealth of knowledge to be garnered from untapped sources, including personal archives sitting in garages and basements and oral histories from people who lived and organized in Chicago during this period. Time, proximity and lack of social connections limited my own access to many of those untapped resources. To supplement the organizational records, which often included memos, notes, press statements, newspaper clippings, and speeches, I utilized secondary sources,

particularly in piecing together the timeline of events through the 1950s and 1960s. The archives were fundamental, however, as they brought to light information that was otherwise unknown and gave unique insight into activists' thoughts, often in a day-to-day and informal manner.

The most important work this thesis does is in situating Chicago's civil rights movements within a longer narrative. Chicago was, and continues to be, an important urban center for Black America. Particularly during the era of industrial migration from the South, as discussed in Chapter 1, Chicago's Black culture thrived. The communities also faced a series of uphill battles. Despite the significant Black population and the community organizing that existed within that population, the narrative of Chicago's civil rights movements remains mostly limited to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s campaign in 1966. This limits not only our understanding of Chicago's local history, but also our understandings of civil rights history more broadly. Many of the injustices Black Chicagoans faced in the mid-twentieth century still exist in some form today. Schools, housing, jobs and police brutality remain key issues in Chicago's Black communities. Certainly individual leader and organizations have made progress, but Black Chicagoans, and other urban Black communities, can still learn from the successes and failures of past activism. As much as there is disappointment in this history of struggle, there is also hope.

There are three key arguments at work in this thesis. The first, that Chicago's civil rights movement grew out of a tradition of community organizing created in Chicago and that model of community organizing worked as the foundation of Chicago's freedom struggle. The second, de facto segregation was just as detrimental as Jim Crow segregation in the South, and Black Chicagoans worked to defeat de facto segregation just as hard as Black Southerners worked to defeat Jim Crow. And the third argument is about the legacy of civil rights in Chicago. Resituating 1966, the year of King's campaign to End the Slums, within the long civil rights

movement, from 1940 to 1970, 1983, or even perhaps 2016, allows for a better understanding of progress in Chicago. It also allows for a reading of this Chicago's organizing history not as a failure, but as a longer narrative of defeats and negotiations that over time led to many successes and certainly real progress.

Community organizing played a crucial role in Chicago's civil rights movements, largely due to Saul Alinsky's principles of organizing that innovatively took labor tactics and applied them to organizing tenants and other marginalized communities throughout the city of Chicago, and beyond. It was not just Alinsky's model that drove Chicago's organizing culture, but also the larger culture of Black civil rights organizing nationally. In Chicago specifically, organizing started with defining the community through the work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League. Creation of a cohesive, though not homogeneous, community allowed for a better understanding of identity and the start of a Black activist culture. Following the development of civil rights organizations, including the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), came a period of coordinated efforts amongst those institutions. As more and more civil rights organizations sprouted across the city, in part due to Alinsky's successful model of tenant organizing and CORE's nonviolent direct action, the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO) stepped in to coordinate efforts amongst groups and focus energies toward one singular goal, while maintaining the autonomy of each individual group. Ultimately these broad coordinated efforts led to coalition building in the late 1960s, a key component of contemporary social justice organizing strategy. This trajectory of community organizing, from institution building to coordination and then coalition, builds a genealogy of thought to trace the earliest Black community organizations to contemporary social justice work.

The fight against de facto segregation is also important to Chicago's civil rights history. Even today, the popular rhetoric would have some believe that modern racism is "subtle," but people used that same argument in the 1960s to claim Northern racism did not exist. This "subtle" de facto segregation made up the bulk of the battle in Chicago. By the 1950s there were few, if any, laws enforcing segregation in Chicago, but there was still a serious problem of racial inequality. From public accommodations, challenged by CORE, to housing, schools, unemployment and political representation, issues in Chicago mimicked issues that faced the nation more broadly. As Black people in Lowndes County, Alabama fought for electoral representation so did Chicago's community members. As schools were integrated throughout the South, Black Chicagoans organized for better schools. As Southern Blacks organized to improve their living conditions, Chicago's slum-dwelling Black population organized to End the Slums. The problems of Chicago's Black residents were no less serious than those of Southern Blacks; Chicago's racial restrictions were just not written into law.

Situating Chicago's civil rights history within the longer narrative of national civil rights allows this specific narrative to be understood as more than just one year in the slums of Chicago. Just as the popular narrative of national civil rights only ranges from Montgomery to Memphis, the best-known history of Chicago's civil rights history only emphasizes the year King lived with his family on the West Side. When the historiography of Chicago's civil rights movements focuses only on King's campaign to End Slums, it is often written as a failure. Within a longer narrative, however, the scholar is able to understand King's role in Chicago more fully and also understand the longer trajectory of community organizing from building a Black migrant community to the Rainbow Coalition that would eventually elect Chicago's first Black mayor. King was not alone working in Chicago, he did not walk into a city new to

organizing, nor did Black Chicagoans stop organizing when he moved on to the next campaign. King's year in Chicago is important when contextualizing the city within the longer narrative of civil rights history, but it is by no means truly representative of the depth and breadth of organizing tradition in Chicago that can be traced from Saul Alinsky organizing the Back of the Yards neighborhood all the way to President Barack Obama. Recognizing grassroots organizations and the unique aspects of Chicago's political and social culture are key to understanding the civil rights movements in Chicago from 1940 to 1970.

As stated, scholars have only skimmed the surface of civil rights history so far. There are countless local and organizational histories yet to be written, and certainly this thesis could have gone the way of a very specific organizational or local history, but that was not the goal nor would it have been possible given my own limited access to oral history interviews and local archives. The aim of this particular study is to expand our understandings of civil rights; to cross the Mason-Dixon, but also to go beyond Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. It is possible to read Chicago's freedom struggle as one that fits well within the formal understandings of civil rights and nonviolent direct action. This thesis challenges that formula, looking at a longer, more complex narrative that includes just as many disappointments as it does successes.

Final Thoughts

I took on this topic because of my own experiences studying civil rights history. I identified with the people I learned about, but never the landscape. The content of this thesis: improving schools, challenging police brutality, and improving housing conditions are issues I relate to more closely than I do the plight of the rural sharecropper. On October 20, 2014, as I was writing the prospectus for this thesis, Laquan McDonald, a 17-year old armed with a small

knife, was shot 16 times in 13 seconds by a Chicago police officer. A grand jury indicted the officer on six counts of first-degree murder. After police released the video of the shooting over one year later, activists in Chicago staged a mass boycott of downtown businesses and a 16-hour sit-in at the Cook County administrative building. If persistence is key to success, than Chicago's civil rights movements have not failed; they have inspired a new generation.

Understanding civil rights issues not just as Southern dilemmas but also as issues of structural racial injustice complicates the narrative. More importantly, it expands the narrative to include a more accurate portrayal of organizing history. The most challenging part of studying civil rights history is knowing that that there is still a great deal of progress to be made in this country, but perhaps in understanding the history we can find hope, inspiration, and know that the battles of the past were not in vain.

Appendix I:

Timeline of Chicago Black Freedom Struggle

CCCO	Coordinating Council of Community Organizations
CFM	Chicago Freedom Movement
COFO	Council of Federated Organizations
COINTELPRO	Counter Intelligence Program
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
ILBPP	Illinois Black Panther Party
MFDP	Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
OBB	Operation Breadbasket
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SNCC	Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
TWO	The Woodlawn Organizations

1900-1939

February 12, 1909	NAACP formed
June 13, 1917	Chicago Urban League founded
July 27- August 2, 1919	Chicago race riot of 1919
1925	Chicago NAACP campaign against Tivoli Theater

1940-1949

November 12, 1940	<i>Hansberry v. Lee</i> supreme court decision
1941	A. Philip Randolph proposed March on Washington
March 1942	CORE founded in Chicago
May 1942	CORE sit-in at Jack Spratt restaurant
1944	G.I. Bill gives veterans access to education and housing
1946	CORE campaign against Chicago's White City Roller Rink
1946	Saul Alinsky publishes <i>Reveille for Radicals</i>
April 1947	Journey of Reconciliation organized by CORE
May 3, 1948	<i>Shelley v Kramer</i> prohibits the use of racial restrictive covenants on real estate
1949	American Housing Act of 1949 acts as impetus for huge urban renewal in major cities like Chicago

1950-1959

1953-1955	Integration of Trumbull Park Homes
May 17, 1954	Supreme Court hands down decision in <i>Brown v Board of Education</i>
1955	Willoughby Abner elected President of Chicago NAACP
April 1955	Daley elected for first term as Mayor
Summer	Construction on Stateway Gardens begins on South Side
August 28, 1955	Emmett Till killed
December 1955-	Montgomery Improvement Association organizes bus boycott
March 1956	through March 1956
August 1956	COINTELPRO formed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover
February 1957	SCLC Formed
September 5, 1957	Little Rock 9 integrate Little Rock Central High School, Arkansas
1959	TWO formed
April 1959	Daley Reelected for second term as mayor

1960-1969

1960

February	Lunch counter sit-ins begin in Greensboro
April	SNCC founded

1961

May	Construction of Robert Taylor Homes begins Freedom Rides Albany Campaign COFO organized in Mississippi
May 31	<i>Taylor v. Board of Education of City School District of New Rochelle</i> decision

1962

April	CCCO founded
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1963

April	Daley reelected to third term as Mayor
May	“Project C,” Birmingham, AL
June	Medgar Evers assassinated
August 28	March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
August 29	<i>Webb v. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago</i> decision
September 15	16 th St. Baptist Church bombed in Birmingham, AL
October 4	In midst of Anti-Willis protests, Chicago Public Schools Superintendent Benjamin Willis resigns
October 16	Willis reinstated by Board of Education
October 22	Chicago “Freedom Day” school boycott
November 22	President John F. Kennedy assassinated

1964

August	MFDP demands seating at Democratic National Convention
February 25	Second Chicago school boycott
March 31	<i>Integration of the Public Schools- Chicago</i> (Hauser Report) published
May- August	COFO Freedom Summer in Mississippi
June	CORE Sumer Project (Chicago and elsewhere)
June 21	Civil rights rally at Soldier Field
July 2	Civil Rights Act of 1964 signed into law

1965

February 21	Malcolm X assassinated
March 7	Bloody Sunday, Selma, AL
June 10	Major civil rights march from Soldier Field to Chicago City Hall
Summer	Dick Gregory leads daily marches in Chicago (total 40)
July 24	Rally at Soldier Field. MLK and SCLC tour Chicago
August 6	Voting Rights Act
August 11- 17	Uprisings in Watts begin
August 12	West Side uprising after Black woman killed by a fire truck
September	MLK announces Chicago as official location for next campaign

1966

January	Kick-off of CFM MLK moves into apartment on Chicago's West Side
February	Chicago branch of OBB formed
April	Chicago Public Schools Superintendent Benjamin Willis announces he will step down as superintendent before the end of the year
June 5- 26	March Against Fear from Memphis, TN to Jackson, MS
Summer	Open Housing Marches throughout Chicago
July	Program of the CFM
July 10	MLK nails list of demands to City Hall door
July 12	West Side uprising
July 31	March in Marquette Park
August 26	Summit meeting and agreement between Chicago Freedom Movement and Mayor Daley Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities founded
September 4	Activists dissatisfied with Summit Agreement (led by CORE's Robert Lucas) hold demonstration in nearby Cicero
October	Black Panther Party for Self-Defense founded in Oakland, CA

1967

January	SCLC and local activists led by Hosea Williams hold voter registration campaign in Chicago King moves out of West Side apartment
April	Mayor Daley reelected for fourth term
Summer	CFM launches School of Community Organizing
June 4	LCMOC launches "Project: Good Neighbor"
June	Final CFM protest, Weston Tent-in in Warrenville, IL
September	Al Raby steps down as convener of CCCO, CCCO disbands

1968

January	Memphis Sanitation Worker Strike
March	Kerner Commission MLK in Memphis working with sanitation workers
April 4	MLK assassinated in Memphis
April 11	Civil Rights Act of 1968 signed into law
June 6	Robert Kennedy assassinated in Los Angeles
September	Fred Hampton forms ILBPP

1969

December 4	Fred Hampton killed in early morning raid
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1970-1979

April 1971	Daley returned to office again for fifth term
December 1971	Rev. Jesse Jackson pulls out of SCLC and forms Operation PUSH
1971	Illinois Black Panther Party officially dismantled

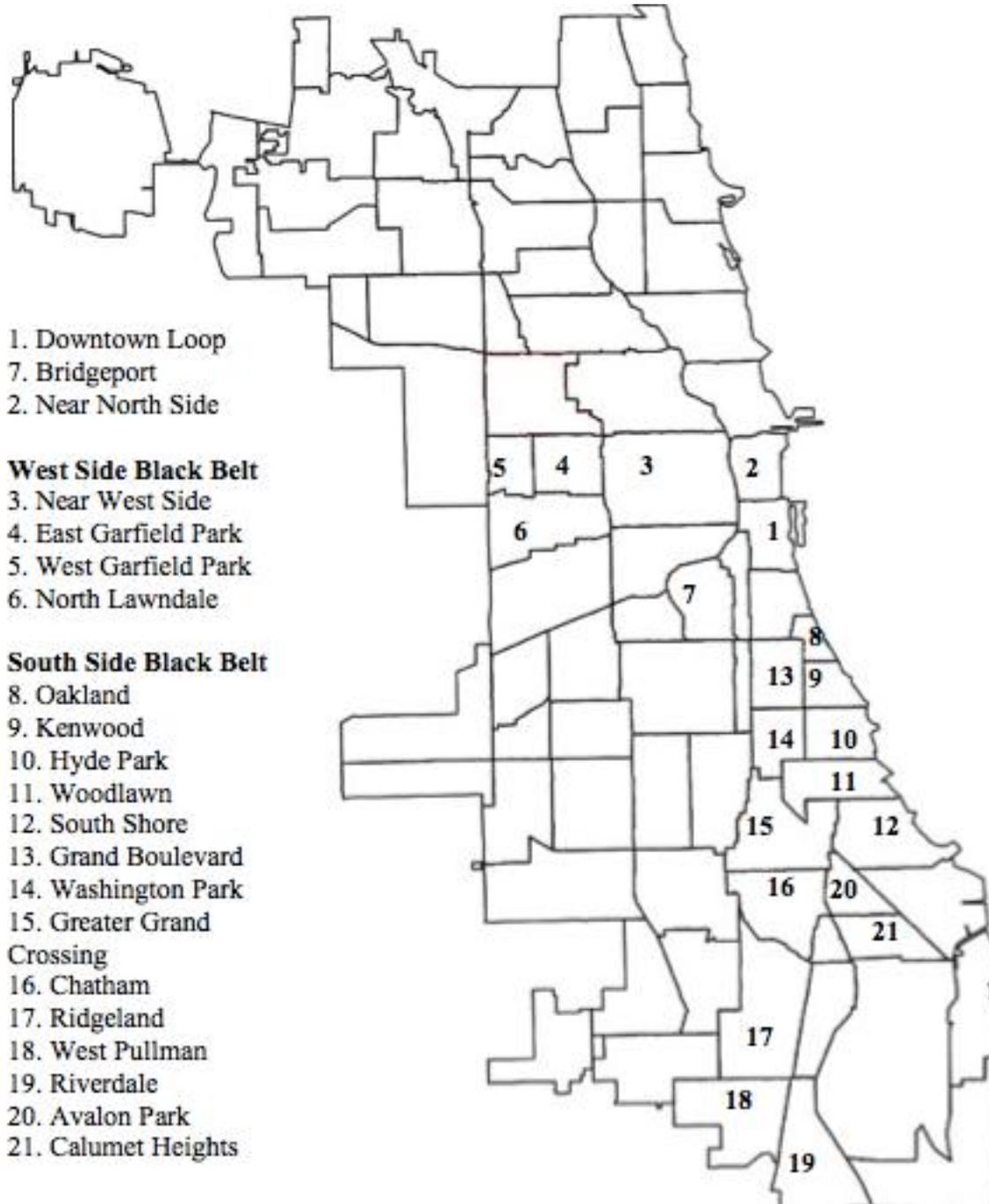
1980-2016

April 1983	Harold Washington elected, first Black Mayor of Chicago
1984	Rev. Jesse Jackson runs unsuccessfully for President of the United States on "Rainbow Coalition" platform
1988	Jackson runs for President, again unsuccessfully
November 2008	Barack Obama elected as first Black President of the United States
November 2012	Barack Obama elected for second term as President

Appendix II:

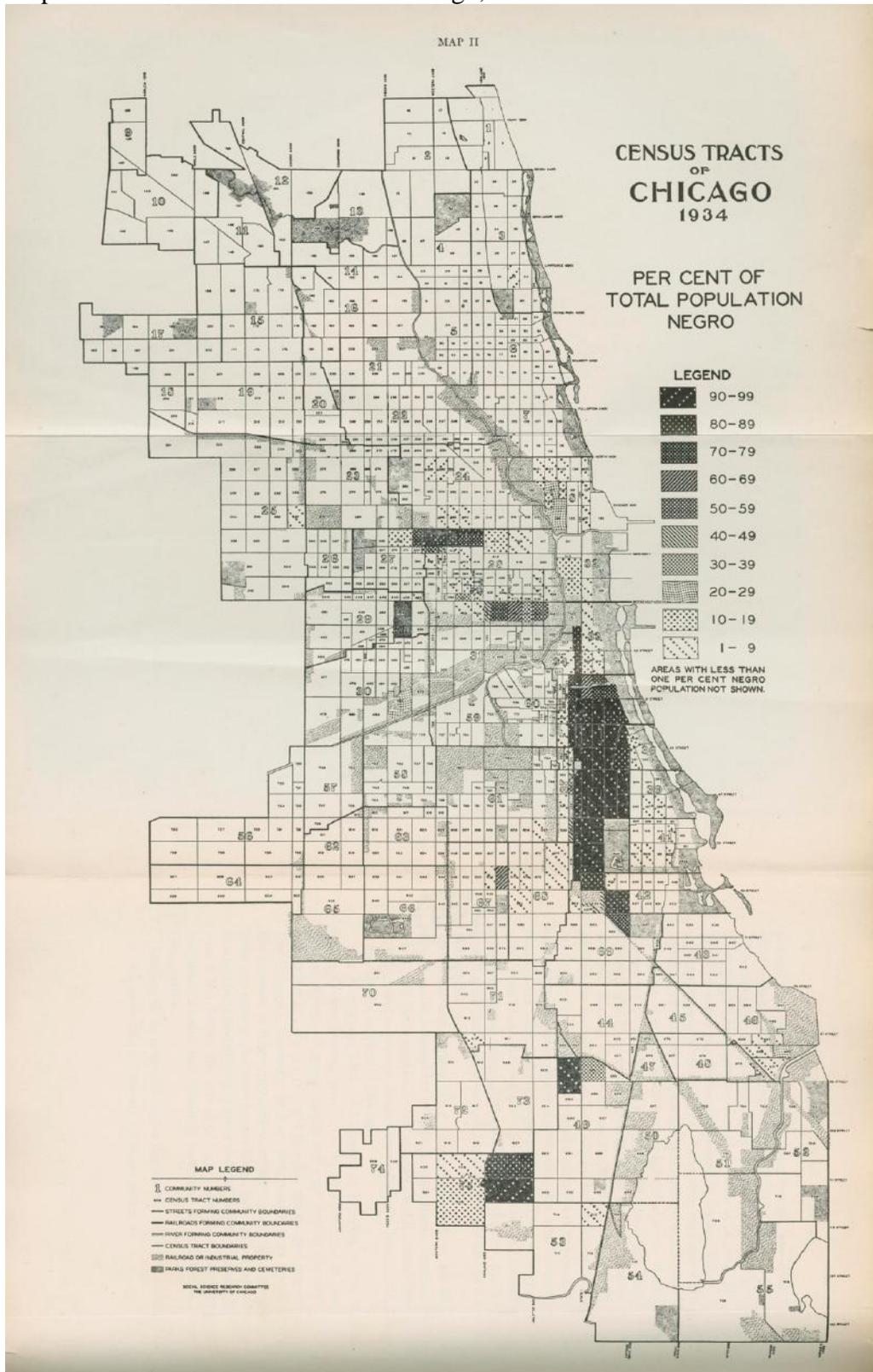
Maps

Map 1. Chicago Community Areas



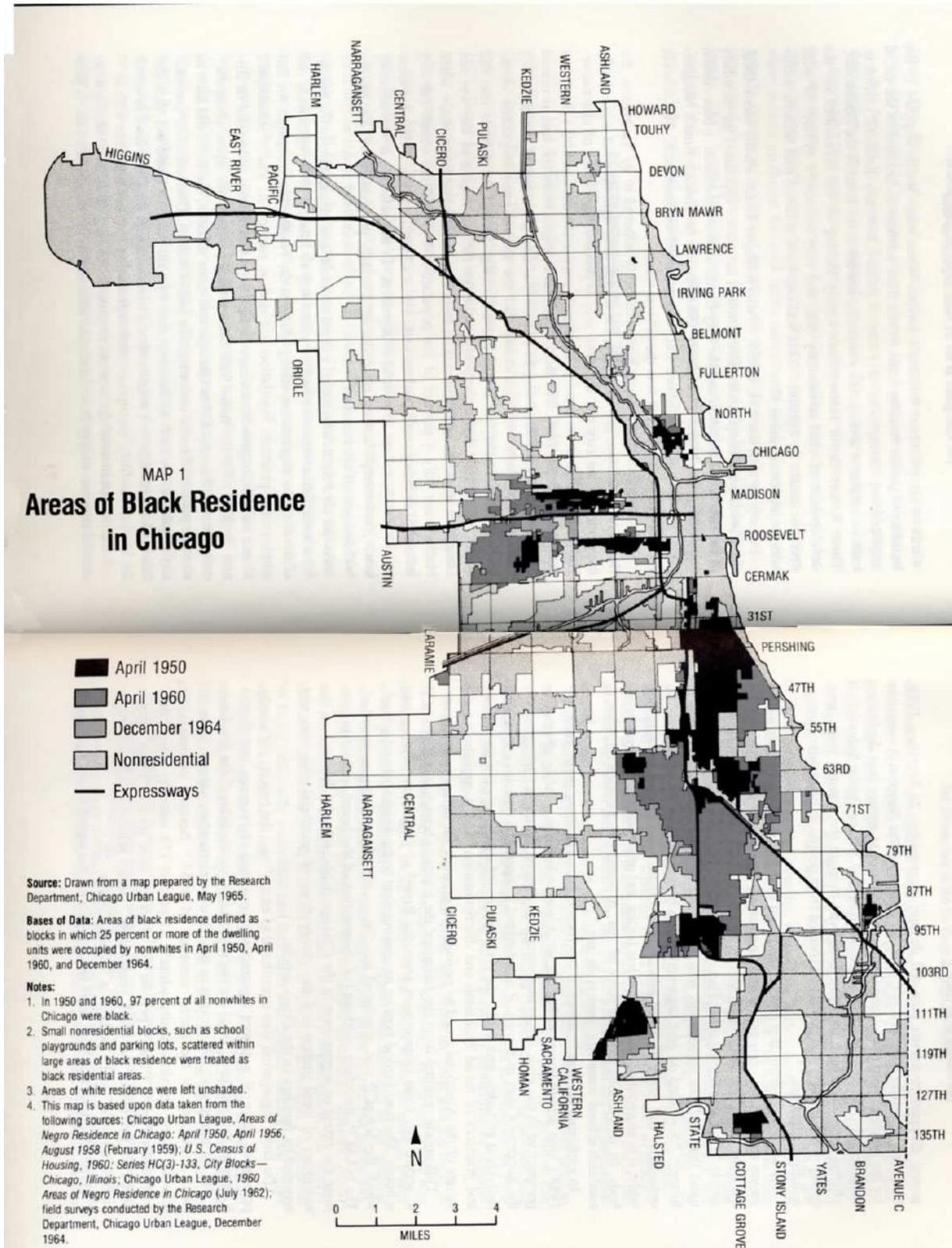
Sources: City of Chicago Community Areas map, accessed March 8, 2016, http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/doi/general/GIS/Chicago_Maps/Community_Areas/Community_Areas_w_Number.pdf.

Map 2. Black areas of residence in Chicago, 1934



Source: Social Science Research Committee, University of Chicago, Accessed March 8, 2016, <http://dcc.newberry.org/collections/chicago-and-the-great-migration>.

Map 3. Areas of Black Residence in Chicago, 1950-1965



Source: Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 74-75.

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