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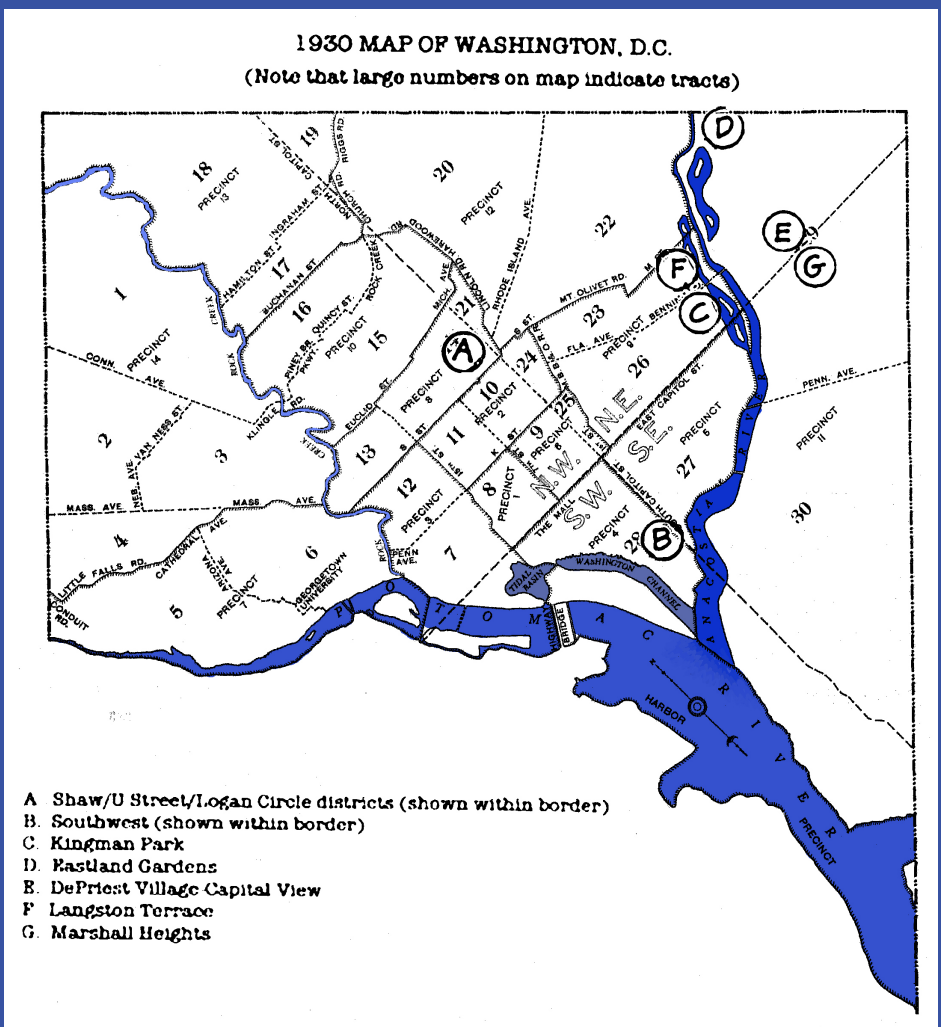

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On the cover: Map prepared by Sandra R. Heard, using a 1930 Precinct Map taken from; Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, Volume III, Part 1, 384, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1930/population-volume-3/10612963v3p1ch04.pdf (accessed 10/2/2018). Cover layout by Carla Tilghman.

American Studies

with American Studies International

Articles

Reviews

2019 **Volume 57, Number 4**

Making Slums and Suburbia in Black Washington During the Great Depression

Sandra R. Heard

In April 1937, black Washingtonian Selma Thomas wrote Eleanor Roosevelt to say that she thought Maryland's "Greenbelt resettlement community" would be an "ideal place . . . to live." Thomas longed for a "modest little home" to help find security during the Great Depression because her husband, a parcel porter for Union Station, was unable to land "a job with a livable salary to care for" his family. While Greenbelt was designed for whites, Thomas seemed to think that even a racially restricted, inexpensive home set in green pastures would be akin to "paradise," allowing her and Mr. Thomas to gain economic stability and raise their "three lovely little ones."[1]

For many Americans like Thomas, an idyllic community on the outskirts of the city was important during the Depression, because at least a third of the nation's populace lived in impoverished conditions.[2] Government officials, social workers, and ordinary citizens, like Progressives before them, also believed that poor housing was a major contributing factor in the purported crime surge in cities.[3] The sanitary modern house and neighborhood were hallmarks of proper citizenship in the 1930s. Since scores of African American homes in urban centers were ramshackle and congested, many blacks did not meet that measure of society. African Americans who were fortunate enough to rent or own updated, spacious quarters in Washington, D.C., boasted of their elite status and the latest conveniences in their houses.[4] Yet they had to contend with the stigma of the slum because of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to validate re-

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strictive covenants in its 1926 *Corrigan v. Buckley* ruling. These discriminatory covenants prevented blacks from purchasing, leasing, or occupying property in white neighborhoods.[5] Strained living arrangements exacerbated intraracial conflicts and caused some African Americans within the nation's capital to use the rhetoric and strategies of the larger society to distance themselves from their poor neighbors. Instead of adequately addressing policies that kept working-class blacks in low-quality shelter, members of the city's African American professional class deemed certain homes as threats to community and nation-building. Blacks who could afford to flee Washington, D.C.'s urban core moved to segregated housing tracts constructed near the district line to own a modern home surrounded by nature.

Suburban settlements, such as Kingman Park and DePriest Village-Capital View, housed upwardly mobile African Americans in Northeast D.C. in the early decades of the last century (See Figure 1). Marshall Heights, a suburb in the Southeast D.C. quadrant, attracted working-class blacks during the same time (See Figure 1). A select group of residents in DePriest Village-Capital View attempted to insulate themselves from "undesirables" and their neighbors in Marshall Heights. To demonstrate diligence and responsibility, a few Marshall Heighters tried to dissociate from Washington, D.C.'s alley residents. As a result, these Marshall Heighters helped to further marginalize poor urban dwellers. Moreover, black Washingtonians in Kingman Park, DePriest Village-Capital View, and the city's older communities embraced a deeply entrenched American notion that "good" housing and environments would make "good" or upstanding citizens.[6] Poor- and middle-class African Americans, who lived in the inner-city and suburban neighborhoods, used their dwellings as spaces of refuge to ward off "disreputable" elements. By equating "slums" with degeneracy, representing low-income residents as bad neighbors, and moving to new suburban tracts, various blacks in the nation's capital helped to stigmatize and ghettoize a segment of their community during the Great Depression.

Inner-City Threats

During the economic downturn, African Americans lived in all of Washington, D.C.'s four quadrants. However, they were concentrated in what is presently called the Shaw-U Street area located in the Northwest section of the city and in the Southwest neighborhood that was bordered by the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, the Mall, and South Capitol Street (See Figure 1). From 1930 to 1940, blacks made up 55% to 62% of Shaw's total population and comprised 48% to 57% of the Southwest populace; by 1940, approximately 50% of the Washington, D.C.'s African American community lived in these localities.[7] Blacks were corralled together in older, rundown parts of the city. In many cases, the housing stock they inhabited was inferior and more expensive than the dwellings that were sold or rented to the city's white residents.[8]

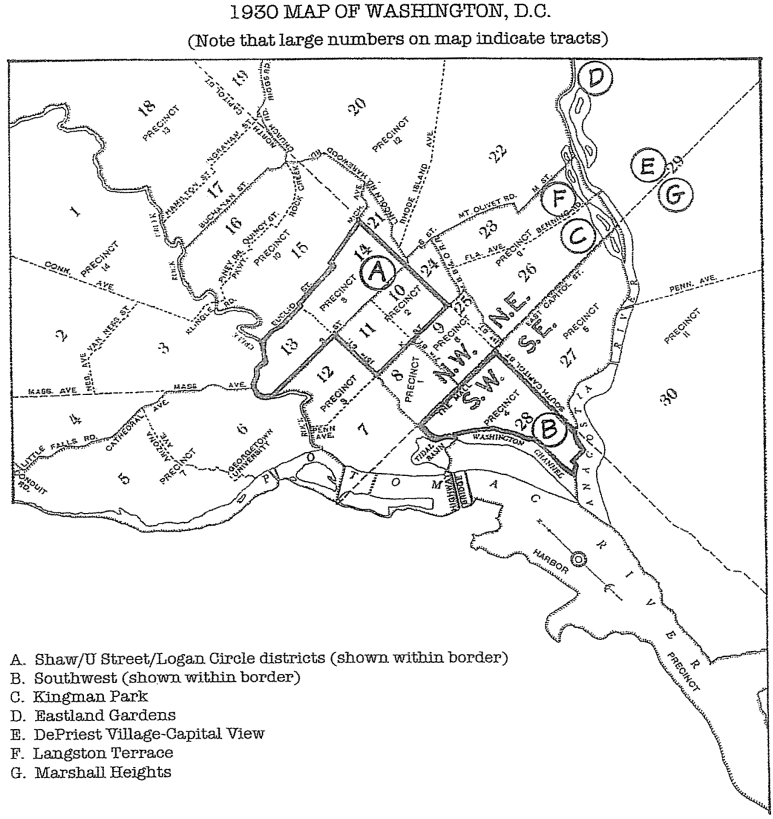

Figure 1: Illustration prepared by Sandra R. Heard, using a 1930 Precinct Map taken from; Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, Volume III, Part 1, 384, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1930/population-volume-3/10612963v3p1ch04.pdf (accessed 10/2/2018).

The city's most underprivileged black citizens lived in alley tenements, which were typically owned by slumlords who charged exorbitant prices for cramped spaces with inadequate toilets, substandard lighting, and heating systems. However, African Americans who inhabited alleys were incredibly resilient in their efforts to navigate these harsh environments. Historian James Borchert has argued that alley residents successfully used southern traditions, built life-affirming communities, and devised various strategies to help brave the challenges of urbanization and racial and class discrimination.[9] African Americans who were trapped in the city's alleys relied on extended family

networks, took in boarders, washed clothes, and collected and sold discarded building materials to deal with extreme financial hardship. Many worked diligently to take care of themselves and their families, without assistance from the government or social service organizations. Washington, D.C.'s poorest residents even tried to keep their overcrowded quarters clean, though they often encountered rodents, lack of regular trash removal, poorly ventilated rooms, crumbling walls, and other dilapidated conditions in and around their homes. Moreover, alley dwellers heavily defended their neighborhoods from outsiders (white and black) to maintain control over their territory and keep their cultural values intact.[10]

Some critics of the city's "slums" assumed that alley dwellers' perceived refusal to appropriate mainstream cultural norms was a testament to their inability to adapt to "normal," and presumably healthier, ways of living.[11] Many of the city's residents also defined alley housing and other quarters that were available to low-income blacks as intolerable places that produced bad health and delinquency. Washingtonians were not alone in thinking that impoverished settings caused degeneracy and sickness. Researchers, journalists, social service workers, and ordinary Americans regularly claimed that environment played a key role in determining behavior and well-being.[12] Like Progressive reformers decades earlier, government administrators and other professionals focused much of their attention on "slums" during the economic crisis of the 1930s, because they believed these communities were impediments to raising upstanding families and building civil society.[13] Months before the stock market crash, African American sociologist William Jones claimed that there was a "surprisingly close relationship between the morbidity, mortality, and criminal conduct of Negroes in cities and their bad housing." For Jones, "the poorest and least resourceful sections" of Washington's black populace lived in back alleys, which cultivated and attracted a "certain kind of retrograde Negro . . . [who] did not wish to measure up to the white cultural standard" or refused to assimilate into mainstream society.[14] The only way to effectively deal with the alley resident, Jones suggested, was to clear the slums and replace them with new buildings. An updated, clean environment would purportedly "benefit . . . the entire [capital] city" by transforming a shiftless underclass into productive citizens or by encouraging underprivileged African Americans to behave more like the middle-class in "stable" settings.[15]

A few years after the Jones findings were circulated, black architect and Howard University professor Hilyard Robinson publicly declared that alleys in the United States were havens for wards of the state that threatened neighborhood stability. Robinson also claimed that America's slum dwellers were noticeably different from those he observed in Europe. The European alley residents possessed a sense of "tradition" and civic pride; their homes possessed a "rather charming quality of picturesque squalor," asserted Robinson, which helped to attract tourist traffic and dollars. On the contrary, he continued, alleys in the United States were occupied by a "very large number of very

poor colored people, and a few white people" who had become a "burden upon the public," because they were diseased transients who needed assistance and monitoring from social, religious, and government agencies.[16] By this, Robinson suggested that upwardly mobile residents wasted their money, time, and effort to reform the city's underclass populations, which purportedly refused to amend their unruly behavior or could not do so because they were morally, mentally, and physically incapacitated by their environment. Robinson further intimated that the only way that Washington, D.C., could remove its onerous slum-dwelling population would be to convert alley hovels into European-style villages that housed industrious working-class people.[17]

Throughout the 1930s, Washington, D.C.'s black journalists reported that racially designated areas of the city, with a high concentration of alley dwellings, spread tuberculosis that compromised the health and prosperity of the city's populace. The *Afro-American* attempted to debunk health officials' claim that the tuberculosis death rate was highest in the city's Northwest black communities. However, newspapermen concurred with the District Tuberculosis Association's classification of slum areas as centers of "concentrated misery and disease—the capital's tuberculosis sore spot[s]."[18] Relying on Jacob Riis's characterization of New York's slums at the turn of the twentieth century, reporters described alleys as wards "where the other half live[d]."[19] Alley dwellers who subsisted next to prominent African Americans were deemed hazardous to their more fortunate neighbors and the larger city. The "stench" from the alley was used as a rhetorical device to play into the prevalent view that homes of the underprivileged were filthy places that produced noxious fumes and other affronts that interfered with the comfort and everyday functioning of the black professional class.[20]

African American journalists who desired to reform the city's working-class population also targeted and maligned other areas of the city that accommodated the poor. Washington, D.C.'s black press frequently provided accounts of domestic disputes that occurred inside and around boarding homes, apartment buildings, single-family dwellings, and commercial buildings located in Shaw and other "Negro" sections of the city. Black homes were depicted as perpetual war zones, characterized by chaos and unrest. According to newspapers, African American men and women who lived in two- and three-story row houses on 6th, 6½, and I Streets NW stabbed, shot, and beat family members and perceived rivals with iron pipes and other weapons because of irreconcilable differences or suspected love affairs.[21] Headlines of street fights, muggings, seemingly random acts of violence or "black on black" crimes that took place in the Shaw District on Q, 14th, and V Streets NW further conveyed that racially marked areas in the city were dark places, brimming with terror.[22] African Americans were additionally charged with robbing unsuspecting citizens inside and outside their communities, organizing "burglary rings," or hoarding stolen merchandise in their homes. In the late 1930s, the *Afro-American* told of a police raid that took place in Precinct 2 at 255 K Street NW, which netted 17

black men and women, and confiscated "5,000 worth of loot" that was allegedly stolen from "homes in various parts of the northwest quadrant of the city."[23]

Velma Williams, president of the black-run Pleasant Plains Civic Association in the 1930s, was adamant that "laborers and other types of [sordid] people" brought unsanitary living habits to her community. Williams lived in a neighborhood located near Howard University and more or less bounded by 6th Street, Euclid Avenue, and 13th and Harvard Streets NW. Poor blacks (and their network of associates), according to Williams, were lazy, dirty, and immoral neighbors who let "their property rundown, [threw] paper and trash in the streets and [did] many other things below the standard of their community." She also claimed whites were somewhat justified in their use of restrictive covenants that barred African Americans when she admitted that she understood why "[white] people hat[ed] to see a Negro move into their neighborhood."[24]

Like Williams, other leading black Washingtonians denounced working-class African Americans who migrated to their communities, because they believed that association with those who did not share their values would ruin their reputations and jeopardize their social status. Howard University students, for instance, recorded "family histories" for E. Franklin Frazier's sociology course to document and analyze their family dynamics and community relations. In so doing, a few revealed that they thought their neighborhoods were deteriorating due to the influx of people of questionable character. Anacostia resident James G. Banks flatly admitted that his father, a Howard Law graduate and supervisor in the Treasury Department's Procurement Division, did not allow him to "mingle with certain kids" in his "neighborhood, [which] was gradually becoming occupied by Southern [black] migrants who were not at all desirable associates." African American migrants were objectionable, according to Banks, because they did not hold his father's middle-class status and values or were too poor to "dress comfortably" and too crude to "maintain a well-balanced home" that supposedly offered the best setting for rearing well-behaved children.[25]

African Americans who resided in poor neighborhoods also complained that "disreputable" people in their communities could have a negative impact on their families, particularly their children. To ward off potential injury, parents used their homes as places of refuge. They turned inward and isolated themselves from "undesirable" neighbors so that they could protect themselves from verbal or physical harassment and cultivate proper citizenship. Frazier and his team of researchers asked Mrs. Coleman, a striving Washingtonian who lived in a "slum section" of Southwest D.C. with her husband and children, if she were satisfied with her home. Coleman replied that she would have "preferred to live in Southeast," because the environment in her neighborhood "was so bad." She continued by disclosing that her "biggest trouble . . . was fighting against outside influence," like juvenile delinquents who would attempt to persuade her children to question authority, disobey rules, or "sprout wrong ideas."[26] By Southeast, Coleman most likely meant Anacostia. Anacostia was

technically a part of Washington, D.C., proper during the 1930s, but it contained a manmade park and reservoir, as well as a sizable working-class population that lived in modest homes set in country or rural surroundings.[27] Coleman's Southeast would likely not have included the area near the city's Navy Yard, because various black Washingtonians saw it as a dangerous slum district that could adversely affect its inhabitants.[28] Mrs. Douglas, a single mother and domestic servant who worked for a family during the day, lived with her son William at 326 L Street SE, about two blocks north of the Navy Yard. When talking with Frazier researchers about the Southeast D.C. quadrant, she reported that the young men in her community would no doubt damage her son if she allowed him to freely associate with them. According to Douglas, she kept William "home most of the time." Douglas added that she wanted to shield her son from the boys "around her neighborhood," whom she claimed would steal and "act so bad" or use "more cuss words in three seconds than she could think of all day when she was their age."[29]

Black Suburbia as Refuge

A significant number of Washington, D.C.'s black residents moved to newly built, segregated housing subdivisions to avoid what they perceived as disorderly inner-city neighborhoods. The city's white builders and developers ran ads throughout the 1930s to persuade African Americans to invest in new residential tracts named Kingman Park and DePriest Village-Capital View, located off Benning Road in the Northeast section of the city (See Figure 1).[30] Businessmen like Charles D. Sager, the builder for Kingman Park, and Raymond Evans, one of the owners of DePriest Village-Capital View, were among the few whites across the nation who offered attractive financing to help African Americans relocate to "colored" suburbs between World War I and World War II.[31] Historian Andrew Wiese has argued that it was sound business strategy for elite whites to lend to working- and middle-class blacks, enabling them to make affordable down payments and monthly installments to purchase homes in suburban settings. However, according to Wiese, it was also a way for the building and banking industries to maintain racial segregation in housing while appeasing blacks who wanted to escape urban ghettos and avoid interacting with whites and their discriminatory ways.[32]

In 1929, Sager established Kingman Park—bordered by H Street-Benning Road, the Anacostia River, and East Capitol and 15th Streets NE—because he "realized [that] there was a definite need for a place for the colored to live." Sager was certain that blacks "would much rather live together" in segregated modern communities "than meet all the opposition of . . . whites" who vehemently objected to living in integrated settings.[33] Howard University student Geraldine B. Alves resided in an aging city home in "the middle of a [predominantly mixed-income] white community." This living arrangement was vexing to Alves and her family from the 1920s through the 1930s, primarily because

she and her siblings "felt the sting of race hatred much earlier than [black] children" who were insulated "in Negro neighborhoods." According to Alves, her parents would not allow her to socialize with either the disreputable "poor whites" who lived on her block or the rowdy "Negro children" who lived on "one of those terrible short streets," a derisive connotation for a lesser-known road that ran behind the residences of elites.[34] She added that her mother advised her to "buy a house in a Negro community in the suburbs."[35] That is, Alves's mother believed that a middle-class black neighborhood at the city's edge was a better option for African Americans who could not stand to live among working-class blacks and bigoted whites of any economic background.

Sager portrayed Kingman Park as a "convenient in-town community with extensive park and school surroundings that furnish[ed] suburban advantages" to appeal to those who thought that mixed-income city spaces were anathema to their sensibilities and threatening to their children.[36] He catered to renters who linked homeownership with economic stability when he advertised that Kingman Park would solve the "family man's problem of furnishing [the] best housing for [the] least cost" and urged his audience not "to waste money for rent that [could] be used for purchase" in a "growing community."[37] Sager even tried to entice blacks who may have associated the middle-class suburb with exclusivity and respectability when he publicized that "over 200" of his homes had been sold to "discriminating people."[38] Sager ultimately sold the idea that blacks could become citizens through homeownership instead of remaining dependents who looked to government officials and landlords to provide shelter for them when he included the following Theodore Roosevelt quotation in one of his ads: "Every person who invests in a well-selected home in a growing section of a prosperous community adopts the way to independence."[39] By coupling homeownership with self-sufficiency and status, Sager tapped into a well-established American belief that the property owner was socially, economically, and morally superior to the renter. He implied that blacks could purchase citizenship or demonstrate that they were upstanding Americans who deserved equal access and treatment under the law because they, like many middle-class whites, opted to raise their families in single-family housing set in "extensive park" surroundings.[40]

In 1929, Washington, D.C., teacher Gertrude Cope established the Kingman Park Civic Association (KPCA), whose main goal was to help its members create a prosperous suburban black community. Sometime shortly after its founding, the KPCA joined the Federation of Civic Associations, an umbrella organization established in 1921 by black Washingtonians who were denied membership in the city's white-run Federation of Citizens Associations.[41] The KPCA's first successes as a group were securing "better light facilities, greatly improved streets, and an improvement of the [neighborhood's] sanitary conditions." Members of the agency convinced the D.C. Board of Education to build three new schools in their area amid the economic downturn. They accomplished this feat by showing that most Kingman Park residents were tax-

paying homeowners who apparently believed that modern educational facilities provided the proper teaching environment to mold children into respectable adults. In 1933, city officials gave KPCA "a silver cup" to commemorate the neighborhood's win for "the best kept lawns in the George Washington Bicentennial Garden Contest."[42] In as little as nine years, the KPCA had organized government lobbying and beautification efforts. Furthermore, the civic association had wielded sufficient influence in the nation's capital to make its neighborhood the thriving "in-town" community that Sager spoke of in the many ads he posted in the city's black newspapers. By 1938, Kingman Park was home to "300 satisfied" African American customers, described by a Frazier researcher as well-dressed "middle-class Negroes" with "spic and span" dwellings and yards and "inexpensive . . .Fords and Chevrolets."[43]

Located east of Kingman Park and bounded roughly by Benning Road and East Capitol, 53rd, and Blaine Streets NE, DePriest Village-Capital View was planned in the 1920s and 1930s for African American professionals (See Figure 1). The owners of the Capital View Realty Company, the builder for the subdivision, were whites who likely collaborated with prominent black businessman John Whitelaw Lewis and hired black real estate brokers to make the pitch to would-be homeowners.[44] Salesmen publicly referred to DePriest Village as the "City of Mansions" to attract those who cared about living in a prestigious neighborhood named after Oscar DePriest, a property owner in Washington, D.C.'s famed Ledroit Park neighborhood and the first African American, outside the South, to serve in the US Congress in the early twentieth century.[45] They also described DePriest Village as a neighborhood with "executive qualities" and "rigid restrictions" to reinforce that only a select few would be allowed the opportunity to purchase in the development.[46] Frequently, realtors marketed DePriest Village-Capital View as "Washington's Most Exclusive Colored Home Community," offering wide paved streets, shade trees, and access to water, sewer, gas, electricity, schools, churches, and stores.[47]

Realtors of DePriest Village-Capital View offered Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans to clients, which helped to maintain the suburb's selectivity. This action also allowed prospective homeowners to purchase "new [semiattached] stone, steel [framed], [and] brick homes," equipped with oak floors, kitchens with built-in cabinets and electric clocks, tiled baths with tubs and showers, hot water heaters, and large basements that were suitable for recreation rooms.[48] It was not standard practice for the federal government to provide FHA funding to construct single-family housing in predominantly black areas inside or outside city limits. Sometimes, though, New Deal policymakers subsidized homebuilding in minority communities where citizens had demonstrated an unflagging commitment to rehabilitating their neighborhoods and achieving independence through homeownership.[49] Capital View Realty may have accessed FHA financing because it convinced government officials and the banking industry that federal housing dollars would be used to expand an elite black subdivision that was off limits to minorities who refused to or could

not display middle-class sensibilities in public and through home maintenance. That is to say, developers built FHA-approved homes because they successfully demonstrated that DePriest Village-Capital View was an "exclusive" suburb, not an aging inner-city district that housed "inharmonious racial and nationality groups."[50]

DePriest Village-Capital View, like Kingman Park, had an active citizens association, designed to maintain a sense of order and propriety in an upscale black settlement. According to O.W. McDonald, the president of the Capital View Citizens Association (CVCA), the principal goal of his organization in the 1930s was to protect the community from "undesirables." The group sponsored "Better Gardens" contests to remind residents to clean and beautify their surroundings. During the winter holiday season, the club organized neighbors to "decorate the exterior of their properties in the Christmas motif" to affect the appearance of a "Yuletide fairyland."[51] Homeowners were vested in protecting their real estate and making sure that their neighborhood was closed, or at least hostile, to those who did not abide by community standards. Nonetheless, the seemingly random violence that many middle-class Americans associated with urban zones and the laboring classes occasionally found its way to Washington, D.C.'s exclusive black suburb. The city's black press headlined that the Mills Brothers, famous African American radio singers, had been "mobbed in [a] fight" that took place at the dwelling of Mrs. Williams, a DePriest resident and a Howard University employee. Journalists specifically reported that Carroll Swann of Deanwood, a predominantly working-class community located in Northeast D.C., attacked the Mills Brothers because he believed that they "paid too much attention" to one of Williams's sisters. This action caused the Mills Brothers to retaliate by tackling Swann and giving him "a good beating." After the brawl, Williams's home was "completely wrecked," the Mills Brothers had "bruised heads and bodies," and Swann suffered a "black eye, and [a] possible fracture of the right arm." Conscientious community members no doubt perceived this incident of domestic violence as a stain on their development. As a result, they attempted to distance themselves from the debacle and reinstate their suburb's exalted image when they reputedly told the *Tribune*, "none of the participants" in the fight "were members of the DePriest Village colony."[52]

Years after the DePriest Village conflict, members of the CVCA denied a request from Marshall Heighters to join the CVCA in its bid for inclusion in the city's Federation of Civic Organizations. It seems that CVCA members rejected this request because they thought that Marshall Heighters were not wealthy enough or did not share the same ideas about home maintenance and neighborhood beautification. In 1935, Reverend James White, president of the Marshall Heights Citizens Association (MHCA), stated that the CVCA's charter prohibited its members from forming political alliances or simply affiliating with those who owned or built homes "costing less than $4,000." Since most of the houses in Marshall Heights were priced "anywhere from $50 up," his working-class community was forced to create "its own citizens association"

that was "separate . . . from any other group" so that its residents could solve their "distinctive problems."[53]

The main issues that confronted Marshall Heighters included a lack of indoor plumbing, a dearth of streetlights and paved roads, and inadequate public transportation. Although the community was established shortly after World War I, a significant number of Marshall Height's residents moved to the area during the Depression.[54] These migrants primarily came from the South and older neighborhoods in Washington, D.C. They settled in a rustic landscape, located south of DePriest Village-Capital View and bounded by 49th Street and Central and Southern Avenues SE (See Figure 1). At a "reunion of pioneers of Marshall Heights" that took place in the late 1970s, residents like Alice Hicks, who moved to the suburb from North Carolina in 1935, confirmed that her new community was a "wilderness" with "plenty of rabbits and rats" but "no streets, no lights, [and] no water."[55] Mostly skilled laborers and domestic servants, Hicks and other Marshall Heighters purchased plots for $100 or less and gradually built modest-sized houses when they had expendable income. A Frazier surveyor claimed that "most of the homes" in Marshall Heights were "so tiny" that he could not understand "how a single person could live in one, let alone a large family." This researcher also noticed that "land around the small box-like structures was highly cultivated," suggesting that many of the community's residents used their yards for small-scaled farming or subsistence gardening to provide food for their families in times of need.[56] For Marshall Heighters, erecting single-family houses on inexpensive land on the outskirts of the city was more attractive than and preferable to paying exorbitant rents to live in what they perceived as cramped, squalid, or low-quality apartments in urban centers. According to one resident (a domestic servant and wife of a truck driver), "it [paid] to live" in the suburbs because "for $30.00 a month," a black family "couldn't get half [as] much" space if they rented in a rooming house within the city.[57] Marshall Heighters were similar to other working-class blacks in American suburbs during the early twentieth century. As historian Weise asserts, African Americans with little income created "rustic landscapes" at the edge of US cities because they desired to fulfill their own "vision of suburb[ia]," which "emphasized domestic production, thrift, and family security, while exposing a lingering ambivalence about urban industrial life."[58]

Citizens of Marshall Heights understood their move to a semirural tract as a way for them to construct and own low-cost shelter in a countrylike setting, to show self-reliance, and to gain a semblance of economic stability. However, some affiliated with Washington's elite saw Marshall Heights as a "shantytown" or a miserable slum district that had the potential to spread disease. In February 1935, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt toured the working-class suburb because she and other government officials were curious to know where "evicted" alley dwellers of Northwest and Southwest D.C. had "gone to live." She saw the sheds and two-story houses that Marshall Heighters inhabited as "more undesirable" than the alley hovels that had been razed by the federal government,

primarily because they were poorly constructed and had inadequate sewage lines.[59] Mrs. Little, a mother who lived in the community, took issue with the First Lady's characterization when interviewed by a reporter affiliated with the *Afro-American.* As Little told it, she and most of her neighbors "never lived in an alley" and freely chose to locate in Marshall Heights because "rents were too high in the city." Little further stated that she and her husband "felt that [they] could acquire land cheap . . . [in suburbia], construct a temporary house and add to [their] comfort" as their "income permitted." To show that Marshall Heights was a thriving community composed of decent, hardworking folks, Little was sure to let the public know that her family was "not on relief"; she also maintained that many of her neighbors were active participants in the community's "self-help cooperative groups."[60] The *Afro-American* spoke with other Marshall Heighters who, like Little, objected to outsiders' derisive depiction of their suburb. These unnamed "citizens," according to journalists, explicitly asserted that the "police and truant officers [did] not have much work in their community," implying that they thought that behavior, not physical appearance, determined whether an area was a "shantytown."[61]

In keeping with the spirit of displaying "good" behavior, self-determination, and citizenship, the MHCA eventually joined the Federation of Civic Associations in 1935. Under the leadership of White, the MHCA was successful at getting the Washington, D.C., government to install streetlights and pave some of the suburb's roads with cinders.[62] Social worker Mary Booker was president of the MHCA in the late 1930s when it persuaded the city's Public Utilities Transit Company to provide bus service through Marshall Heights and DePriest Village-Capital View to ensure that area children would have transportation to and from schools. During Booker's tenure, the group advocated equal voting rights for all Washingtonians when it supported the "Down with Taxation without Representation" campaign that was popular in the city during the Depression. Members of the association also called for the establishment of a "tuberculosis clinic at . . . Freedmen's Hospital," serving the city's entire African American populace.[63]

Conclusion

Many African Americans who resided in Washington, D.C., during the Great Depression readily adopted the ideology of the nation's middle class, not that of a racialized working-class minority, in their attitudes about housing.[64] Residents of Kingman Park and DePriest Village-Capital View, for example, established civic groups to help them create premier black suburbs within the city's limits. They did so largely because they embraced the middle-class notion that owning a well-maintained dwelling surrounded by a manicured lawn was a distinctive marker of respectability and status. Homeowners in Marshall Heights could not afford to build or buy homes that resembled those in Kingman Park and DePriest Village-Capital View. However, these working-class

African Americans also looked toward suburban environs to help them achieve and display the socioeconomic mobility and moral rectitude that they felt were unachievable if they lived in low-income urban areas. Marshall Heighters built "self-help" organizations to demonstrate autonomy and cooperation. They organized a citizens association to bring resources to their suburb, gain political power, and prove that they were upstanding residents, not dependents who were reliant on the state and others for survival. To cement their status as stakeholders in Washington, D.C., and distinguish themselves from poor blacks who lived in the inner city, residents like Little publicly refuted claims that Marshall Heighters were "evicted" alley dwellers who were on "relief." As a result, these working-class African Americans helped to further stigmatize their seemingly less fortunate counterparts who were trapped in decaying ghettos located in older sections of the nation's capital.

Blacks who resided in Washington, D.C., during the economic crisis also did not undergo the process of proletarianization that has been well-documented by historians. According to Joe William Trotter Jr., industrialization created black proletariats in manufacturing hubs during the interwar period; Trotter further asserts that these proletariats often collaborated with the established black bourgeoisie in industrial cities and both groups expressed their class interests in racial terms to combat the discrimination they encountered.[65] However, the city did not have a large working-class black population that toiled in factory settings during this time. Most African Americans in the nation's capital labored as underpaid government workers in the 1920s, and during the height of the Depression, a large percentage of the city's black residents held low-wage jobs in personal and domestic service.[66] Moreover, Washington, D.C., was a white-collar border city that did not receive a sizable migrant population during and immediately after World War I; by 1920, more than 80% of the city's African American populace were native Washingtonians and transplants from Maryland and Virginia who had lived in the area for at least a decade or more.[67] Blacks from Southern states increasingly flocked to the capital between 1930 and 1940, looking for jobs, housing, and relief from the federal government.[68] But the traditions and customs of these migrants did not supplant the middle-class ethos that was well established in the city before the Great Depression. There was also a visible working-class culture in the city's streets, dancehalls, and other public spaces because of unemployed African Americans' efforts to create recreational outlets and earn money during the economic downturn.[69] However, this working-class lifestyle was not necessarily the dominant or most pronounced culture within "Black Washington." Because some poor residents boldly flaunted their activities, African Americans who upheld middle-class ideas of respectability became even more vocal and public about their disdain for what they perceived as lowbrow behavior. This middle-class outlook was especially noticeable when black Washingtonians referred to impoverished areas of the city and when they worked to protect their homes from perceived outside threats.

Notes

1. Selma Thomas to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, April 27, 1937, Washington, D.C., Unemployable, Folder 5, Box 119-1, Works Progress Administration, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University. When Selma Thomas contacted the First Lady, she rented on the fourth floor of the Henrietta Apartments, a Beaux Arts-inspired, five-story brick building located at 933 N Street NW in what is currently known as the Shaw District. Information on the architectural style of the Henrietta Apartments was gathered by street survey. See also Sanborn, District of Columbia, Washington, 1927–1928, Vol. 1, 1928, Sheet 70, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

2. See Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen, *Picture Windows: How the Suburbs Happened* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 51–77. Also refer to Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1937 inaugural address, in which he stated that "one-third of" the nation's population was "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished." Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Second Inaugural Address," January 20, 1937, Bartleby.com, accessed October 27, 2009, http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres50.html.

3. See, for example, "Crime Fostered by Bad Housing," *Washington Post*, June 3, 1934, R5; "Desperadoes Breed in Slums, New York City Survey Shows," *Washington Post*, July 31, 1934, 11; "Bad Housing Breeds Disease and Crime, Expert Declares," *Washington Post*, January 21, 1935, 12; and Isabel Vickers, "Crime and Slums," *Washington Post*, June 5, 1936, X8.

4. In the 1930s and 1940s, several of E. Franklin Frazier's Howard University students proudly maintained that they lived in well-furnished, two- or three-story brick homes that contained seven to ten rooms, indoor plumbing and electric lighting, and the latest modern appliances. See the following essays in Family Histories, *The Negro Family in the U.S.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University: Pauline L. Ellis, "The Family," circa 1930s or 1940s, Folder 22, Box 131-86; Essie J. Lark, "Family History," circa 1930s or 1940s, Folder 9, Box 131-88; and Emma L. Wilkins, "My Family History," June 5, 1946, Folder 6, Box 131-91.

5. "Corrigan v. Buckley." *Oxford Reference*, accessed December 3, 2018, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095640691.

6. The notion that housing could positively or negatively affect behavior has been an established middle-class view in the United States since at least the mid- to late 1800s. For more on this topic, see Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 45–72; Gail Radford, *Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in the New Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Barbara B. Mooney, "The Comfortable Tasty Framed Cottage: An African American Architectural Iconography," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 1 (2002): 48–67.

7. In 1930, blacks made up 55%, or 55,254, of the 100,051 people who lived in Precincts 2 and 8, the area currently known as the Shaw, U Street, and Logan Circle Districts. In 1930, S Street, North Capitol, Michigan/Euclid, Rock Creek Park, and 15th and K Streets NW bounded Precincts 2 and 8. In 1940, blacks made up 62%, or 76,779, of the 122,772 people who lived in Precincts 2 and 13, the area currently known as the Shaw, U Street, and Logan Circle Districts. In 1940, S Street, North Capitol, Michigan/Euclid, Rock Creek Park, and 15th and K Streets NW bounded Precincts 2 and 13. In 1930, blacks made up 48%, or 11,728, of the 23,965 people who lived in Precinct 4, the area known as Southwest and bordered by the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, the Mall, and South Capitol Street. In 1940, blacks made up 57%, or 11,567, of the 29,343 people who lived in Southwest. In 1940, 93,603 of 187,266 black Washingtonians (or 49.9% or the city's total black populace) lived in Shaw and Southwest. See *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, *Population, Volume III, Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1932), 384, 389, accessed December 18, 2008, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1930.htm, and *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population, Volume II, Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1943), 954–56, 969, accessed December 18, 2008, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1940.htm.

8. As early as 1929, African American sociologist Jones completed a housing study to partly urge real estate owners to recognize "fully the difficulty which Negroes [had] in securing houses with modern equipment at reasonable prices." Jones also recommended that builders should "provide a superior grade of material and workmanship" in the new apartments and single-family homes they intended to market to upwardly mobile African Americans to replace the usual expensive yet cheaply constructed dwellings that many were forced to occupy. See William Jones, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D.C.: A Study in Human Ecology* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1929), 153. Mary E. Plummer echoed Jones in 1938 when she asserted in the *Courier*, the official organ for the black-run Pleasant Plains Civic Association, that African Americans spent much of their income on deteriorated real estate in urban centers because they could not find or were barred from acquiring modern homes in new residential developments. See Mary E. Plummer, "Symposium: The Economic Emancipation of Negroes in the District of Columbia," *Courier* 2, no. 3 (1938): 2, Church Publications, Folder 8, Box 131-111, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University. In addition, the *Washington Tribune* stated that black "people [were] the poorest paid

workers and the highest paying renters." See "Rents Are Too High," *Washington Tribune*, July 8, 1932, 8.

9. James Borchert, *Alley Life in Washington: Family, Community, Religion, and Folklife in the City, 1850–1970* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

10. Ibid., 128–36.

11. Ibid., 73, 165, 195.

12. "Squalor and Grandeur," *Washington Post*, January 8, 1934, 6; "Crime Fostered"; "Desperadoes Breed"; "Bad Housing"; Vickers, "Crime and Slums"; "Children Gone Wrong," *New York Times*, October 3, 1936, 16; "NAACP Supports Wagner Housing Bill in Senate," *The Chicago Defender*, May 2, 1936; "Afro-Readers Say: Better Housing Needed," *Baltimore Afro-American,* August 21, 1937; and "Find Low Wages, Slums Are Breeders of Crime," *The Chicago Defender*, January 14, 1939.

13. For more on reformers and public officials' roles in equating slums with degradation and immorality from the late 1800s through the early 1900s, see Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885–1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

14. Jones, *Housing of Negroes*, 25–26, 40–41.

15. Ibid., 52–55.

16. "Europe's Alleys Unlike Ours," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, October 8, 1932, 13.

17. According to historian Kelly Quinn, Robinson was greatly influenced by Europe's modernist housing movement, which championed the idea that a state-sponsored, low-rise, garden-styled apartment community was the most affordable, humane, and architecturally appropriate way to house poor people in the early twentieth century. See Kelly Anne Quinn, "Making Modern Homes: A History of Langston Terrace Dwellings, A New Deal Housing Program in Washington, D.C." (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2007), 91–122. Robinson, like other professionals and experts of his time, also seemed to believe that environment and culture could create healthy or damaged psyches within black communities. For more on this topic, see Daryl Michael Scott, *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880–1996* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1997), 35, accessed December 4, 2018, https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=v0cMCgAAQBAJ&pg=GBS.PT34.

18. "T.B. Death Rate Is Highest in Precincts 4 and 5, Chart Shows," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, February 22, 1936, 12.

19. "Where the Other Half Lives," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, January 11, 1936, 13.

20. "Stench Time," *Washington Tribune*, June 1, 1935, 4.

21. The *Tribune* reported that Wilbur Briscoe shot and killed Jesse Wood at his home on 1234 6th Street NW; The 1928 Sanborn Insurance Map shows Wood's home as a three-story, semiattached framed dwelling that sat between a similar three-story attached framed unit and the Mt. Zion Baptist Church. See "Married Lover Seeking Revenge Kills Wrong Man," *Washington Tribune*, January 20, 1933, 1, and Digital Sanborn Maps 1867–1970, Washington, D.C., 1927–1960, Vol. 1, 1928–Nov. 1959, Sheet 72, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress. The *Afro-American* told of Wallace Lewis who attacked his former lover Mary Bias with an iron pipe. At the time of the incident, Bias resided at 1229 6½ Street NW. The Sanborn map records 6½ Place NW as a two-story attached dwelling located a block west of 6th Street NW. See "Taximan Tells of Killing His Jilted Rival," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, January 14, 1933, 6. The *Afro-American* also announced that Mary Rankin was fatally stabbed in front of 816 G Street NW and that William Archer fatally shot William Bean in front of Archer's home located at 2418 I Street NW. See "Girl Killed in Street Fight," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, January 28, 1933, 4, and "Alleged Killer Held for Action of Grand Jury," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, March 4, 1933, 23. The Sanborn map does not list 816 G Street but does show that the 800 block of G Street NW was heavily populated with offices and commercial buildings. The map described 2418 I Street NW as a three-story attached framed dwelling located approximately one block south of the inhabited alley known as Snows Court. See Digital Sanborn Maps 1867–1970, Washington, D.C., 1927–1960, Vol. 1, 1928–Nov. 1959, Sheets 15 and 42, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

22. "Pistol Report Ends Chase of Suspects," *Washington Tribune*, January 20, 1933, 2, and "Week End Fights Send Several to Hospital," *Washington Tribune*, February 3, 1933, 1.

23. "Police Arrest 17 in Alleged Burglary Ring," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, February 4, 1933, 4.

24. Velma Williams (president of the Pleasant Plains Civic Association), Interview with T.E. Davis, September 13, 1938, Interviews, Folder 7, Box 131-113, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University. When referring to poor blacks, Williams seemed to embrace the rhetoric of Progressive-era racial conservatives who believed that African Americans were inferior and unable to assimilate into white society because of their so-called pathological behavior. See Scott, *Contempt and Pity*, 27–30.

25. James G. Banks, "Family History," circa 1940s, Family Histories, Folder 9, Box 131-85, *The Negro Family in the U.S.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.

26. Mrs. Coleman, Interview with Anonymous, circa 1930s, Notecards, Folder 4, Box 131-111, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.

27. Howard Gillette states that before World War II, "Uniontown (now Old Anacostia) and Barry's Farm/Hillsdale (now Barry Farms) carried on in the manner of small towns, surrounded by open space. Many [black and white] residents kept gardens on their large lots and sold produce in central Washington. Although a few prominent Washingtonians lived in the area, such as D.C. Budget Director Walter L. Fowler as well as Frederick Douglass, most residents worked at blue-collar or laboring jobs." Howard Gillette Jr., "Old Anacostia: Washington's First Suburb," in *Washington at Home: An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1988), 100.

28. One of Frazier's interviewers asked Rosella Hillman, a black teen who lived in Southwest D.C., what she thought of other parts of the city. Hillman stated the following: "I [like] Northwest—the people [are] friendly. My aunt lives in Northeast. I like Northeast—the people are very friendly there, but one place I wouldn't live is Southeast. The people fight and cut. They come up to you and want to start a fight." In addition, an anonymous Frazier interviewer described the Southeast neighborhood as "a slum area" that was "near the Navy Yard and an [unusual amount] of noise." The interviewer added that "without exception, all of the houses in the block [surveyed were] in need of major repairs." See Rosella Hillman, Interview with L. Lee, July 25, 1938, Interviews, Folder 11, Box 131-112, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, and William Douglas, Interview with Anonymous, circa 1930s, Interviews, Folder 9, Box 131-112, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.

29. See Douglas, Interview.

30. Ad: "Kingman Park Homes," *Washington Tribune*, June 30, 1933, 6; Ad: "Homes: Kingman Park," *Washington Tribune*, April 7, 1935, 5; Ad: "Ideal Home Site: Kingman Park Home," *Washington Tribune*, June 15, 1935, 12; Ad: Now Open, Model Home . . . Kingman Park," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, August 19, 1939, 13; Ad: "Health, Wealth . . . DePriest Village and Capital View Homes," *Washington Tribune*, July 8, 1932, 5; Ad: "Happy Homes Are Built in DePriest Village, Capital View," *Washington Tribune*, June 24, 1932, 11; Ad: "Live In DePriest Village, Capital View: Washington's Most Exclusive Colored Home Community," *Washington Tribune*, June 17, 1932, 11; Ad: "DePriest Village: 'The City of Mansions,'" *Washington Tribune*, April 8, 1932, 6; Ad: "Individuality Is Shown in the Modern Home: DePriest Village, Capital View," *Washington Tribune*, July 1, 1932, 11; and Ad: "For Sale: Capital View-DePriest Village," *Washington Tribune*, November 25, 1932, 6.

31. Ad: "Kingman Park: Fifth Anniversary," *Washington Tribune*, July 27 1933, 11; Charles Sager (developer of Kingman Park), Interview with R.J.B., November 1938, Community, Folder 20, Box 131-111, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University; Ad: "De Priest Village, Capital View: Washington's Most Exclusive Colored Home Community," *Washington Tribune*, February 12, 1932, 15; "Realty Firm Will Build 50 Homes in City," *Washington Post*, October 14, 1934; Thomas M. Cahill, "The Week in Real Estate," *Washington Post*, April 9, 1939; and Ad: "You Enjoy Both a 'Townhouse' and a Countryhome When You Live in Capital View," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, May 14, 1938, 3.

32. Andrew Wiese, "Black Housing, White Finance: African American Housing and Home Ownership in Evanston, Illinois, before 1940," *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 2 (Winter 1999): 429–60.

33. Sager, Interview.

34. Geraldine B. Alves, "Family History," July 7, 1944, Family Histories, Folder 2, Box 131-85, *The Negro Family in the U.S.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University. In addition, Jones stated that black Washingtonians who were "particularly concerned about their social position in the city tend[ed] to avoid short streets . . . because they [were] not sufficiently well known to give the desired dignity and status." Jones added that "the short street [did] not give as great an incentive to display as [did] the well-known long street, the homes of which [were] more before the eyes of the public." He further claimed that "a number of" black Washingtonians disclosed "that they would not live on short streets, either because they have to be apologized for, or are likely to be confused—in the minds of persons who are not acquainted with the city—with the alleys" (Jones, *Housing of Negroes*, 87–88).

35. Alves, "Family History."

36. Ad: "Homes: Kingman Park," *Washington Tribune*, April 7, 1933, 5.

37. Ibid.

38. "Kingman Park Homes."

39. Sager was quoting Theodore Roosevelt who, at some point in his career as New York governor or US president, stated the following: "Every person who invests in well-selected real estate in a growing section of a prosperous community adopts the surest and safest method of becoming

independent, for real estate is the basis of wealth" ("Kingman Park Homes," 6). Also see William H. Ten Haken, "Real Estate as a Marketable Commodity," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 148, no. 1 (1930): 19–25.

40. Jackson argues that since the mid-1800s, middle-class whites have equated homeownership with decency, success, permanency, and stability so as to differentiate themselves from the transitory urban renter. Jackson also states that upwardly mobile whites have historically expressed their citizenship or supposed exalted moral, social, and economic status in the United States through homeownership of single-family dwellings enclosed in ornamental yards. See Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 45–72.

41. See "With Civic Associations: No. 9—Ivy City Civic Association," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, April 16, 1938; "With Civic Associations: No. 12—Southwest Civic Association," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, May 21, 1938, 13; "With Civic Associations: No. 7—Brookland Civic Association," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, April 2, 1938; and Marya McQuirter, "Claiming the City: African Americans, Urbanization, and Leisure in Washington, D.C., 1902–1957" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2000), 140–41.

42. "With Civic Associations: No. 8—Kingman Park Civic Association," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, April 9, 1938.

43. Sager, Interview; Kingman Park, Survey by R.J.B., November 1938, Community, Folder 20, Box 131-111, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University; and Ad: "Ideal Home Sites: Kingman Park Home," *Washington Tribune*, June 15, 1935, 12.

44. *Memories of Capitol View* (Washington, D.C.: Capitol View Civic Association History Committee, 2010), accessed August 3, 2013, http://www.wdchumanities.org/docs/2010DCCHP/CapitalViewBrochure.pdf; "City of Mansions"; "Thomas C.R. Bragg of the Capital View Realty Company's Sale Force," *Washington Tribune*, June 17, 1932, 11; Ad: "Holiday Greetings," *Washington Tribune*, December 23, 1932, 5; "Realty Firm Will Build"; and "Week in Real Estate."

45. "City of Mansions" and Office of Planning, "Ledroit Park Historic District (Ledroit Park Historical Society)," accessed February 19, 2009, planning.dc.gov/planning/frames.asp?doc=/planning/lib/planning/ preservation/brochures/ledroit.pdf.

46. "City of Mansions."

47. Ad: "De Priest Village, Capital View," *Washington Tribune*, January 22, 1932, 15; February 12, 1932, 15; and April 22, 1932, 6; Ad: "Your Home in DePriest Village, Capital View," *Washington Tribune*, June 10, 1932, 11; "Live in DePriest Village"; "Happy Homes"; and Ad: "Health Is Wealth," *Washington Tribune*, July 8, 1932, 5.

48. Ad: "New Stone, Steel Brick Homes in Capital View," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, March 26, 1938, 3; Ad: "Now Showing New Stone, Steel, Brick Homes: Capital View," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, April 30, 1938, 5; and "'Townhouse' and a Countryhome."

49. According to Thomas Sugrue, after much public wrangling among local community groups, city planning officials, private developers, and the FHA, the federal government decided to subsidize single-family housing in a black settlement located in Detroit's Eight Mile-Wyoming area between 1940 and 1950. Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 63–72.

50. See the "De Priest Village, Capital View" and "City of Mansions" ads. In addition, Kevin Gotham points out that the 1934 Housing Act did not allow the FHA to lend to homeowners who lived in mixed-raced communities in the inner city because New Deal policymakers believed that providing mortgages to certain "racial and nationality groups" was a bad credit risk. Kevin Fox Gotham, "Racialization and the State: The Housing Act of 1934 and the Creation of the Federal Housing Administration," *Sociological Perspectives* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 291–317.

51. "With Civic Association: No. 10—Capital View Association," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, April 23, 1938, 19.

52. "Mills Bros. Mobbed in Fight: Famous Radio Artists Beaten in Fight at DePriest Village Party," *Washington Tribune*, January 20, 1933, 1–2.

53. Florence M. Collins, "Marshall Heights Folk Wary of Any Commercial Invasion," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, March 2, 1935, 13.

54. Anne H. Oman, "Marshall Heights Settlers Recall the Birth of Their Neighborhood," *Washington Post*, December 15, 1977. Also see Becky M. Nicolaides, "'Where the Working Man is Welcomed': Working-Class Suburbs in Los Angeles, 1900–1940," in *Looking for Los Angeles*, ed. Charles G. Salas and Michael S. Roth (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institutes, 2001), pp. 57–96.

55. Ibid.

56. Marshall Heights, Survey and Interview with R.J.B., August 22, 1938, Interviews, Folder 2, Box 131-113, *Negro Youth Study, Washington, D.C.*, Research Projects, E. Franklin Frazier Papers, Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.

57. Ibid.

58. Andrew Weise, Places of Their Own: *African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 78, 67–93.

59. "Mrs. Roosevelt Tells of Trip To Inspect Slum Clearance," *The Evening Star*, February 4, 1935, B1; and "Alley Homes Were Better, She Avers," *Washington Times*, February 4, 1935, 13.

60. Florence M. Collins, "Marshall Heights Men's Self-Help Project Dies, but Women's Flourishes," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, March 9, 1935, 13.

61. Collins, "Marshall Heights Folk."

62. Ibid.

63. "With Civic Associations: No. 6—Marshall Heights," *Afro-American, Capital Edition*, March 26, 1938.

64. Like other African Americans during the early 1900s, many black Washingtonians embraced what Evelyn Higginbotham calls the "politics of respectability" to uplift and gain political power for themselves and other members of their community in their attitudes about housing. According to Higginbotham, the politics of respectability was dually progressive and conservative, because it contested prevailing ideas of black inferiority and shored up middle-class ideas of respectability, such as hard work, cleanliness, and self-determination. For more on this topic, see Evelyn Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), and Randal Maurice Jelks, *African Americans in the Furniture City: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Grand Rapids* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

65. Joe William Trotter Jr., *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915–45* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), xi–xii. Many African Americans in Washington, D.C., did not form alliances across class lines to gain equality for black Washingtonians as a whole. In so doing, their actions countered that of blacks featured in Richard Thomas's *Life for Us Is What We Make It.* This monograph demonstrates how Detroit's elite and working-class African Americans forged tenuous bonds to build community and access freedom and progress between 1915 and 1945.

66. Historian Constance Green asserts that the nation's government employed approximately 70% of the city's 64,453 black workers in 1928. Green states that in 1928 there were more than 51,880 black Washingtonians employed by the federal government; messengers, charwomen (janitors), and other manual workers, earning an average of $1,234 a year, comprised most of the list. See Constance McLaughlin Green, *The Secret City: A History of Race Relations in the Nation's Capital* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 203. The US Census reported that the average wage in the Washington, D.C., in 1925 was $1,571. See Paul F. Brissenden, *Earnings of Factory Workers, 1899–1927: An Analysis of Pay-Roll Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1929), 388. The census also reported that approximately 48% of the city's black labor force held jobs in domestic and personal service in 1930 and more than 60% of its blacks worked in domestic and personal service jobs by 1940. See *Fifteenth Census*, 388, and *Sixteenth Census*, 968.

67. I borrow the term "white-collar city" from Green's *Secret City.* By referring to Washington, D.C., as a white-collar city, the historian seems to have meant that in the 1910s and the 1920s, it was home to a significant number of salaried professionals who were affiliated with the federal government, universities, and private enterprises. In "Occupational Classes of Negroes in Cities," Frazier reported that in 1920, approximately 10% of the 64,453 gainfully employed black Washingtonians held white-collar jobs (professional, public services, and trade), 21% were skilled and semiskilled workers, and 69% were domestics or laborers. See Green, *Secret City*, 196, and E. Franklin Frazier, "Occupational Classes of Negroes in Cities," *American Journal of Sociology* 35, no. 5 (1930): 723. Also see *Fourteenth Census of the United States, Compendium, District of Columbia* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1924), 19, accessed March 7, 2010, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1920.htm.

68. Green, *Secret City*, 228. In addition, from 1930 to 1940, Washington, D.C.'s black populace went from 132,068 to 187,266. See *Fifteenth Census*, 385, and *Sixteenth Census*, 956.

69. McQuirter, "Claiming the City," 178–231.

Marian Anderson as Cold Warrior: African Americans, the U.S. Information Agency, and the Marketing of Democratic Capitalism

Sharon R. Vriend-Robinette

In an effort to bolster their image abroad, from September to November 1957, the U.S. State Department sent Marian Anderson on a tour of East and Southeast Asia. Under most circumstances, it would have been a tenuous decision to send an African American woman on such a mission, especially since many people across the globe criticized U.S. domestic race relations. However, after the 1939 Freedom Concert, the 1955 integration of the Metropolitan Opera House and the 1956 publication of *My Lord, What a Morning!*, a ghostwritten autobiography, Anderson had symbolic currency evoking the potential success of all people in the United States and the success of democratic capitalism. The U.S. Information Agency (USIA) did not present the Asian countries with a familiar face with whom they were enamored but instead presented them with an individual whom the USIA perceived as a known quantity, embodying an already established message of African American success.

The State Department goal was to spread the U.S. democratic ideology throughout the world. Because of events such as the Lincoln Memorial concert and representations such as *My Lord, What a Morning!*, Anderson seemed to be the embodiment of the ideology. Since the use of cultural figures and artifacts was less obviously propagandist, they were more readily welcomed. That Anderson was an African American was a boon to the State Department because of the negative image the international press gave the United States with its history of racism. This became increasingly important during Anderson's tour

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because while she was away, Orval Faubus, the governor of Arkansas, committed well-publicized racist resistance to desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas. Anderson, as a State Department emissary and an African American woman, needed to navigate challenging terrain. The stakes were even higher because the tour was the subject of a CBS documentary *See It Now* episode titled "The Lady from Philadelphia," which would be distributed both domestically and internationally.

The tour was deemed a success by the State Department, which claimed that it bolstered both international goodwill and domestic pride for the United States. The State Department used the already established symbolism to their benefit, allowing them to circumnavigate the clear issues of civil rights abuses and resistance. In the *See It No*w episode, they further downplayed issues of race by nurturing a highly passive gendered image—despite the fact that issues of race were actually at the forefront of the political and ideological agendas worldwide. At the same time, what was significant and different about Anderson's role as emissary is that while other USIA tours focused especially on exporting what they considered to be true American products—such as jazz—presumably because of the already established symbolism, they supported Anderson's tour to perform Western classical music. Although their intent was to present a vision of an American success based on the contemporary status quo, they overlooked Anderson's practice of including spirituals in each concert. The spirituals contained an inherent critique of the racial hierarchy that permeated U.S. society. While jazz demonstrated innovation (thus supporting entrepreneurship and capitalism), the spirituals would critique it all. In this article, I focus on the State Department's motivations for sending Anderson, their efforts at propaganda, the depictions of Anderson in "The Lady from Philadelphia," and the State Department's evaluation of the tour.

Anderson's symbolic currency was established through the Easter Sunday concert at the Lincoln Memorial. This concert provided some resolution to a public act of discrimination. In 1939, Marian Anderson, world-renowned contralto, was scheduled to sing at Constitution Hall, which was owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Because of their discriminatory policy allowing only white performers, she was barred from singing in the hall. Marian Anderson was African American and did not meet the DAR's criteria. Through a much celebrated controversy, the DAR's policy was put under national scrutiny, and in 1939, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt covertly facilitated a performance by Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in an Easter Sunday concert. Seventy-five thousand people were in attendance, and at that moment, Marian Anderson became an important symbol demonstrating simultaneously the need for African American empowerment and the ability of African Americans to attain a significant level of success within the U.S. culture.[1]

The symbolism associated with Anderson was important to many and was used in various ways throughout mid-century. It was particularly nurtured in a ghostwritten autobiography, *My Lord, What a Morning!*, which translated her

story into a narrative of the myth of U.S. success. Anderson, despite trials and tribulations, including but not limited to racial discrimination, was able to rise to high levels of success and celebrity.[2] She sang at the Lincoln Memorial. She integrated the Metropolitan Opera. She demonstrated that racial hierarchy and racism was not limiting but rather limited. This symbolism was particularly important in a Cold War culture especially because Anderson's autobiography was not only for domestic but also for international consumption.

Throughout the Cold War, the State Department tried to win the favor of the rest of the world. African American emissaries had a significant role, and the representation of U.S. society that the USIA sent through the person of Anderson was especially important within the Cold War culture. In *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935–1960*, Brenda Plummer documents the story of U.S. diplomacy after World War II as it related to African Americans and a civil rights agenda.[3] The essential story told by the historians of Cold War race relations is that international and domestic race relations fed off of each other in the Cold War context.

After World War II, the U.S. government faced a crisis of international opinion. Earlier in the century in *The American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal outlined how the tension between the status of African Americans and the "America Way of Life" was difficult to navigate internally. After World War II, the "American Dilemma" was extremely problematic externally within the global community. With the move toward decolonization and the establishment of the division between Western capitalist and communist societies, there was a Western belief that self-determination was a precept that identified liberated countries. Further, these newly liberated countries had the option to choose between two models—U.S. Western capitalism and Soviet communism. The United States had an appealing mantra of "liberty and justice for all," but within the international sphere, the unequal status of African Americans in the United States appeared to be evidence that the U.S. creed of freedom and opportunity was not fully manifested and perhaps impossible to establish within a Western capitalistic system. In order to defend itself against international critique and entice the newly decolonized countries toward the Western world, the U.S. government began to address race relations in a new light. What had been previously perceived as a domestic issue was now crucial within a foreign affairs agenda.

In order to attract the decolonized nations, the U.S. government decided that it needed to rectify the unequal treatment of African Americans. One landmark decision that made the U.S. government more attractive within the international purview was the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954. The Supreme Court's decision that segregated schools were unjust was publicized within the international community. Because this decision came from the Supreme Court, foreign countries perceived that the highest echelon of the U.S. government did not sanction either de jure or de facto racism. Thus, after the *Brown* decision, the global community often believed that while the United States had a difficult history marred by racism and racist ideology, its govern-

ment and presumably its citizenry were trying to rectify this tragic, limiting social ill.[4] Nonetheless, publicized incidents of racism, of which there were many, damaged the reputation of the United States, and thus the U.S. government deemed it strategic to send in African American artists such as Anderson to be U.S. cultural diplomats.[5]

The government sponsored Anderson because she matched the entertainment profile that the public affairs officers believed would be most suitable for USIA sponsorship. In 1957, there was a meeting of the regional public affairs officers of the USIA of Southeast Asia in New Delhi. In the summary of their meetings, they described the three factors that significantly influenced the Southeast Asian perceptions of the United States. One factor was racism. They wrote,

> The Mid-East crisis, Little Rock and Sputnik have all been injurious to American prestige. Little Rock makes it harder to talk about American equality, freedom and justice.[6]

While Anderson could not necessarily address the problems associated with the political and economic wrangling over oil or displace views of U.S. technological failure, she could be useful in dispelling the taint on the U.S. ideology regarding "liberty and justice for all." Moreover, because of her success and professed belief in the U.S. government, she could be both an example of the "good life" and an emissary who could reinforce the goodwill motives of the U.S. government

The public affairs officers listed a number of conclusions that would then govern their strategic plans. They suggested the following program guidelines:

> A positive approach is infinitely better than a negative one. . . . [And also c]areful attention must be paid to the extreme sensitiveness which characterized peoples of the area. No condescension, talking down, or taking for granted is permissible. This means among other things that U.S.I.A. exhibits, performances, and output generally must be of first rate, high level quality. It also means that establishing credibility and acceptability while difficult is indispensable to successful operations.[7]

These requirements matched the Anderson image and persona well and were evident in the State Department's records of the concert tour in general.

The State Department chose Anderson and because of her physical appearance—her obvious dark skin—and her undeniable acclaim in the vocal music world. Anderson was a symbol of black success over racial bigotry. This was established through the "Freedom Concert" of 1939. Solely her presence would be a "positive" example of U.S. democracy in action. Also, as her autobiography represented her, Anderson's symbolism conveyed that even those

Figure 1: Anderson with the Bombay Symphony Orchestra, 1957. A typical depiction of her with head down and eyes closed. While Anderson was known for frequently closing her eyes while performing, the preponderance of images in this posture is overwhelming and disproportionate. Marian Anderson Collection of Photographs, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

on the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder could rise to prominence and celebrity. Anderson would not have to critique any alternative (read communist) ideological system in order to convey that the U.S. democratic system was successful. As further evidence of the success, in 1955, Anderson integrated the Metropolitan Opera. Moreover, Anderson had a long and noteworthy career. She would not be considered a condescension. People would be drawn to her simply because of her international celebrity.[8] She would be able to destabilize the antiegalitarian assumptions people had about the United States. While this could be undercut quickly if Anderson spoke out against U.S. race relations, the State Department could count on her tradition of withholding public comment. However, even if Anderson had spoken out against the U.S. government, the State Department could point out her fame and class privilege. These would contribute to a rebuttal to any accusations of racial bias.

While Anderson was a fine manifestation of the State Department's requirements, none of this would matter if Anderson and the State Department could not convince the peoples of the various Asian countries of this fact. The

State Department needed to prime the prospective Asian audiences as to who Anderson was and why she was an appropriate representative of the republic. They did this through a powerful publicity blitz. They printed publicity posters; they distributed free translations of *My Lord, What a Morning!* They sponsored contests in schools and gave school children prizes for reading *My Lord, What A Morning!* They aired previous concerts on the radio, planted newspaper articles, presented a USIA film titled *Marian Anderson*, held free workshops on "Western classical music," constructed educational exhibits about the Lincoln Memorial concert, and conducted radio interviews that featured Anderson. They also distributed free wallet-sized pictures of Anderson, and a six-month calendar featuring Anderson, and some outposts even arranged to stamp a reminder of the upcoming concert on department store receipts.[9] All of these efforts combined to encourage the Asian public to attend the concert, convince them of Anderson's celebrity status, and stress that while Anderson had confronted racism, she still had reached success. As I discuss below, it should be noted that there was a perceived need to help people understand and appreciate the Western classical music that Anderson sang. This was something—despite colonial histories—that was perceived to be outside the realm of personal experience. In any case, the publicity efforts did not go unrewarded.

The concerts themselves drew significant crowds. In many of the Asian countries, the embassy officials declared the Anderson performance to be the most successful venture ever sponsored in terms of appeal and attendance. In India, they even broadcasted her concert to a football (soccer) stadium to handle the overflow. The audience was so entranced with Anderson's performance that they behaved as if they were in the presence of the artist herself. For example, they applauded at the end of each selection as if she were there to hear them.[10] Given the fact that the majority of the population had previously been unaware of Anderson and were unfamiliar with Western classical music, this indicated that the publicity efforts were effective.

There was a sense of consternation among some of the officials in response to the difficulty of presenting highbrow Western music. They remarked that while they appreciated Anderson's concert and that overall it was a success, they would prefer in the future for the State Department to send more lowbrow musicians who would have more accessible material. Nonetheless, at none of the embassies was there a sense that the public did not appreciate the presentation. Given the obstacles of language and aesthetics, this connotes that the publicity efforts were successful.[11]

The distinction between lowbrow and highbrow music is interesting and significant. In *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*, Penny Von Eschen aptly demonstrates that the USIA sent many jazz musicians on tour especially because their music was more accessible and interesting to the people in decolonized/decolonizing areas. There was the perception that the music was not tainted by colonial overtones. Simultaneously, artists such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and David Brubeck were frustrated

at points because the majority of the people in the countries they were touring were unable to gain access to their shows—the seats were reserved for dignitaries. In contrast, while Anderson was singing some highbrow music (with significant colonial overtones), there was not the same concern about meeting the popular audiences because it seems that the venues might have been bigger. Often, Western concert halls did not exist in the regions she traveled. With that, she ended up singing in larger places—sometimes very nontraditional venues. In fact, much to Anderson's dismay, she ended up singing in an athletic stadium. Or, as mentioned above, her performance was piped into an overflow auditorium. This is not to say that the audiences represented every echelon of Southeast Asian society. Many of her audiences were comprised of only the elite in society. In *Marian Anderson: A Singer's Journey*, Allan Keiler notes that Anderson was particularly struck by the socioeconomic disparity found in the countries she toured and experienced the interactions with people outside of the venues and performance context as extremely educational.[12]

There was other evidence that the U.S. propaganda efforts were not in vain. They appeared to have convinced the Asian public that Anderson was exactly who the State Department said she was—a successful African American who had benefited from American democratic ideals. This narrative would have been found in the autobiography if nowhere else. John V. Lund, public affairs officer in Bombay, brought this out particularly well in his report. He wrote,

> In Bombay, she lived up to everything that had been spoken or written about her. She was generous with encores, gracious with autograph seekers, and at the reception given in her honor by the Press Guild she swept the group off its feet with the gentle and simple eloquence of her five-minute talk. Press comment concerning Miss Anderson and her performance was extensive and excellent.[13]

While Lund did remark that the propaganda was not the only factor that allowed the press to give "extensive and excellent" remarks in regard to Anderson, Anderson's own actions supported that which had been written about her. Still, the propaganda that had been disseminated throughout Bombay prior to Anderson's arrival certainly gave a vocabulary with which to work.

This became particularly clear in the report that Thomas W. Simons, American consul general of Madras, sent to the State Department in Washington, D.C. He quoted the newspaper the *Hindu*. The *Hindu* essentially introduced Anderson with a summary of *My Lord, What a Morning!* The author wrote,

> Miss Marian Anderson's contralto voice has charmed millions of men and women in all parts of the globe but she owes no part of her success to luck or undeserved patronage. Born in a Negro middle-class family in Philadelphia, she has

> had to climb her way to triumph step by hard step. She has had to beat down prejudices arising out of colour, class and sex but she has also found men and women ready to recognize her worth and willing to help her. In 1939, the use of Constitution Hall in Philadelphia [*sic*] was denied to her by the Daughters of the American Revolution but the loss was theirs. Mrs. Franklin D Roosevelt, another famous American woman and wife of the great American President, resigned from that organisation in protest and the United States Government themselves offered her the use of Lincoln Memorial for an outdoor concert in Washington. The whirligig of time brings on sweet revenge: in 1942 the Daughters of the American Revolution extended an invitation to her to sing in the very Constitution Hall from which they had barred her three years before.[14]

The *Hindu* explained the "Marian Anderson Story" very similarly to the narrative of her autobiography. Although the author did remark that she came from a middle-class family, which was a bit different than the "rags to riches" narrative that came through in *My Lord, What a Morning!*, the overall narrative that Anderson faced great obstacles and overcame them with stunning success and a pleasant personality remained. Further, the story elaborates that the "men and women ready to recognize her worth" were none other than members of the highest-ranked government officials, for they were the people who condemned prejudice and enabled her to sing at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939. This was reminiscent of the symbolism put on Anderson by the European-American public after the concert. Additionally, the U.S. government was able then to present to Anderson "sweet revenge" in that, because of the acclaim that resulted from the 1939 concert, Anderson was able to sing at Constitution Hall a mere three years later.[15]

The story was evidence of U.S. propaganda efforts in that the article continued to explain that they received their information not only from Anderson's personal interactions with the press, but also from the government-sponsored translations of her autobiography. The author of the *Hindu* article explained,

> Miss Anderson, as those who have met and spoken to her in Madras and those who have read her autobiography "My Lord, What A Morning," will testify, has not allowed her earlier struggles to embitter her or her later triumphs to spoil her inborn courtesy, good nature and consideration for others.[16]

Thus, from the information garnered from the autobiography, the Indian press was able to understand that she gained victory over racial bigotry. Additionally, success did not "spoil" her intrinsic good nature.

Simon credited the *Hindu*'s positive presentation of Anderson to the efforts of the State Department. He wrote,

> To have an American artist so received is proof of the good relations which American officials in Madras have maintained with government officials and others, and is symptomatic of the worth of the cultural program. The value of having an outstanding American visit South India from time to time is self-evident.[17]

Thus, Anderson's personality and actions were not interpreted as the primary reason for a good cultural event. Rather, he implied that the efforts of the U.S. officials were the most significant reason for the effective performance. While this simply could have been an attempt at self-aggrandizement, Simon's words do indicate that the primary purposes of the concert were to reinforce the good image of the United States and that, through the propaganda efforts of the Madras officials, they were able to convince the Indian public that Anderson was indeed whom the State Department depicted.[18]

It also appears that the State Department successfully communicated Anderson's celebrity status and success. Throughout the State Department's records, the constituency referenced the honor they felt as a result of having a celebrity within their midst. For example, the American consul general in Lahore, Pakistan, William Spengle, wrote of the concert,

> As the applause died down in the crowded theater on the evening of November 28th, another link in the Pak-American friendship had been solidly welded into place. Miss Marian Anderson, world-famous contralto, had just completed a most successful concert and received a standing ovation. . . . From the moment she walked out onto stage it was obvious that here was an artist of rare talent who had complete mastery of her audience.[19]

In this report, Spengle linked both her expertise and her prestige to the successful concert.

Richard S. Barnsley, acting chief public affairs officer of Manila, the Philippines, wrote in his report that "interest in Marian Anderson, as a personality and as a singer was very great, and the press used all the advance material the Embassy and the Impresario were able to give them."[20] Here, the recognition of Anderson's star status brought some sort of interest in the performance. Both of these excerpts were taken from the perspective of the consulate officials, but the issue of celebrity was also significant to the people themselves. For example, the *Ceylon Daily News* reported that "Marian Anderson who arrived in Colombo Tuesday night from Bangkok is not only one of the world's best

known and best loved singers, but a fine human person who has carved herself a reputation by her humility, religious devotion and deep dedication to her art."[21] Although it is not yet possible to know whether this was an embassy-planted propaganda article, it still gave evidence that her reputation of fine artistry preceded her. Furthermore, it indicated not only that the Ceylonese had heard of her musical prowess but also that they had picked up on the reputation of the steadfast individual, which had gained currency throughout the previous years.

It is important to note that many of these accounts and descriptions of Anderson's visits focus on her character and her virtues, such as dedication, humility, and devotion. Her biography and other evidence show that Anderson often demonstrated a strong character and many virtues, but I also think that this is one way that the people she encountered addressed her gender identity. Rarely was Anderson's gender discussed or made note of. This is relatively odd given her career aspirations, which went against the gender norms of the time. Had she been a white woman, undoubtedly she would have been asked about breaking gender norms. Clearly, it is impossible to separate such significant identities—such as race and gender—but it appears that the public culture Anderson moved within did so. This is most clearly seen in the show "The Lady from Philadelphia," an episode of Edward R. Murrow's *See It Now* series. "The Lady from Philadelphia" initially aired in the United States on prime-time television on December 30, 1957. CBS ran subsequent reruns, and the State Department distributed it to various posts throughout Asia.[22]

Although every other representation of Anderson focused on race and minimized her gender, in the film, Anderson's gender was emphasized much more than her race. Murrow represented Anderson in the context of the "true woman," which was not altogether a misrepresentation. At the same time, it also has some association with a 1950 stereotypical representation of a white woman while all the time overlooking the challenges African American women have faced given the intersectionality of race and gender. It also is significant that the representation was a new one and reinforced the positive image of the United States for propaganda purposes.

"The Lady from Philadelphia" opened with a dedication to the children of Asia and to Anna Delilah Anderson, "whose daughter, Marian Anderson, represented her people and our country in Asia." This opening was instructive. Anderson represented her people—the African Americans in the United States—and "our country." "Our country" suggests some sense of ownership, but with the differentiation between "her people" and "our country," it suggests that "her people," the African American public, could not claim ownership of "our country." Anderson, as a successful African American woman, was the embodiment of the republic, but the question was, especially given the domestic civil rights issues of 1957, how could that be? Anderson, as a successful African American female political symbol, could have been a very tenuous representative of the republic. However, Anderson rarely took an adversarial position, and the U.S. government, when it sent her, could trust in her history

of nonassertiveness. Nonetheless, Anderson was a successful African American woman. In reality, on this trip, she visited many dignitaries, negotiated press conferences and interviews, and performed many concerts. Anderson met with many important people, both male and female, both adults and children, both Europeans and Asians. But she also was the daughter of Annie Anderson. Even at sixty years of age, she was connected to her mom as a child. While clearly true, the rhetorical choice is not empowering. This foreshadows the remainder of the film. While Murrow could have depicted her in a more independent and activist role, the film manifested a more passive Anderson.

Throughout the film, Anderson was welcoming, smiling, and animated. At the same time, she appeared to be extremely humble and was portrayed as subservient.[23] Except for one instance when she discussed the incident in Little Rock with men, every instance of political discussion was among women or children. The two formal instances of political discussion were with Asian women. For example, she was interviewed by Daw Mya Sein, a female Buddhist scholar in Rangoon. During the interview, Sein queried Anderson on her use of the words "we" and "one" when referring to herself. The scholar wondered why Anderson so rarely used the word "I." Anderson replied that "possibly because we realize as long as we live, that one realizes there is no particular thing that you can do alone." Anderson continued to describe that even in a concert setting, there were those who wrote the music, the people who made the pianos, and the accompanist who supports the singer. She said that "everything you do is not of your doing. The 'I' is very small after all." Throughout the entire discussion, Anderson averted her eyes from the interviewers and often looked down at the table in front of her. It gave the appearance of self-effacement. Thus, Anderson, while she realistically explained that human beings are interdependent, still did not take any credit as an individual. Further, by consistently looking down, she displayed a subordinance that was perceived to be humility.

Murrow similarly portrayed this in a discussion between Anderson and an Indian radio personality Terra Ali Bay. The narrator introduced the segment by explaining that Anderson was a "special sort of American and the questions asked of her were of a special interest to Asians. The questions ranged from Atom Bombs, baseball, to the 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial which the U.S. government made available to Anderson." Picking up on the theme of the Lincoln Memorial, Murrow then filmed Bay, asking about the Lincoln Memorial concert. She said, "In reading your autobiography, you've been a trailblazer in many things. You acted as a symbol at the Lincoln Memorial, is that correct?" Anderson responded, "I didn't talk much about the incident then." She continued that she "felt no bitterness then or now because we look for bigger things. If you're all right on the inside you don't have to worry about such things because they will take care of themselves. There is a divine pattern and there is no one person who can stop it."

Bay then suggested that she did not understand the concept of racial prejudice because skin color seemed irrelevant to her.[24] She continued to say that

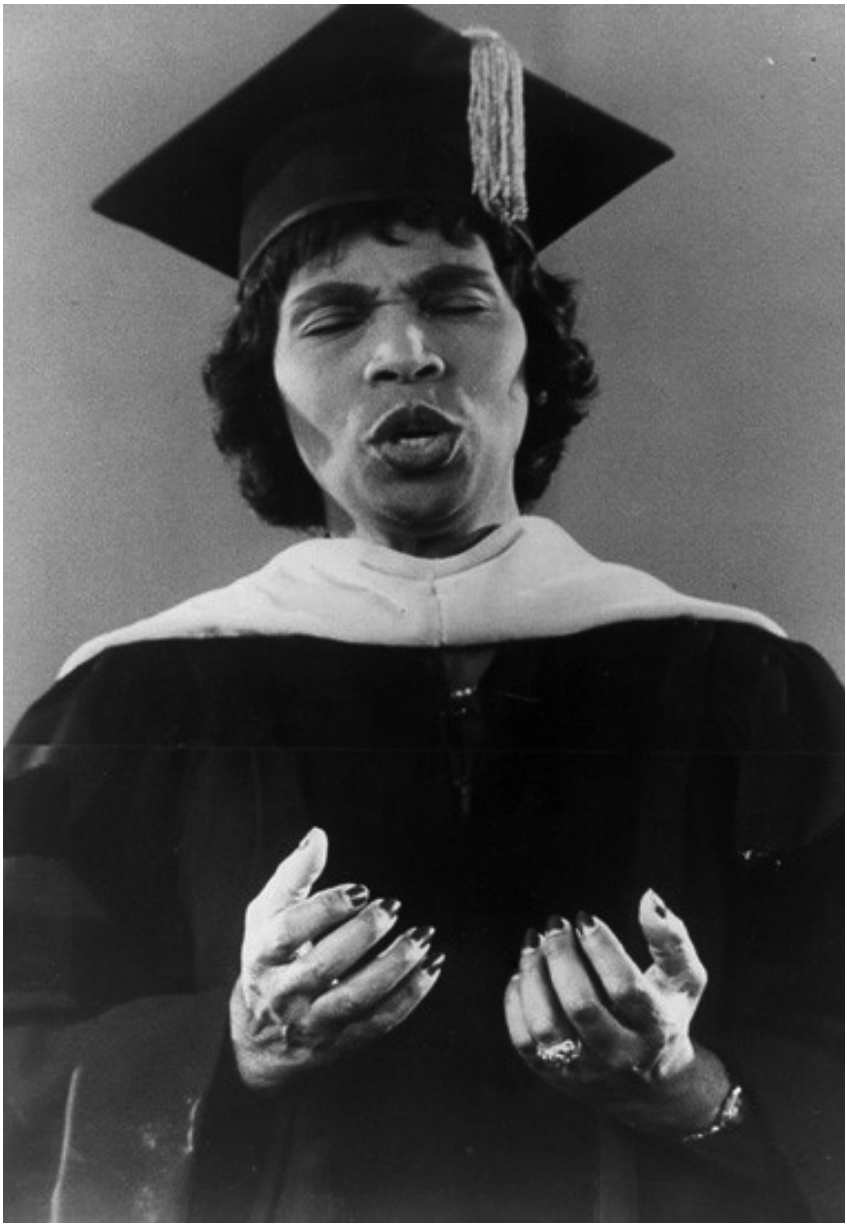

Figure 2: In 1957, after being awarded an honorary degree by EWHA University in Seoul, Korea, Anderson sang in the graduation ceremony. This event was recorded and presented in "The Lady From Philadelphia." Marian Anderson Collection of Photographs, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

she understood that this prejudice was isolated in specific areas, presumably in the South. Then she asked Anderson whether when Anderson referred to "my people" she was referring to the colored peoples in the United States. Anderson responded with a rather lengthy monologue. Throughout her speech, she consistently averted her eyes. Anderson explained that the assumption that "my people" referred to the colored people of the United States occurred frequently. However, she wanted to clarify that "not all Negroes are relegated to a particular section." She did remark, however, that "there are those about whom we are concerned." She explained that her concern focused also on the nation. She said, "It is so true that no matter how big a nation—it is no stronger than their weakest people. As long as you keep a person down, part of you must be down. This won't let you soar. Regardless, the whole of the nation is dependent on how it treats the weakest member. The fact that we could come over for the State Department for which I'm thrilled with this honor and opportunity. It gives us an opportunity to speak for the only land we know." She continued, "My land, my country, and my allegiance is to America."

The interviewer then remarked that everybody has difficulties and crossroads. She asked, "What is the basic faith you come back to?" Anderson explained that as the daughter of Anna Anderson, she returned to the faith of her mother. She was a "believer" in the Judeo-Christian faith of her mother and that every day and in the "extremities," she went back to this faith. She believed that faith "gives understanding of fellow men even when they behave so poorly. If the Supreme Being is just, if things happen along the way, one thinks of faith and goes back to the well to be replenished." The interviewer then asked, "Does it sum it up to say 'See it through to the end?'" Anderson responded positively and said that it reminded her of a spiritual. The lyrics were "I open my mouth to the Lord and I never will turn back. I will go, I shall go, to see what the end will be." At this point, the film narration interrupts Anderson and the Indian woman, and the narrator remarks, "A French poet once said that 'If you wish to influence Indians, rather than send 1,000 missionaries, send one saint.' The United States sent Miss Anderson."

This scene represents a number of important themes throughout the film. First, Anderson was speaking with an Indian woman. This was important because while there were obvious cultural differences between the two, to a racist society, a woman of color speaking with another woman of color was perfectly acceptable. Second, Anderson consistently looked down throughout the interview. Thus, in the interview, she presented an air of humility and subservience. Third, Anderson, in reference to the Lincoln Memorial incident, said that she was not angry, nor did she need to act on anything (e.g., race issues). She reinforced a posture of passivity under the assumption that divine intervention would resolve it. Fourth, she minimized individual power and significance. When discussing prejudice and racism, Anderson did say that the unfair treatment that did exist worried her. However, this worry stemmed from the fact that the country was being hurt. This demonstrated that she was a patriot, not

a disloyal individualist (the only time individualism would be considered disloyal). Fifth, she often invoked spirituality—a particularly feminine trait associated with True Womanhood. Anderson explained that the Supreme Being would ensure justice.

The film reinforced Anderson's apparent passivity when it presented a press conference that was focused on Little Rock. A male reporter asked Anderson whether she would sing for Faubus. Anderson replied, "If I could help at all, I should be very delighted to. If Governor Faubus would be in the frame of mind to accept it for what it is, for what he could get from it, I would be very delighted to do it." Essentially in this statement, Anderson was pleasant and showed nothing of what she thought—she did not explain the content of "what it is" or what Faubus "could get from it." While I believe that Anderson thought that the spirituals she sang and their history gave evidence of a proper mode of behavior and a vision of human equality, she did not spell this out. The reporter then asked her what she believed would promote understanding between peoples. She responded that "to contribute to the betterment of a cause . . . you can do it best in the medium you use most easily." She suggested that the reporter was a good writer, that other people were good speakers, and that she was a singer. She explained, "My singing means more to my people than my writing would."

Anderson gave an interesting response in this instance. I think that what she thought was that her singing could help transform U.S. society from racism. Yet she did not elaborate on how the singing was educational or instructive. She minimized her more radical assumptions. Consequently, she appeared to sidestep any direct answer. She explained that each person should do what they do best. She promoted relatively radical individualism. However, she also proposed a stereotypically gendered suggestion. She suggested that she was not able to speak—that was not her form. Further, she was not able (read unwilling) to explain her views. Instead, she wanted to entertain. While this can be understood as laudable, it still suggested that she was without thought and that her voice was the voice of the songstress, not the oppressed. This established her as a good woman.

In many ways, Murrow's portrayal of Anderson invoked the tradition of "respectability politics" common to many African Americans from the turn of the twentieth century through the Progressive era. As Evelyn Brooks Higganbotham wrote in *In Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920*, African American women frequently used the values and practices of temperance, cleanliness, thrift, polite manners, and sexual purity to demonstrate "respectability" in an effort to encourage (Booker T.) Washingtonian uplift to the African American community and to demonstrate already attained status to the European-American community. This also dovetailed nicely with the nineteenth-century "True Woman" ideal in which proponents argued that women embodied the moral high ground and, in fact, embodied the republic in ways that men, because of their essential physical

nature and interaction with the dirty industrial world, could not. While in the nineteenth century African American women were not often associated with True Womanhood because of racist attributions of animalistic behavior, in the twentieth century such leaders as W. E. B. DuBois defended African American women against such racist essentialist arguments demonstrating that European American men were actually the base, sexual beasts and that in many situations African American women were under their control. According to Anne Stavney in "'Mothers of Tomorrow': The New Negro Renaissance and the Politics of Maternal Representation," out of this defense, in the early twentieth century, there was the birth of the True Black Woman, which focused on the role of the black mother as social contributor. At the same time, while the role of mother was lauded by both African American and European American communities, it was often undercut by the reality that African American women often, because of economic dictates, needed to work. While their work often was within the domestic sphere, it was not with their own children. The ideal set up a symbolic tension between the lived experiences of African Americans and the discourse. Subsequently, as Laila Soraya Haidarali describes, the Harlem Renaissance introduced the New Negro Woman. The New Negro Woman was a member of the bourgeois, had significant achievements often outside the home, was not necessarily a mother, and demonstrated respectability. Two things should be noted out of this context. First, Anderson was born in 1897 and would have come of age during all of these different permutations of African American womanhood. They would have been meaningful to her as she grew up and started her career. Second, it is important to note that the trajectory of white women's symbolic expression during this time was focused on moving away from True Womanhood to New Womanhood and experimental femininity in the iconic images and experiences of the flapper and Rosie the riveter. Many white women were pushing against respectability.[25]

Further, as Angela Davis details in *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* and Treva Lindsay explains in *Colored No More: Reinventing Black Womanhood in Washington, D.C.*, African American women were pushing boundaries of what it meant to be an African American women by foregrounding social class, sexuality, and individualism, each in heterogeneous ways. With that, Anderson could well have fit in with these independent women.[26]

At the same time, during the 1950s, the stereotypical representation of white women would have been one that would be passive, patriotic, and conformist. It is important to identify this image as a stereotypically white image because given the modern-day civil rights movement as well as a history of stereotypically negative images of African American women outside of the African American community, this image associated with African American women would not have the same symbolic resonance. Yet it is this symbolism that I think Murrow associates Anderson with in "The Lady from Philadelphia."

Generally, I believe that the manner in which Murrow defused the explosive situation of having an African American woman as the embodiment of the

republic was to highlight her gender rather than race and associate her with the passivity and conformity that was upheld by impulses of respectability politics. It was not inconsequential that the film was titled the "*Lady* from Philadelphia." It was important that during the film, the narrator quoted an Indian press article that proclaimed that Anderson was "our fair lady." The dedication of the film was to her mother and to the children of Asia. This put Anderson squarely in the maternal tradition. The two interviewers who were intellectuals and females brought the discussion to U.S. race relations and issues of decolonization. Anderson responded to their questions by referencing the issues of spirituality and consistently lowered her eyes. As women often are associated with spirituality, this reinforced the high femininity that Murrow produced. By not meeting the journalists' eyes, Anderson framed herself into a subservient role. When filmed at a press conference and when Anderson was filmed answering difficult questions regarding Orval Faubus and Little Rock, Anderson left political discussion to the all-male press corps, and she claimed that her medium was entertainment—entertainment includes an inherent posture of service.

Murrow's presentation also depicted Anderson within the context of her symbolic associations. When she stressed that the United States was her country of origin and the country to which she pledged her allegiance, the film attributed all of the symbolic traits she embodied to the condition of the United States. As was Marian Anderson, so was the country. This came through particularly when the narrator explained the State Department's instructions to Marian Anderson. According to the narration, the State Department officials told Anderson, "You are not a propagandist, just be yourself." They could say this because the construction of Anderson throughout her history with the dominant U.S. political structures was entertainer, woman, and patriot.

In reality, Anderson was a woman. However, generally, the USIA and the broader U.S. culture focused on the racial and nationalist components of Anderson's persona, and they often ignored her gender. This could be because at midcentury, the culture at large was generally concerned more with race than with gender. The second wave of the women's movement would articulate gender issues in the public sphere in the 1960s and 1970s—after Anderson's involvement with the State Department.

While there was considerable negative public opinion regarding white women's employment and careers in the 1950s, African American women had almost always worked. Thus, perhaps because of Anderson's racial status, Anderson was expected to be employed. However, one would also expect that while it may have been anticipated that Anderson would work, it presumably would have been a stretch to the hegemonic cultural assumptions for a woman—especially an African American woman—to have a successful career. Further, while I believe her spirituality sits directly within the context of African American community, empowerment, and resistance, it would not have appeared as such given her rhetorical choices.

It seems that for Murrow, Anderson as an African American symbol of U.S. civil rights advancement, given the Cold War context, was much more tenuous than any fluctuation of what a "good woman" was. With this, he portrayed her as a very passive person by using a stereotypic representation of gender. This is noteworthy especially because other accounts focused on race and Anderson's response to racial inequality.[27]

In regard to the tenet of U.S. racial harmony, we see that Anderson manifested the idea of a "positive approach is more effective than a negative one" as the regional public affairs officers suggested in their meeting. Anderson, with the already established message, was a good example of what the United States was trying to convey—that they were struggling with racism, but in the end, freedom and all that is right would prevail. This was evident throughout the State Department's reports of the concert tour. In general, there were two types of reference to the success of Anderson's tour within the context of foreign affairs and U.S. race relations. In some instances, they were explicit—that Anderson had directly confronted the issue of race relations with the Asian public and that she had positively deflected negative impressions of U.S. race relations. The other was more implicit—that Anderson had given the Asian countries a glimpse of what a good American was. This still is necessarily tied to race because Anderson's skin color was part of her composite whole and because of her prevailing symbolism.

Often the State Department official would remark that she handily dissuaded negative visions of U.S. race relations, and the official would reference newspaper editorials or articles as evidence. One of the best examples of newspaper coverage that used Anderson to uphold a pro-U.S. stance came from the report of Richard Barnsley, acting chief public affairs officer of Manila, that he sent to the State Department in Washington, D.C. The Filipino press referenced the issue of Orval Faubus and Little Rock multiple times. Barnsely introduced the press excerpts with the following comment: "Manila music critics and other journalists were unqualifiedly enthusiastic about Miss Anderson's performance and all of them made special mention of her tremendously impressive personality." Barnsley then included a number of excerpts from the Manila press. The first article came from the *Manila Times*. The author wrote, "Listening to Marian Anderson sing is an experience rarely come by. . . . Her presence here is a reminder that she looms much larger than the ordeal of Little Rock, which after all will pass, whereas Marian Anderson is of all time."[28] In this statement, the author implied that Anderson was a positive example that was eternal as compared to the temporal state of Little Rock. In part, Anderson could be interpreted in this manner because, with the proximity of their relationship, Anderson had touched her listeners with a more poignant interaction or example than the Faubus incident. The author critiqued Faubus's actions but did not perceive that they were the embodiment of elevated principles. In reality, this was misguided. The Little Rock incident—as a representative incident of racial discrimination—was more typical in the United States than Anderson's success.

Presumably, the closer contact with Anderson highlighted African American success, and the distance of Arkansas made racism less real and more temporal. Nonetheless, according to the *Manila Times*, the U.S. dominant society appeared to be on the correct path toward a democratic society.

Similarly, the *Philippines Herald* gave the dominant society in the United States accolades for having the good sense to recognize Anderson's talent. They wrote,

> The Filipinos feel proud and greatly honored by the presence in their country of Miss Marian Anderson. . . . Miss Anderson's success is eloquent reassurance that personal merit and character transcend all barriers, even those of racial prejudice. The American people were the first to recognize the great artist in Miss Anderson and were almost one in taking her into their hearts.[29]

The *Herald* reinforced the intended message of Anderson's trip in that the author implied that racial prejudice, although a negative trait of the United States, was not so far reaching as to deny those who were deserving of a higher place in U.S. society. The *Herald* gave the United States even more credit by stating that the American people recognized Marian Anderson's talent and embraced her. While this definitely gave the U.S. society a great deal of credence, it misrepresents the reality of the situation. For, as stated previously, Anderson was not welcomed onto U.S. concert stages initially. Indeed, she, as did many African American artists, went to Europe, where racial prejudice would not be such a determining factor in reaching high status within the art world.

Finally, Barnsley included an excerpt of the *Manila Chronicle* in his report. The *Chronicle* described Anderson's visit:

> She comes here as a cultural ambassador of her country, and her visit is intended to acquaint the Filipinos with the little known fact that America is not all jukebox. We can hardly think of an American artist who is better qualified to accomplish this necessary mission. . . . For she is one of the noblest of music's creatures. . . . Bringing Miss Anderson and her voice to our part of the world is making up for Orval Faubus. He is the barbarian and . . . a rustic disgrace, because the real America, as well as the rest of the good world, hails Marian Anderson.[30]

The reference contrasting Anderson's performance to "jukebox" music was interesting in that so many of the embassy officials had a greater desire for more accessible talent—popular celebrities—to represent the United States as cultural emissaries.[31] In the *Chronicle*, the author lauded the mission particularly

because it was not popular but rather part of European high-art tradition. This correlated I think to the guidelines of State Department programming outlined above that fame and "no condescension" were important components to the State Department's propaganda tours. The *Chronicle* article suggested that the classical music raised the status of U.S. culture. Further, when the author mentioned Anderson as a contrast to Faubus, part of the State Department's message came through clearly. While there was a race problem in the United States, the problem was in the South.[32] This was denoted by the term "rustic" in relation to Faubus. The United States in its totality did not sanction racism; instead, like the rest of the world, it focused on democratic freedom.

While the following excerpt from the *Bangkok World* was less explicit as to how Anderson's visit impacted Thai views of U.S. race relations than some of the articles in the Filipino papers, Henry F. Arnold, public affairs officer from Thailand, included the following excerpt in his report:

> [It is] the sincere hope of all her admirers in Thailand that she continues to be blessed with the happiness and success as she brings to all peoples of the world the beauty of music through her God-sent voice. She stands as beckon [*sic*] light to all, a true daughter of America and a most fitting representative of her people.

Arnold contextualized the excerpt when he stated,

> A return visit of Miss Anderson to Bangkok would be an extra-ordinary event for Thai music lovers. She has done much to increase the prestige of the United States in Thailand and has served as a living demonstration of the opportunities in America. The Mission strongly recommends a future visit of Miss Anderson to the Far East under the President's Fund Program.[33]

The author of the *Bangkok World* article noted that Anderson had enjoyed happiness and success in the past, and thus he or she hoped it would continue. The author credited the United States with the birth of Anderson (a good daughter). Further, the author racialized Anderson with the additional distinction of representing her people well. This designation was different than the generic, far-reaching title of "American." Thus, the pro-U.S. sentiment came through in that the United States recognized Anderson's greatness and encouraged her to use her gifts even though African Americans traditionally held a less valued status in U.S. society.

This was reinforced by Arnold's report. While he did make special mention that a repeat performance by Anderson would heighten the Thai music lover's pleasure, he focused on what such a performance would do for Thai–U.S. rela-

tions. His remark that Anderson's performance/visit had heightened the U.S. status within the Thai culture because she served as an example of the U.S. success mythology gave evidence that Anderson's actions as cultural emissary furthered the State Department's agenda.

Many of the reports specifically mentioned the Little Rock incident from the perspective of the State Department officials. For example, Edmund H. Kellog, the chair d'affaires of Cambodia, wrote,

> Many Americans and Cambodians were brought together both before, during and after the performance. More than anything, Miss Anderson proved to be one of the best arguments in favor of American culture ever offered here. She also stood as a refutation of the Little Rock and segregation items that were so recently played up in the press.[34]

Kellog described the Anderson tour as one that brought a shared sense of community between the Cambodian public and the U.S. citizens in Cambodia. Additionally, reminiscent of the report from Thailand, Anderson's concert was enjoyed by the Cambodian people, and thus the Cambodian people became more interested in U.S. culture. Finally, Anderson stood as a "refutation of Little Rock" and other "segregation items" that had recently been publicized within Cambodia. The term "refutation" in this context did not erase Little Rock and the U.S. practice of segregation; rather, because Anderson was successful, the Cambodian public could see that African Americans could have a pleasant life within the United States. This was interesting insofar as Anderson's life was not the norm. However, because of the closer contact between Anderson and the Cambodian people than, for example, the children in need of armed protection in Little Rock, the visit allowed the Cambodian people to focus on Anderson rather than the more frequent instances of bigotry-related discrimination.

Further, Anderson's willingness to tour under the auspices of the U.S. government seemed to sanction the U.S. government and imply support for its intentions in regard to race relations. This was particularly important within the context of Little Rock. As should be obvious by now, the government had specific aims in mind when sending African Americans abroad. They wanted the emissaries to speak well of the United States, and in regard to race relations, they were to explain that the United States was trying to undo years of history. Not all artists were willing to do so, and thus they were either omitted from the State Department tour lists or dismissed. One good example of this was Louis Armstrong's experience. He was supposed to go on a State Department-sponsored tour to the Soviet Union also in 1957. After Little Rock, he canceled the tour. Dudziak explained,

> Armstrong said that "the way they are treating my people in the South, the government can go to hell." Were he to go

> to the Soviet Union, "The people over there ask me what's wrong with my country, what am I supposed to say?" Armstrong later added "The government could go to the devil with its plans for a propaganda tour of Soviet Russia."[35]

Because of Little Rock, Armstrong was not able to give the State Department the support that it wanted. While Armstrong pulled himself out of the tour, it is not clear whether the State Department would have allowed Armstrong the option of going anyway. In fact, as Dudziak showed, there was public outcry against Armstrong, and while his passport was not seized (as others' had been), the FBI monitored his actions. Von Eschen also demonstrated that Armstrong was too important as a U.S. ambassador to blacklist or shelve. He ended up going on a State Department tour to South America later in the same year.[36]

Since the incident at Little Rock occurred while she was on tour, Anderson did not have the option of canceling the tour before it started. However, because Anderson, unlike Louis Armstrong, did not cancel the tour, nor did she speak out angrily about it, she seemed to be giving support to the U.S. government in general. It did not go unnoticed. In the report from the deputy chief of mission from Taipei, Taiwan, James B. Pilcher told the State Department, "At the airport press conference, she impressed the local reporters with her polite and cordial attitude, while at the same time passing off in a most friendly way all questions about Little Rock and Louis Armstrong."[37] While we do not know what Anderson specifically said or how she "passed off" questions about Little Rock, Pilcher maintained that Anderson's presence and her unwillingness to publicly condemn white society in the United States helped the U.S. government's image by impressing the reporters.[38]

In any case, the majority of the reports gave a resounding "yes" to Anderson's effective intercessions in regard to issues of domestic race relations. A number of officials made mention of this fact. For example, Everett F. Drumright, the consul general of Hong Kong, wrote, "Her presentation to the Hong Kong public at this time provided an excellent contribution toward our objectives of counteracting recent detrimental news about U.S. racial problems and won new respect for U.S. cultural achievements."[39] Drumright's report underscored the importance of Anderson's visit to U.S. race relations, especially at the time of the problems in Little Rock. Thomas D. Bowie, counselor of the embassy for political affairs in Vietnam, wrote, "The Anderson personality and the charm of the entire party were felt wherever they appeared, whether it was at a diplomatic reception or a refugee camp, and they presented their side of America in the best imaginable way."[40] The Anderson party represented the prosperous, happy American. Additionally, James Magdanz remarked, "The Department of State believes that she made a splendid contribution to the furtherance of international understanding both in her concerts and in her more informal activities."[41] Anderson presented the United States as a viable and healthy institution. Anderson's concert tour accomplished what it was intended to do.[42]

The State Department chose well when it sponsored Anderson's concert tour throughout Asia. Through the concert at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939, Anderson became symbolic of American democracy and the ability of African Americans to succeed within it. In *My Lord, What a Morning!*, Taubman reinforced the association. Through the USIA's propaganda efforts, Anderson's image of the African American success story circulated throughout the countries she toured. On meeting her and attending the concerts, the different Asian populations embraced her and her symbolic currency. Anderson left the Asian public with the belief that her success was equally possible, if not more probable, than the acts of discrimination, such as in Little Rock.

This was significant because, as Brenda Plummer explained, the newly decolonized Asian countries were suspect of a U.S. model of government especially because of its discriminatory racial practices.

Because of "The Lady from Philadelphia," the influence of Anderson's Asian concert tour was not limited to Asia, nor was it limited to the fall of 1957. That the film highlighted gender instead of race in an effort to be more appealing is interesting. It is noteworthy that Anderson's symbolism—in this one instance—veered from the race narrative to a gendered narrative. How this translated transnationally is worth thinking about further. Perhaps it was a method by which they could focus on commonality rather than conflict. Perhaps it indicates that women's rights were so far from consideration that the portrayal was not threatening. Perhaps, because the conversations filmed were often between two professional women of color, revolutionary in themselves, they felt that they needed to demonstrate passivity. At the same time, had they delved deeper the gendered narrative of Anderson as international celebrity and independent career woman also would have challenged the traditional norms. Instead, they painted a passive, stereotypic figure.

At the same time, the question must be asked: was Anderson as individualist and apolitical as she was presented? Many reviewers thoroughly critiqued her tour and "The Lady from Philadelphia" as entirely too accommodationist.[43] I think that her symbolic story is incomplete. In "When Malindy Sings: A Meditation on Black Women's Vocality," Farah Jasmine Griffin wrote about the symbolism of African American women's musical voices. She describes how they have been used both to signal a crisis within the U.S. culture and to soothe the culture in a time of crisis. She directly references Marian Anderson's 1939 Freedom Concert as a time in which, despite a context of historic injustice, music brought the image of a "peaceful interracial version of America."[44] This would suggest that the more accommodationist vision of Anderson is true. Yet I find Griffin's "meditation" interesting because while she explores the historical meaning of the spirituals from within the fields to within DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folks* and jazz from its inception to the present (including Cold War exportation), there is no exploration of an artist who introduces the folk songs of resistance, faith, and justice into classical music halls throughout the world.

Given the sociopolitical structures in which she was forced to operate, this was a significant point of symbolism that Anderson could control. Anderson perceived herself as an artist and believed that she was destined to impact the world primarily through song. Her performances and the music she included were of utmost importance to her. As referenced earlier, her inclusion of African American spirituals in every concert puts her squarely within the African American community and religious tradition where God will bring a righteous justice against those who oppress. Her songs worked as facilitators of community and empowerment. Yet she is not often given credit for this important contribution, which has had a lasting legacy. At the same time, it appears that the answer Anderson gave when questioned about whether she would sing Faubus rings true for the U.S. government as well. "If [they] could take it for what it is, for what [they] could get from it, I would be happy to." While I do not believe that the U.S. government took Anderson's music and person for what it was, I do think that it took it for what it could get from it.

Notes

1. For an extended outline of the controversy before the concert and the symbolism of the 1939 concert, see Sharon R. Vriend, *"My Life in the White World": The European-American Representation of Marian Anderson, 1939–1957* (PhD diss., Bowling Green State University, 1999), 19–88. For an excellent discussion of the significance of the Freedom Concert and the meaning of the Lincoln Memorial, see Scott Sandage, "A Marble House Divided," *Journal of American History* (June 1993): 135–67.

2. For an in-depth discussion of this, see Sharon Vriend-Robinette, "*My Lord, What a Morning!*: A Representation of Marian Anderson in an Intercultural, Cold War Context," *Interdisciplinary Humanities* (Spring 2010): 57–69.

3. Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935–1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Mary Dudziak, "The Little Rock Crisis and Foreign Affairs: Race, Resistance, and the Image of American Democracy," *South Carolina Law Review* (September 1997): 1645–716. Plummer and Dudziak represent a group of historians who attempt to bridge domestic policy and foreign policy. They also incorporate cultural events and figures into their understanding of foreign policy studies. They and I have also been informed by Emily Rosenberg for her study on how the U.S. government worked to export the American Dream. The American Dream was also a component of a broader U.S. ideology of liberty that Michael Hunt explains. He also insists that race and especially racism has consistently informed U.S. foreign policy. Finally, Akira Iriye suggests that the export and import of culture and cultural icons has impacted foreign policy and posits that this should be considered in foreign policy study. See Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987); and Akira Iriye, "Culture and International History," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). For scholarship that addresses issues associated particularly with cultural ambassadors, see Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.) Further connections between the United States and decolonizing countries can be seen in Robin D. G. Kelley, *African Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

4. This was delineated by Dudziak, "The Little Rock Crisis and Foreign Affairs," 1997.

5. One study that discusses this phenomenon is Mary Dudziak, "Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War," *Journal of American History* (September 1994): 543–70.

6. "Summary of Discussion and Conclusions Reached at the Regional Public Affairs Officers Meeting New Delhi, India, November 11 and 15, 1957," 2 (National Archives, Record Group 59, Department of State, 1955–1959 Central Decimal File 320/8-3158, Box 1264; (hereafter referred to as "Regional Public Affairs Officers Meeting"). It is important to note that this meeting was convened during Anderson's concert tour; thus, this statement and the guidelines that followed were not the guiding principles for the State Department when it chose to send Anderson. Further-

more, the incident in Little Rock also occurred during Anderson's Asian concert tour. Thus, the specifics of this statement were not applicable to Anderson per se. However, the policy as stated in the report was not a radical ideological break from USIA policy, and Little Rock, while an important blow to the egalitarian image the United States desired, was not the only instance of U.S. racism. Thus, it does not seem inappropriate to use this document as a guide for foreign policy in Asia. See Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 121–50.

7. "Regional Public Affairs Officers Meeting," National Archives, Record Group 59, Department of State, 1955–1959 Central Decimal File 320/8-3158, Box 1264.

8. Dudziak documents how the State Department was more than willing to counter any critique of the state of African Americans in the United States. She credits Josephine Baker's eventual poverty to the U.S. government's interference with venues. Baker was outspoken and with Anderson's hesitance to harshly critique the government the State Department probably did not worry about this too much. See Dudziak, "Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War," 1994; For information on Paul Robeson see Martin Duberman, *Paul Robeson* (New York: Knopf, 1988), and Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 303–58. The combination of Anderson's history of avoiding public critique and the symbolic associations of Anderson with Americanism and African American success should not be underestimated. Anderson had many qualities similar to a person such as Paul Robeson, who was in fact harassed by the U.S. government instead of sponsored by it. Anderson and Robeson rose to prominence from limited means. Each had lived in Europe. Both used and popularized spirituals in an attempt to educate their audiences and to connect with an African American understanding of life and liberty. In the late 1930s through the 1950s, their paths diverged, and Anderson maintained distance from formal political activism that Robeson engaged in with full force. (In fact, Robeson publicly associated with the Communist Party USA and had connections with the Soviet Union.) Anderson was branded a patriot and Robeson a subversive. Anderson went to Asia under the auspices of the U.S. government, and Robeson's passport was revoked. It is instructive that prior to a UN appointment, the government itself made direct inquiries on Anderson's affiliation with Robeson. It is clear in Anderson's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) files that they asked many associates of Anderson whether she had any affiliation with or sympathies to Robeson. They all denied them. See Marian Anderson, File Number 77-9562, FBI, and Marian Anderson, File Number 77-3643, FBI.

9. While the State Department did not use all of these methods at each city, all of these methods were used in anticipation of Anderson's arrival at various cities. See venue reports in Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

10. Ibid.11. Ibid.

12. Anderson was pleased that she met the people who were not able to attend the concerts—especially within their own contexts. At the same time, she would point to the nonmusical interactions and appearances as stressors—interactions that took a great deal of energy that could detract from her performances. Nonetheless, whether at a concert or at a market, Anderson interacted with a great number of people on her tours. See Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, and Allan Keiler, *Marian Anderson: A Singer's Journey* (New York: Scribner, 2000), 280–88.

13. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

14. Ibid.

15. This presentation was not totally accurate. Marian Anderson did sing at Constitution Hall in 1942, but it did not reflect a change of policy. Anderson sang for a benefit performance for U.S. servicemen and was not under professional contract. The DAR continued to ban "nonwhites" from professional contracts and paid performances. See Peggy Anderson, *The Daughters* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), 133–35.

16. Ibid.

17. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

18. For an additional example of how Anderson's narrative as presented in *My Lord, What a Morning!* was used as an Asian representation of Anderson, see ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. All references to the television program come from Edward R. Murrow, "The Lady from Philadelphia," *See It Now* (New York: CBS News, 1957), videocassette.

23. While it was true that during 1957 an African American woman would have to be subservient in many contexts, Anderson was the star of the show. While she may have closed her eyes during concerts to block out the audience, she was an obvious presence and not subservient at all. Thus, this is significant for this portrayal.

24. Granted that an Indian woman, with intimate knowledge of a caste system, would ask this question is extremely ironic.

25. For a discussion of respectability politics, see Higganbotham. for other issues of respectability and representation, see Anne Stavney, "Mothers of Tomorrow": The New Negro Renaissance and the Politics of Maternal Representation," *African American Review* 32, no. 4 (1998): 533–61, and Laila Soraya Haidarali, "Browning the Dark Princess: Asian Indian Embodiment of "New Negro Womanhood"" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 32, no. 1 (2012): 24–69; for an extended discussion of what True Womanhood meant in the nineteenth century, see Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 151–74.

26. For excellent studies that delineate how black women pushed boundaries of social expectation regarding race and gender, see Angela Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), and Treva Lindsey, *Colored No More: Reinventing Black Womanhood in Washington, D.C.* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017).27. At the same time, despite its conservative to moderate tone and narrative, the film was blocked in some U.S. regions because it was seen to be too negative about the South and too radical in terms of race relations. See Keiler, *Marian Anderson*, 287.

28. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Mary Dudziak maintains that the international community often perceived that racism was a regional issue. Mary Dudziak, "Little Rock Crisis and Foreign Affairs," 1699–703.

33. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

34. Ibid.

35. Mary Dudziak, "Josephine Baker and the Cold War," *Journal of American History* (September 1994), 568. See also Laurence Bergeen, *Louis Armstrong: An Extravagant Life* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997), 471–73, and Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 64.

36. Ibid.

37. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

38. Of course, we also do not know whether Anderson secretly wanted to join with Armstrong and tell the government to go to hell, but, although perhaps only good manners may have restrained her, she did not. Keiler maintained this was because of her belief in the idea of the United States. See Keiler *Marian Anderson*, 283–84.

39. Anderson, Marion [*sic*], File 032, Central Decimal File 1955–1959, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. One could question the veracity of the overwhelming support of this tour by such diverse cultures as Vietnam, Korea, India, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. While the State Department reports were bolstered by English-language press accounts in addition to some translated press excerpts, all the descriptions, except for the issue of artistic choice, were positive. It may be that the report writers of the USIA were focused on a general outcome rather than tour specifics. When Eisenhower came to office, he established the USIA as an almost autonomous Cold War agency with a direct line to the executive office. Eisenhower, along with his advisers, decided that propaganda would be a priority and that all propaganda coming out of the USIA would be positive and uniting. They believed that overt propaganda should be positive and aspirational and that it should enable all people—both domestically and globally—to find commonality within U.S. values. So when the USIA officials were reporting out, they may not have had too high a bar to reach. It also would been in their best interest to focus on the positive. Shawn J. Parry-Giles, "The Eisenhower Administration's Conceptualization of the USIA: The Development of Overt and Covert Propaganda Strategies," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (Spring 1994): 269.

43. This was particularly true in African American papers. For example, see Ralph Matthews, "Thinking Out Loud," *The Baltimore Afro-American*, January 11, 1958, 5, and "Miss Anderson in Asia," *The Baltimore Afro-American*, January 18, 1958, 4.

44. Farah Jasmine Griffin, "When Malindy Sings: A Meditation of Black Women's Vocality," in *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies*, ed. Robert G. O'Meally, Brent Hayes Edwards, and Farah Jasmine Griffin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Denouncing the Hooded Order: Radicalism, Identity, and Dissent in the UMWA

Benjamin Schmack

> Those one hundred per cent men told us we'd be glad to turn over the books before they got through with us. They have threatened me repeatedly, so that my house is guarded all the time. They sent notice they would shoot me or drive me away. They can shoot me all right, but they'll not drive me away.[1]

This excerpt from the September 9, 1924 edition of the *Alton Evening Telegraph* relayed a statement made by a United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) member during the Forty-Second Annual Convention of the Illinois Federation of Labor. During his time at the convention, Henry Corbishley, president of UMWA Local 992 of Zeigler, Illinois, passionately advocated for the embattled miners of southern Illinois and hoped to enlist greater support for their resistance to the "one hundred percent men" of the Ku Klux Klan.[2]

Located in the southwest corner of Franklin County, roughly 300 miles southwest of Chicago and 100 miles east of St. Louis, Zeigler accounted for one of the most vibrant immigrant communities in the region during the 1920s.[3] By 1920, Franklin County boasted a population of 8,851 foreign-born, 7,035 native-born citizens with foreign-born parents, and 1,720 native-born citizens with mixed parentage out of a total population of 57,293. This meant that first- and second-generation immigrants made up nearly a third of the population of Franklin County during this period. Among these 17,606 men and women

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were a large percentage of "new immigrants," or immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Of the foreign-born residents, Italians (1,787), Poles (1,054), and Yugoslavs (914) all outnumbered the British-born population (825), while Russians (810), Lithuanians (631), and Austrians (550) also composed a large percentage of the population.[4]

A substantial number of these new immigrants resided within Zeigler, which also represented Franklin County's economic lifeblood—the coal industry. The Bell and Zoller Coal Company served as the main employer in the city, and Zeigler miners helped Franklin County lead Illinois in coal production from 1913 to 1930.[5] Zeigler's prominence within the industry was such that at least one of the city's two mine shafts ranked among the top four in the state in terms of both miners employed and coal produced throughout the entirety of the 1920s. In fact, from June of 1924 to June of 1925, the men of Local 992 hauled 1,473,701 tons of coal out of Bell and Zoller Mine No. 1. At the time, this was the largest one-year output by a single shaft in the state's history.[6]

However, Franklin County differed from other southern Illinois mining counties because of the level of radical attitudes among its immigrant miners. This radical sentiment stood in defiance of the reactionary and repressive political climate of the decade, which frequently vilified both immigrants and leftist radicals. Through the Palmer Raids and the Immigration Act of 1924, the federal government voiced a clear disdain of both political dissent and immigrant status in the years following World War I.[7] These policies designated both immigrants and labor activists as "others," and it was within this context that immigrant miners in Franklin County became frequent targets of violence at the hands of the newly revived KKK.

The Klan focused on new immigrant miners because of their status as both racialized others and as union laborers. For new immigrant workers, Klan attacks represented one of many volatile encounters with southern Illinoisans. These interactions shaped new immigrant understandings of their own racial and ethnic identity in relation to both Black and White workers. Many Franklin County miners mounted consistent resistance to the terror of the KKK through grassroots organizing strategies and affiliations with left-wing radicals. The clearest example of this was seen in Zeigler, when Local 992 elected Henry Corbishley president of their ethnically diverse UMWA Local. Corbishley himself was native born, but he constituted a different type of "other" in American society: he was a Communist and affiliate of the Workers Party of America.

Corbishley brought his radical labor convictions with him to the Illinois Federation of Labor convention in 1924 and articulated the dire situation the Klan presented to organized labor in southern Illinois. Corbishley and his allies introduced a number of anti-Klan resolutions and hoped for a statewide endorsement of their interethnic solidarity.[8] However, their efforts met heavy opposition from the entrenched hierarchy within the Illinois Federation of Labor and the UMWA. Their reaction to the Klan dilemma proved so temperate that it bordered on collusion and deviated sharply from the national stances of these

organizations in regard to the KKK. The battle over the anti-Klan resolutions spoke to a growing division between UMWA miners at the local level and the UMWA officialdom. For Zeigler miners especially, the failure of Corbishley's anti-Klan resolution served as a forecast of their coming decade-long battle against an alliance of the UMWA officialdom, coal operators, the KKK, and the Illinois court system.

The rhetorical conflict at the 1924 convention highlights the need for labor historians to distinguish between the stated position of an organization and the reality of their activism. In this way, this article draws influence from critiques of aspects of the new labor history, most notably Herbert Hill's criticism of Herbert Gutman's work on the racial egalitarianism of the UMWA. Hill argued that Gutman rooted his contentions regarding the UMWA, particularly that it served as the "advanced model of interracial working class solidarity," not in the historical record, but rather in "myth-making." Hill also contended that in doing so, Gutman presented an idealized UMWA that influenced a "romanticized 'popular front' leftism" within new labor history more broadly.[9] The history of Zeigler forces one to reexamine this romanticized view. The unionization of the Zeigler mines by the UMWA brought no racial harmony to the area, but rather it coincided with the removal of nearly the entirety of the working Black population from Franklin County. This piece follows the line of thinking advanced by some scholars of race struggles in the United States, particularly the works of the Black radical activist Harry Haywood and historian Mark Solomon. As they argue, Far Left organizers, not established trade unions, advanced the most strident and consistent resistance to racism during the 1920s. While class-first doctrines often led to intense disagreements between White and Black Communists, the fact remains that Communist support for antiracist, antilynching, and anti-Klan campaigns played a central role in building the Workers Party and the Communist Party USA in their earliest incarnations.[10]

The story of the 992 adds to the scholarship on radicalized trade unions in a time period and region often neglected by labor historians. Much of the scholarship devoted to Communist organizing focuses on its international aspect and the relationship between American organizers and the Kremlin. Stemming from the influential midcentury works of Theodore Draper, numerous historians embraced the "tragic" view of the American Communist movement and his conclusion that the movement was "transformed from a new expression of American radicalism to the American appendage of a Russian revolutionary power."[11] These accounts vary in their severity of course. James Barrett, in his biography of William Z. Foster, for example, acknowledges the potential of American radicalism in its early stages but argues that the shifting international party line disrupted the legitimacy and agency of the movement. Others, such as Jennifer Luff and Jennifer Delton, prove more critical of radical activists as both scholars argue that the labor movement benefited from the expulsion of Left-leaning unions. Hardline anticommunist historians, most notably John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, not only discount the agency of American Com-

munist activists but also charge revisionist historians with romanticizing and outright falsifying the contributions of these radicals.[12]

The works that discuss the actual contributions of Communists to trade unionism largely focus on the years after 1935 and the advent of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). This temporal distinction is due to the very real gains made by Communist activists during the popular front era, the perceived lack of success during the 1920s and early 1930s, and the lingering presumption that an incorrect party line ensured failure before 1935. Because of these issues, organizing pre-1935 is frequently categorized as trial and error. However, historians such as Robin D.G. Kelly, Mark Solomon, Randi Storch, and Rosemary Feurer pay closer attention to grassroots activism before the CIO and reveal much about the localized efforts of Communist organizers. My work follows this grassroots paradigm, but shifts the focus back further into the first decade of the Workers Party of America and into the understudied coal country of rural southern Illinois. Lastly, the residents of Zeigler during this period represent an important addition to studies of racialization and ethnic identity among rural laborers, such as the subjects in Kelley's pioneering work on Communist activism in Alabama.[13]

Race, Radicalism, and the Roots of Zeigler

Zeigler's radical history began nearly immediately after the town's inception in 1902, when Chicago millionaire Joseph Leiter purchased 8,000 acres of land in Franklin County.[14] Much like other famous company towns, the wealthy founder exerted an almost autonomous level of control. Leiter even embedded his family's lineage into the very foundation of the community when he named it Zeigler after the middle name of his father Levi Zeigler Leiter.[15] In another display of his control over the town, the younger Leiter went to great lengths to keep unions out of Zeigler. He surrounded the mine with a stockade and lined the walls with machine gunners who guarded the mine twenty-four hours a day.[16] Leiter once told the *Chicago Tribune*, "These union men are mistaken if they think they can put me out of business. I am prepared to fight for eighteen years if necessary. I will close down before I will give in to them."[17]

Bullets were not the only tactic Leiter used in his fight with organized labor, as the wealthy industrialist soon introduced a variation of what David Roediger and Elizabeth Esch refer to as race management to the county as well. Roediger and Esch show that the methods of managing slaves in the antebellum period influenced future management strategies in the industrializing United States. In particular, an obsession with viewing racialized groups as workers to be managed in different manners gave rise to race management strategies that pitted White, Black, Mexican, Asian, and racially "inbetween" Europeans against one another in the competition for industrial jobs.[18] In the first decade of the twentieth century, many new immigrants encountered American conceptions of race and racialization for the first time. Eastern and southern Europeans

quickly understood their designation on the racial hierarchy of the United States as what Roediger and Barrett refer to as "inbetween peoples." As these scholars argue, "differences between the racialized status of African Americans and the racial inbetween-ness of these immigrants meant that the latter eventually 'became ethnic' and that their trajectory was predictable. But their history was sloppier than their trajectory."[19] The racialized union battles in Zeigler serve as ideal examples of this "sloppiness" as both Black and new immigrant workers occupied precarious positions as scabs and racialized others.

Leiter used new immigrant and African American laborers to weaken the resolve of the native-born White miners. In July of 1904, shortly after the first strike began, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that Leiter planned to bring Black workers from Alabama in by train. This strategy proved difficult as striking miners watched the train routes so closely that the Black laborers had to commute the final two miles on foot.[20] The following month, Leiter bussed seventy-five Italian miners into Zeigler. The native-born strikers attempted to board the cars, but they failed in this instance to inflict any physical violence on their immigrant targets.[21]

Leiter's correspondence during this period made it clear that his use of ethnic strikebreakers was no mere coincidence, and thus these incidents were largely the result of his decisions. Leiter and his managers, A.M. Abriola and Hugh Crabbe, frequently referred to the ethnicity of incoming miners in their communications. In a telegram sent on August 10, Crabbe inquired whether Leiter wanted specifically "to continue to secure Italian miners."[22] Not surprisingly, Leiter's tactics exacerbated the situation even further, and only four months after Leiter's use of Italian scab laborers began, strikers fired upon a train of immigrant strikebreakers and killed one Italian miner.[23] These incidents started a long and complex history for immigrant workers in Zeigler in which they formed an understanding of their racial and ethnic identity in relation to both native-born White and African American workers.

While new immigrants and African Americans in Zeigler shared common identities as strikebreakers and as targets of native-born violence, this rarely manifested into any real interracial solidarity. Instead, animosity developed between various European ethnicities and Black workers, thoroughly reinforcing new immigrants' understandings of themselves as "inbetween." One such instance occurred in the spring of 1906 when a brawl broke out between Black and Hungarian workers over "labor differences." Both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Washington Post* reported on what was referred to as a "race riot." Both papers also emphasized that "ill feeling . . . has been brewing between the two classes" for a long period. At no point do the articles refer to the Hungarians as members of the White race, but instead imply that the fight was between two separate nonwhite racial "classes."[24]

Violent strikes persisted for the next five years. Paul M. Angle likened Zeigler to a battlefield in his writings, explaining that in "one camp were seventy state militiamen, forty deputy U.S. marshals (whose salaries Leiter paid), and

a varying number of private mine-guards and deputy sheriffs," and in the other "were several hundred striking miners, armed with everything from revolvers to shotguns."[25] The *Chicago Tribune* claimed that at night Zeigler "resembles a fortified town," because "two machine guns are mounted in a tower and on a parapet, a great searchlight is turned on."[26] Neither unionization nor machine guns proved the most deadly force in Zeigler during this period however. That dubious distinction belonged to mine explosions. Two separate explosions, one in 1905 and one in 1909, claimed the lives of forty-nine and twenty-six miners, respectively.[27] However, the 1905 explosion remains a source of contention among historians, and debates over the cause of this explosion speak to the divided nature of the working class in the region.

In a 1910 report to the Department of Commerce and Labor, Frederick L. Hoffman confirmed that the initial coroner's jury claimed that the disaster emanated from a powder explosion, "indicating a criminal purpose to blow up the mine." However, the Bureau of Labor disputed these claims and argued that the explosion occurred due to poor ventilation and gas buildup. They also contended that the coroner's findings "invited the suspicion that the men conducting the inquest had been selected for the purpose of shielding the company." Hoffman presented compelling evidence of negligence by the company, but he placed considerable weight on the unlikelihood of sabotage by the strikers. He contended that to "support such a theory it would be necessary for the jury to suppose that certain men were willing, in their desire to destroy the property of the company, to sacrifice their own lives. This imposes too heavy a tax on human credibility."[28] Although Hoffman's claims about the mismanagement of the mineshafts were sound, his findings grossly underestimated the volatility of the strike.

Both newspaper and historical accounts, such as those of Angle and Philip A. Kalisch, also concluded that gas buildup in the unventilated shafts caused the explosion, although Angle found that many years after the fact, company officials still contended it was an act of sabotage.[29] However, James Loewen revives this historical debate in his book *Sundown Towns*, addressing racial components ignored by previous historians. During interviews with Zeigler residents in 2002, Loewen found that many of the White residents traced their roots as an all-White community, or sundown town, to the aforementioned mine explosions. Oral tradition in the region claims that racial hatred toward the strikebreakers led to acts of sabotage that claimed the lives of dozens of African American miners.[30] Loewen builds much of his discussion of Zeigler as a racially restrictive town on this oral tradition as well as on the 1953 memoir of actress and activist Ruby Berkley Goodwin.

In *It's Good To Be Black*, Goodwin, a long-time supporter of the UMWA, recalled her childhood growing up in the mining community of Du Quoin, located in neighboring Perry County. Goodwin spent much of her memoir praising the UMWA as an interracial union, but she also recalled stories she overheard as a child regarding the early days of the nonunionized Zeigler mines.

During a discussion of scabs, Goodwin once heard her Aunt Dea tell her father, a union miner, that the strikebreakers "got what was coming to 'em at Zeigler." Like Dea, most of the Du Quoin community believed that the mine explosion in Zeigler was no accident. Aunt Dea's declaration was one that stressed her belief in worker solidarity, even to the point where she blamed Black strikebreakers for their own grisly fate. Goodwin expanded on the incident and explained that

> [o]ne hundred Negroes from Kentucky had been slipped into the mines the previous evening. The next day another Negro walked boldly up to the office and asked for a job. Late that afternoon a series of explosions shook the mine. . . . The miners knew that the explosion was not untimely. It was timed to perfection. The lone miner who had walked boldly up to the office and applied for a job was an expert shot firer from upstate. If anyone had been watching they would have seen him climb up the ladder and get into a waiting surrey just a few minutes before the explosion.[31]

Goodwin, more so than her aunt, emphasized the importance that race and racial difference played in the mine explosion. For Goodwin, it was clear that the mine was sabotaged not simply because of Leiter's use of scabs, but also because Leiter used Black scabs. Even if we may never truly know what or who caused the explosion in 1905, the fact is that those in the area believed that it was a racially motivated act of sabotage. The persistence of this belief speaks to the importance of racial difference in the development of Zeigler regardless of the series of events.[32]

In 1910, after eight long years of gunfights, strikes, and mine explosions, the union miners of Franklin County defeated the Chicago millionaire Joseph Leiter. Leiter sold the mine to the Bell and Zoller Coal Company, which quickly accepted unionization under the auspices of the UMWA. Unionization finally arrived in Zeigler, and it was due to a form of radical labor activism. Yet, the unionization that arrived in Zeigler bore little resemblance to the interracial UMWA described by Gutman. The arrival of the UMWA did little to heal the racial and ethnic divides constructed over the first decade of Zeigler's existence. In the same year as the sale of the mine, a Greek man killed a deputy sheriff. Instead of simply charging the guilty party for his crime, the native-born population of Zeigler ran all the Greek residents out of town, displaying mob mentality over interethnic solidarity.[33] While no doubt shaken by the events, Greek residents returned to Zeigler two days later. Black residents, on the other hand, had a far harsher experience with the new unionized Zeigler. With Leiter no longer in charge of the Zeigler mines, the use of African Americans as miners effectively ceased, and Zeigler began a near ninety-year history as one of Loewen's sundown towns.[34] The existence of Black laborers within the boundaries of Franklin County ended in the early 1910s, but their experiences lingered in the

consciousness of the county through new immigrants. Unlike African Americans, eastern and southern European immigrants remained in Franklin County and Zeigler following unionization. This was due largely to their sizeable numbers, but this should also be viewed as a very early example of the "whitening" of racialized immigrants.

Commies and Klansmen Battle for Zeigler

Franklin County immigrants were clearly on the road to whiteness. The endpoint, however, remained ahead, and coal industry hiring practices reflected this continued inequality. The decade following World War I brought considerable hardship to the industry. This was mostly due to a combination of overproduction from 1913 to 1923 (in which coal output increased by 336 million tons) and a sharp decline in demand brought on by the increasing importance of oil. By 1921, unemployment among Illinois coal miners reached 28 percent.[35]

In Franklin County, the issues of unemployment disproportionately impacted foreign-born miners even within mines worked by UMWA locals. According to Franklin County birth records, county mines employed 352 native-born workers and 362 foreign-born workers in 1916. By 1926, however, the mines employed 692 native-born workers and 259 foreign-born workers.[36] The overproduction in this period actually increased the number of coalminers in the county by 235, but the number of immigrant coalminers decreased by 103. Of course, these numbers account for only those coal miners who had children and obtained birth certificates during this period. More men were employed in Franklin County mines than these numbers suggest, but the rate of job loss for new immigrants stands in stark contrast to the job growth for native-born coalminers. While the UMWA had no hand in firing its members, the union apparently made little effort to stand beside its immigrant members against Illinois coal producers. The situation in Franklin County represents another disconnect between the often-egalitarian rhetoric of the UMWA at the state and national level and the realities for ethnic laborers at the local level.

Beyond discriminatory hiring practices, the continued racialization of new immigrant miners was also evidenced by the frequent attacks on them by members of the KKK during the late 1910s and early 1920s. A number of prominent historical works over the last few decades expanded our understanding of the Second Klan. The works of Nancy MacLean, Thomas Pegram, and Kathleen Blee, among others, reveal that the Klan built a nationwide revival on an expanded framework of hate. The Klan of the 1920s built on its previously expressly Southern message and embraced a nationalistic perspective of "one hundred percent Americanism." The KKK retained its decades-long hatred of African Americans, but now despised new immigrants, non-Protestant religious denominations, supposed immoral or nontraditional behavior, and Far Left political affiliation, as well. Local accounts of the Klan, exemplified by the works of MacLean, Masatomo Ayabe, and Craig Fox, also show that the

Klan's proliferation was relatively mainstream. In many communities, the Klan operated not in the shadows, but out in the open. Additionally, its member rolls were not filled with seedy, disreputable people, but rather with large numbers of respected, active members of the middle class.[37]

As the influence of the KKK grew in southern Illinois, some UMWA miners—whom the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL) publication *The Labor Defender* referred to as "irresponsible members"—joined the Klan. Klan influence in nearby Williamson County was particularly strong, as the hooded order essentially took control of the county in 1922. The KKK, led by former Federal Prohibition Agent S. Glen Young, illegally enforced the Volstead Act throughout the county by raiding establishments and homes. The houses targeted by the Klan raids showed clear anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic motivation as the majority of the homes belonged to Italian Catholics. The Klan persecuted Italians in Herrin to such a severe degree that the "Italian consular agent at Springfield protested to the U.S. State Department." Although this action pressured the KKK, the boisterous Young claimed that "'in two hours I can get seven thousand [Klansmen] from Williamson and Franklin counties'" to participate in these raids.[38] Targeted use of the Volstead Act also affected immigrant miners in Franklin County, but in Zeigler, actual officers, not Klan members, conducted the raids. The authorities blamed groups of foreigners for "robberies and killings . . . especially on pay nights." In response to this, officers "attempted to close up illegal saloons and rid the town of its troublemakers, and in one evening ten saloons were nailed up."[39]

While the Klan never took control of Franklin County as it did in Williamson, the KKK remained a regular presence throughout the county. Reports of Klan rallies appeared regularly in *The Zeigler Item*, one of the town's two newspapers, and the paper often promoted upcoming events that would be hosted by the Klan. According to the newspaper, Franklin County towns such as Zeigler, Christopher, and Sesser were home to numerous Klan rallies in 1923 and 1924. At one point during the summer of 1924, the KKK burned two crosses in Zeigler in a one-week span.[40] Although the masked order drew large crowds in Franklin County, clear and consistent opposition also existed, especially in Zeigler. The mayoral elections of 1925 serve as a particularly clear example of this sentiment as Charles Murphy Smith won the election almost solely due to his anti-Klan platform. In a campaign advertisement, Smith stated, "I am proud of the stand I am taking as everyone looks alike to me, regardless of where they come from, as I am old enough to realize that we cannot run this town successfully with an organization comprised of the Knights of the Korn-Kob-Klan." The *Item*, which supported Smith's opponent Fred D. Hall, even claimed that Smith only won because he "trotted out the Ku Klux bugaboo" throughout the campaign.[41]

Smith's mayoral victory in 1925 showed that considerable opposition to the KKK existed in Zeigler, but it did not explain where this sentiment originated. The anti-Klan movement in Zeigler gained traction initially because a

particularly progressive branch of the UMWA, Local 992, made the town its home. The mostly immigrant members of Local 992 elected the "staunch progressive" Henry Corbishley president of the Local on three separate occasions between 1923 and 1925.[42] While Klan incursions occurred frequently, the consistent resistance of Corbishley and the radical laborers within the 992 limited their influence, especially in comparison to surrounding counties in southern Illinois.

Corbishley's status as a radical was well known in the area, and *The Daily Independent* of Murphysboro, Illinois, even referred to Corbishley as the "leader" of the "communist movement in Southern Illinois."[43] In reality, Corbishley was only one leader of a movement that had many prominent members in the region, but it was certainly true that Corbishley was a well-connected labor radical. In particular, Corbishley's relationship with William Z. Foster and the TUEL proved quite important to the Zeigler radicals' organizing strategies. Foster recalled in his autobiography *From Bryan to Stalin* that Corbishley worked tirelessly with TUEL organizers to "mobilize great mass meetings of miners" during the coal strikes in 1922.[44] Due to Corbishley's background and connections, the endorsement of these efforts suggested that many 992 members, both immigrant and native born, supported a radical ideology.

However, these miners found other ways of expressing their own radical agency as well. In the very first daily edition of *The Daily Worker*, published on January 13, 1924, a large number of workers sent donations and "birthday greetings" to the newspaper. As a show of gratitude, the paper published the names of workers from forty locations that donated. As one might expect, industrial centers such as New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Gary, and Cleveland were well represented, but the Franklin County towns of Zeigler, Orient, and West Frankfort appeared right alongside these major metropolitan areas. All told, eighteen residents of Franklin County proudly donated to *The Daily Worker* and allowed their names to be published in the main organ of the Workers Party of America. This was a bold declaration of radical sentiment, as many of these donations came from immigrants, such as Lithuanian 992 member William Bartash, who had not yet obtained United States citizenship as of 1924. Most of the individual donations came from Zeigler and West Frankfort, but the Slavic miners of Orient paid for an advertisement on page five of the paper in which they greeted *The Daily Worker* into the world. "Jugo-Slav Branch No. 7," based out of the mining town, pledged the "Full Support of Its Members to Make the Militant Labor Press Grow and increase in Power and Influence."[45]

Corbishley made his militant stance abundantly clear in two separate articles in the August 26, 1924, edition of *The Daily Worker*. In the first of these articles, Corbishley voiced his opposition to the recent push among coal operators for the "open shop" in southern Illinois coalmines. The article also claimed that the miners of Zeigler placed little faith in UMWA President John L. Lewis and other officials within the Illinois UMWA. Instead, they resisted the coal operators at the grassroots level and pushed for better pay and a six-hour workday.

Figure 1: O.R. Zimmerman's cartoon depicted the "United Front" opposing southern Illinois radicals during the decade. In it, the Klansman, armed with both gun and rope, serves as the protector of the exploitative forces of capital, which for Zimmerman included UMWA District 12 President Frank Farrington. O.R. Zimmerman, "The United Front Against the Illinois Miners," The Daily Worker, August 29, 1925, 1, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/daily-worker/1925/index.htm.

Beyond their demands, Corbishley relayed the bleak situation facing the miners in Zeigler and stressed the hegemony of Bell and Zoller in the company town. Corbishley stated that "Zeigler is a town that has the coal mine at one end and the company store at the other. When the miner gets up in the morning to go to work, all streets in town lead to the Bell and Zoller mine. When he comes out of the shaft and starts home, all streets lead past the company store."[46] Corbishley elaborated further on the conditions in Zeigler in the second article and added that the KKK present in Franklin County frequently harassed Zeigler miners and worked in conjunction with the "non-union 'open shop' business men" and A.C. Carr, the mayor of Zeigler in 1923 and 1924.[47]

Considering the often-volatile history of race and ethnicity in Zeigler, the interethnic solidarity shown by the laborers of the 992 proves all the more impressive. While one might be tempted to view this solely as another example of the whitening of immigrants, the persistent attacks of the KKK on these miners suggest that they remained racialized in the eyes of many native-born whites. A potential explanation for this unity that allows for the continued existence of racialization in the region is that of the importance of radicalism to the union local. Corbishley's radical affiliations gave this diverse group of miners the means to resist not just the Klan but also the forces of capital more broadly.

Local 992's radical sentiment clearly formed in large part because of these developments at the local level, but it was also indicative of emerging divisions within UMWA District 12 as a whole. Much of this tension revolved around a growing disconnect between large numbers of Illinois miners and District 12 President Frank Farrington. Farrington presided over the entirety of the UMWA in Illinois and represented nearly 100,000 miners by the dawn of the 1920s. Farrington presented himself as a democratic leader, but his public image never fully reflected his views on immigrant miners.[48] During his days as a member of the UMWA Executive Board, he showed great trepidation in allowing new immigrants membership in the union. He believed they were too quick to strike and that they frequently broke agreements between the UMWA and coal operators. New immigrant miners in Franklin County reciprocated this distrust. In August of 1920, during a particularly bloody strike in the Franklin County town of West Frankfort, immigrant UMWA members openly defied Farrington's instructions to call off the strike. The strike ended in carnage when the native population viciously attacked the Italian miners. Due to the violence perpetrated around West Frankfort, hundreds of foreign-born men and women fled the county.[49]

Despite this tension between Franklin County miners and Frank Farrington, the radical organizers of southern Illinois had some reason to be optimistic about their ability to combat the KKK menace with the help of organized labor. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) issued a statement of condemnation toward the Klan in 1923. The AFL viewed the Klan as a menace to the workingmen of the United States and decried them as an un-American and discriminatory organization. In a 1921 correspondence with Ralph E. Slaugh-

ter, the chairman of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, AFL President Samuel Gompers made it clear that he saw the Klan as an affront to organized labor and that he wished to see no overlap in membership between the AFL and the swelling ranks of the KKK. He wrote that there were "too many self-constituted persecutors of labor to permit the opportunity to pass in condemning an invisible empire whose work is at night and behind masks and whose victims may sometimes be members of trade unions."[50] This was a bold stance by Gompers and the AFL, but it was not one that developed overnight, nor was it met with universal approval.

The AFL passed an anti-Klan resolution at its 1923 convention, but its membership had openly refused to pass such a resolution at two previous AFL conventions. In 1921, the convention blocked the introduction of the lone resolution regarding the KKK. The following year, a Central Labor Union delegate from New Hampshire named James A. Legassie managed to introduce a resolution that openly condemned the Klan as "detrimental to the best interests of the working people of this country and directly opposed to the Constitution." However, the Resolution Committee substituted a different version that concluded that the AFL should not "endorse or condemn any organization . . . unless the purpose of such organization is . . . interfering with the rights, opportunities and liberties of wage earners." This resolution never once mentioned the KKK by name and clearly served as a means to defer the issue further. The resolution passed in 1923 was far more specific in its condemnation and mentioned the Klan by name, but it was also a statement regarding the AFL as a nationwide organization.[51] The enforcement of this national resolution at the regional, state, and local level remained difficult, and it fell on those locals most affected by Klan violence to call for more stringent anti-Klan measures within the state affiliates of the AFL.

Gaining support from the UMWA against the Klan at the state and local level also seemed to have potential. Farrington's response to the Klan issue in southern Illinois proved slow, but UMWA District 12 had expressed anti-Klan sentiments in the past. In his work on the Klan in Williamson County, Masatomo Ayabe emphasizes that the Illinois UMWA constitution labeled membership in the Klan as grounds for expulsion. Ayabe is quick to qualify this, finding that many rank and file union miners remained white supremacists and that many "decided to wear the white robe even at the risk of losing their union membership." Ayabe is right to make this distinction, as many of the union strongholds he analyzed remained segregated communities. However, placing too much emphasis on statements made by the union officialdom proves problematic. Ayabe's own work shows that suspected Klansmen and Klan supporters remained employed in large numbers in Williamson County despite the UMWA's proclamations.[52] Because of this, greater attention needs to be paid not only to the members' failure to embrace racial egalitarianism, but also to the failures of the UMWA and AFL hierarchies to truly enforce these stances. Drawing once again on Hill's critique of Gutman, the supposed egalitarianism of these unions

is often thrown into question when their implementation is examined in specific instances. At points, the AFL and the UMWA voiced their opposition to the racism, xenophobia, and religious bigotry of the Klan, but when it came time to truly stand behind those fighting the Klan, such as the new immigrant miners of Zeigler 992, they left many union locals to fend for themselves.

In September of 1924, Corbishley and other southern Illinois TUEL representatives attended the Forty-Second Convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. The central Illinois city of Peoria was the site of the convention, but the majority of the representatives, 282 out of 474, came to the convention from Chicago. The 120 miners in attendance made up a sizeable portion of the delegates, but because these numbers were split among the three different coal regions of the state, the southern Illinois representatives faced an uphill battle to gain support for their regional grievances.[53] *The Labor Herald* reported on the conference and relayed two of the major goals of the radicals in attendance. The first was the promotion of William Z. Foster as the only true working class candidate in the presidential election of 1924. The second was to introduce multiple resolutions that "condemned the Ku Klux Klan for its disruption of miners' union locals in southern Illinois."[54]

Two anti-Klan resolutions came to the floor on the fourth day of the convention and were debated concurrently, but the southern Illinois miners had already made their presence known at the convention by this point. Corbishley introduced another resolution earlier in the convention, calling for the Illinois Federation of Labor to voice opposition to the upcoming National Defense Day. His resolution stated

> WHEREAS, September 12th has been proclaimed as National Defense Day, to be observed thuout [sic] the country as a means of testing the Nation's preparedness for war, and WHEREAS, this preparedness test is an avowed part of the efforts of the capitalist war mongers to build constantly greater armaments, to build a military machine ready to extend American imperialistic investments and exploitation of workers of colonial countries, and other oppressed nations, as well as to be held in readiness to be turned against the workers at home in any conflict between capital and labor, therefore be it RESOLVED that the Illinois State Federation of Labor in regular convention go on record opposing these efforts of the American war mongers including the National Defense Day exercises and condemning militarism in general.

The *Chicago Tribune* reported on the conference and published articles on September 10 and 12 that highlighted Corbishley and the multiple resolutions he brought to the floor. According to the paper, another delegate shouted that

Corbishley was a "pay roll patriot of the Russian Government" and that his resolution was "tinged deeply with un-Americanism."[55]

Illinois State Federation of Labor Secretary Victor Olander's comments on this resolution were particularly interesting as he revealed a general approval of its contents but distaste for its author. Olander stated that the "introducers of resolutions reading as did the original proposition . . . also frequently present other resolutions dealing with proposals to recognize in some way or another what is nothing more than Communistic propaganda." After denigrating Corbishley, Olander and Illinois State Federation of Labor President John Walker stressed the patriotism of Illinois labor and the contributions of Illinois workers to the war effort. In the end, however, they changed very little about the resolution. Although these statements opened Corbishley up to red baiting, his anti-National Defense Day resolution created a dialogue in the convention for controversial topics, such as his later anti-Klan resolution.

Later that day, Corbishley and two members of the Dowell, Illinois, UMWA Local No. 3703 introduced two separate, largely identical resolutions to the Committee on Resolutions regarding the Klan issue. Corbishley's bill stated:

> WHEREAS We see plainly that there are different kinds of illegal organizations thruout [sic] the world appearing under different kinds of masks and names; and WHEREAS, we see all through experience that every one of these organizations has the same aim,—to destroy labor organizations; and WHEREAS, we see one of those bosses organizations—the Ku Klux Klan existing in this country and daily torturing the people, especially organized labor, as for instance at Herrin, Zeigler, Christopher and Dowell, and brutal murder right in the courthouse of West Frankfort and etc., therefore be it RESOLVED that we condemning the illegal K. K. K. organization, also call on our brother delegates to the Forty-Second Annual Convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor to adopt this resolution and demand that the Illinois State Federation of Labor promote a series of anti-Klan mass meetings and demonstrations in Illinois, especially in the southern part.[56]

The resolution was blunt, direct, and firmly rooted in the experience of miners in the various southern Illinois mining counties. Most importantly it offered a concrete recommendation for how the Illinois Federation of Labor could show its opposition to the racial terrorism of the Klan in southern Illinois. By nearly any measure, this resolution represented a logical, regionalized extension of the national AFL and UMWA resolutions that would affirm the Illinois Federation of Labor's support for its immigrant and Black members. However, a number of representatives at the convention offered varying levels of disapproval.

After hearing the anti-Klan bills, the resolutions committee introduced a substitute resolution that condemned the Klan, but with some noticeable differences. First, the new resolution was considerably longer and filled with the same type of patriotic rhetoric espoused by Walker and Olander in response to Corbishley's National Defense Day resolution. It featured frequent references to the importance of democratic institutions, and the condemnation of the KKK mostly emphasized the Klan's violations of American democracy, not its attacks on union members. Secondly, the resolution briefly discussed both religious and racial intolerance, but it did so in a nonlocalized way that failed to speak to the very real situation present in the state. At no point in the resolution was a specific city, county, or even state mentioned, nor was any particular incident of Klan terrorism ever addressed. Lastly, the resolution ignored Corbishley's calls for "anti-Klan mass meetings and demonstrations" in southern Illinois and never offered any procedures or recommendations for how to combat or expel this menace from labor union locals.[57] In his report on the conference, *Daily Worker* correspondent Karl Reeve addressed some of these oversights and noted that the resolution was nearly identical to the resolution adopted by the AFL a year earlier.[58] In other words, the resolutions committee simply regurgitated the previous statements of the national AFL instead of passing a bill that dealt directly with Klan violence in southern Illinois.

At first glance, this may seem a glib or pessimistic perspective of a resolution that did in fact condemn the KKK as a racist organization, especially in comparison to University of Chicago economist Eugene Staley's writings on the conference. Staley's *History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor*, published in 1930, is the only other work that discusses the 1924 conference at any length, although it receives only a few sentences. In his account of the convention, Staley denounced what he referred to as the "guerrilla warfare tactics" of the Communist delegates. Because of this, he rarely addressed the grievances of those delegates with much objectivity. Conversely, Staley paid glowing tribute to the contributions of Walker and Olander to the successes of the Illinois Federation of Labor. He even pointed to the passing of the anti-Klan bill as one such triumph, writing that the "Federation condemned the Ku Klux Klan in 1924, adopting the exact language of an AFL report on the Klan in place of more violent resolutions which had been introduced."[59] The "violent resolutions" that Staley referred to were those of the southern Illinois miners, although he never acknowledged what their original statements were. It is worth mentioning that Staley's only major source on the conference itself was that of the "official printed proceedings of the Illinois State Federation of Labor annual conventions." This limited archive neglected the numerous newspaper accounts that offered further context and accounts of the events.

What Staley never addressed in his book were the reactions of delegates to the resolution itself. This fallout proved just how little support a truly forceful condemnation of the Klan had at the convention and also revealed the true motives of Walker in advocating for the new resolution. Once the bill was in-

troduced, the most vocal opposition to the altered resolution came not from Corbishley, but from pro-Klan forces that viewed these statements as discriminatory to Klansmen. A carpenter's representative named Branham argued that the "parties who drew that up are just as intolerant as those who burned people at the stake." Branham also concluded that the resolution would "split the organization wide open," because "we have a lot of members who belong to the Klan and it is an invitation to them to get out. . . . We have got to have members of the Ku Klux Klan in our organizations." It was in President Walker's response to Branham that he exposed the true intent of the altered resolution. Walker argued that the "report is in the exact language of the report adopted by the AFL by unanimous vote in the convention a year ago and it has not split the organization at all."[60] Walker essentially assured a pro-Klan representative that, despite the supposed condemnation present in this resolution, there would be no break between the Illinois Federation of Labor and its Klan members. In short, Walker's resolution would change nothing.

By removing the teeth from Corbishley's resolution, the hierarchy of organized labor in Illinois could "condemn" the Klan without losing members or truly provoking the powerful hooded organization. While the bill infuriated laborers on both sides of the Klan issue, so much so that ten delegates rose in opposition to its take on the Klan, it passed and became the organization's official stance on the KKK. The southern Illinois miners gained a resolution that condemned the Klan, but it did next to nothing to change their situation. The Illinois Federation of Labor left its immigrant miners exposed to continued Klan violence and avoided their responsibilities as members of the AFL to support their union brothers regardless of their racial or ethnic identity. The resolution was hardly the signifier of true racial solidarity that Staley believed it to be, nor was it emblematic of many romantic "new labor history" portrayals of organized labor. Instead, it represented a hollow and calculated maneuver made by the establishment of Illinois labor to maintain the status quo.

Incensed by the flimsiness of the anti-Klan bill that supplanted his own, Corbishley took his message straight to the numerous media outlets present at the convention. In various interviews, he conveyed both the level of influence the Klan held in southern Illinois and the methods through which they limited the power of organized labor and ethnic solidarity. In an interview with the *Alton Evening Telegraph*, Corbishley spoke of a recent Klan incursion into his union local. In June of 1924, the 992 reelected Corbishley handily over Klan-backed candidates, but following the election "fifty or sixty alleged Klansmen held another election immediately afterward and named their slate of officials."[61] These Klan-backed officials convinced enough UMWA International Executive Board members that their claim was legitimate. This particular instance of Klan insurgency within the 992 lasted only for a short period, but it would not be the last; these actions showed just how serious the KKK threat was to UMWA members. Corbishley also discussed these issues of Klan violence with the *Chi-*

cago Tribune, which placed the struggles of the 992 in one of the most widely circulated newspapers in the nation.[62]

While these articles voiced Corbishley's opposition to the Klan, only the left-wing press mentioned the controversial claims leveled by a number of miners against UMWA District 12 President Farrington. Earlier articles on the convention in *The Daily Worker* reported that Farrington and Secretary Olander pressured representative Robert Speedie and other delegates from Dowell to withdraw their condemnation of the KKK. Speedie told reporter Karl Reeve that both Farrington and Olander visited him and stressed the importance of squashing the Klan bill. He recalled that Farrington showed him a letter from the KKK, which explicitly stated, "that he [Farrington] would lose thousands of votes unless he used his influence to keep the anti-Klan resolution from coming up on the floor of the federation convention, and to fight it if it did come up."[63] Speedie's revelation confirmed many of the TUEL's long-held suspicions about Farrington and his true motivations as District 12 president.

On September 11, the *Chicago Tribune* published an article titled "Dark Future for Illinois Miners," which quoted Farrington and his accounts of the most important occurrences at the conference. Despite reports on the anti-Klan resolutions appearing in the paper both the day before and the day after this article's publication, Farrington never mentioned any discussion on the KKK at the conference or his opposition to the anti-Klan resolutions. Instead, Farrington focused his attention on the "interstate commerce commission," which he claimed "has 'struck the Illinois miners the most deadly blow ever dealt by any foe we were ever called on to face,'" because the commission reduced "freight rates in nonunion territory."[64] This statement no doubt offended radical miners like Corbishley, considering that Farrington largely ignored the Klan situation only days before this article's publication.

In one of the last resolutions of the concluding day of the conference, Secretary Olander introduced what Eugene Staley referred to as a "harmony resolution." In describing Olander's actions, Staley wrote that he "acted as a peacemaker behind the scenes, counseling tolerance in fighting intolerance, and a harmony resolution introduced by him on the last day and adopted unanimously helped to lessen the tension."[65] Once again, Staley showed both his unwavering support for the officialdom and his tendency to avoid the specifics of their resolutions. In reality, Olander's "harmony resolution" completely robbed the already tepid anti-Klan measure of any of Corbishley's original intent. Not only did Olander argue that "trade unionists should not permit themselves to be divided by differences of opinion regarding individual affiliations, actual or supposed, with other forms of organization," but also that "nothing which has transpired in this convention shall be used to cause divisions within local unions . . . or to discriminate against any member or members of any trade union."[66] In other words, the convention refused to discriminate against the most discriminatory terrorist organization in the nation despite its frequent attacks on union members. For the radical immigrant miners, this greatly dam-

aged their opinion of the Illinois Federation of Labor officialdom, and it served as a further indictment of the UMWA District 12 president. Karl Reeve most succinctly voiced the feelings of the Far Left, when he wrote that Farrington "betrayed the trust" of progressive miners "by not fighting" and reiterated that Farrington "left the convention without saying a word" in regard to the condemnation of the KKK.[67]

Conclusion

The refusal of the UMWA and the Illinois Federation of Labor to fully acknowledge the problem of Klan corruption and violence left union locals in Franklin County exposed to even greater Klan incursions. In December of 1924, Klan agitators tampered with union elections throughout the county and filled the subdistrict officialdom with supporters of Farrington. Within a year, many of these subdistrict officials orchestrated the expulsion of Corbishley and a number of Local 992 members from the UMWA. Additionally, these officials conspired with Klan members, coal operators, and the courts to bring false charges against a number of 992 members.[68] Events like these exposed the depths of corruption present in the UMWA and the level of influence of the KKK in southern Illinois. The radicals present at the 1924 convention warned the laborers of Illinois about the severity of the situation but were largely ignored. The inaction of the UMWA in 1924 allowed for the chaos that enveloped Franklin County in the mid-1920s and created such a distrust of the UMWA in many coal communities that the later dual unions of the late 1920s (The National Miners Union) and early 1930s (The Progressive Miners of America) gained considerable traction in the region.

Corbishley's stand at the convention spoke to the radical sentiments and interethnic solidarity present in many of the union locals in Franklin County. While anti-ethnic prejudices still persisted among many of the native-born miners in coal communities like Zeigler, the influence of the Far Left provided a means for many to embrace a shared radical affiliation instead of focusing on their different ethnic identities. Additionally, the southern Illinois radicals present at the convention spoke in the best interests of a significant portion of the UMWA, even if the officialdom refused to stand in solidarity with these miners.

Notes

1. "Miners Start Fight on K.K.K. in Convention," *Alton Evening Telegraph*, September 9, 1924, 1.

2. This article represents an expanded analysis of a few portions of my master's thesis. For a more thorough account of the story of the Zeigler Local 992 during the second half of the 1920s, see Ben Schmack, "Rural Radicalism: Repression and Resistance in Southern Illinois Coal Country, 1924–1927," (master's thesis, Northern Illinois University, 2015).

3. Eugene Staley, *History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1930). Staley's is the only work, to my knowledge, that references the 1924 convention. The most notable work that mentions Zeigler is James Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005), although he only briefly discusses Zeigler. Aside from my own research, his discussion of Zeigler's racial past is the deepest

analytical treatment of Zeigler. In Paul M. Angle, *Bloody Williamson: A Chapter in American Lawlessness* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), Angle devotes a chapter to Zeigler's founder Joseph Leiter and the town's formative years from 1900 to 1910. Stephane Elise Booth, "The Relationship between Radicalism and Ethnicity in Southern Illinois Coal Fields, 1870–1940" (PhD diss., Illinois State University, 1984). Booth's 1984 dissertation discusses immigrant miners in southern Illinois and briefly discusses Zeigler. Additionally, Booth's statistical indexes are a tremendous research aid. Winifred M. Hensen, "History of Franklin County, IL" (master's thesis, Colorado State College of Education, 1942). Hensen's "Franklin County" is fairly old and at points biased, but it is one of the few secondary sources that addresses the history of Zeigler.

4. Booth, "Relationship between Radicalism and Ethnicity," 245–47; U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States*, Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920.

5. David Thomas Markwell, "'The Best Organized Labor State in America': The People of District 12 and the Illinois Perspective, 1898–1932" (PhD diss., Southern Illinois University, 2010), 82, 80.

6. Department of Mines and Minerals, "Report Files," Record Series 245.002, Illinois State Archives.

7. For more on the Palmer Raids and the targeting of political dissenters during the first Red Scare, see Ann Hagedorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007); Stanley Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer: Politician* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963); Robert W. Dunn, *The Palmer Raids* (New York: International Publishers, 1948). For more on immigration restriction and the racialization of immigrants through government policy, see Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004); Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).

8. Thomas Wren, "Illinois F. of L. Plans Council for Unemployed," *The Chicago Tribune,* September 10, 1924.

9. Herbert Hill, "Myth-Making as Labor History: Herbert Gutman and the United Mine Workers of America," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 2, no. 2 (1988): 132–33. For other sides of the debate over Gutman and the new labor history, with both defense and critique, see David Roediger, "What Was So Great about Herbert Gutman?" *Labour/LeTravail* 23, Spring (1989); Walter Johnson, "Agency: A Ghost Story," in *Slavery's Ghost: The Problem of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation*, ed. Richard Follett, Eric Foner, and Walter Johnson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011, 23).

10. Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans*, 1917–1936 (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 1998); Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1978); Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1976). For more on Communist involvement in antiracist campaigns, see Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948–1968* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Robin D.G. Kelly, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

11. Theodore Draper, *The Roots of American Communism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 395.

12. James R. Barrett, *William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Jennifer Luff, *Commonsense Anticommunism: Labor and Civil Liberties between Wars* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Jennifer Delton, *Rethinking the 1950s: How Anticommunism and the Cold War Made America Liberal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *In Denial: Historians, Communism & Espionage* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003).

13. Robin D.G. Kelly, *Hammer and Hoe*, 1990; Rosemary Feurer, *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900–1950* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Randi Storch, *Red Chicago: American Communism at Its Grassroots, 1928–1935* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

14. Hensen, "History of Franklin County," 77.

15. Angle, *Bloody Williamson*, 119. Before his death in June 1904, Levi Z. Leiter was a Chicago real estate mogul and a former business partner of Marshall Field. He was largely responsible for the wealth of his only son and at one point bailed Joseph out of a catastrophic business failure. During the late 1890s Joseph attempted to corner the wheat market, but after the market broke, he eventually sold at a loss of more than $10 million. Levi covered Joseph's debts and remained confident enough in his son to name him head of his estate. "Crash in Leiter Deal," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 14, 1898, 1; Paul Gilbert and Charles Lee Bryson, "Joseph Leiter," *Chicago and Its Makers: A Narrative of Events from the Days of the First White Man to the Inception of the Second*

World's Fair, 1929, archived online at chicagology.com; Levi Z. Leiter Papers and Leiter Estate Records (Chicago History Museum), Descriptive Inventory.

16. Hensen, "History of Franklin County," 78.

17. "Leiter Back from Mines," *The Chicago Tribune,* December 18, 1924.

18. David Roediger and Elizabeth Esch, *The Production of Difference: Race and the Management of Labor in U.S. History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

19. James R. Barrett and David Roediger, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality and the 'New Immigrant' Working Class," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 1 (1997): 6.

20. "Strike at Zeigler Grows," *The Chicago Tribune,* July 26, 1904.

21. Angle, *Bloody Williamson,* 123.

22. Levi Z. Leiter Papers and Leiter Estate Records (Chicago History Museum), Box 3, August, 1904.

23. "Fire on Train, Kills Miner," *The Chicago Tribune,* November 18, 1904.

24. "Miners in Riot at Zeigler," *The Chicago Tribune,* March 9, 1906, 4; "Negroes and Huns Clash," *The Washington Post*, March 9, 1906, A.

25. Angle, *Bloody Williamson,* 123.

26. "Bring Eastern Men to Zeigler," *The Chicago Tribune,* November 30, 1904.

27. Philip A. Kalisch, "Death Down Below: Coal Mine Disasters in Three Illinois Counties, 1904–1962," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908–1984)* 65, no. 1 (1972), 8, 10.

28. Frederick L. Hoffman, Department of Commerce and Labor, *Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor* no. 90 (September, 1910) Washington: Government Printing Office, 518–9.

29. Angle (Bloody Williamson, 128–30) mostly draws his evidence on the explosion from the findings of State Mining Board investigations, which came to the same conclusions as Hoffman; Kalisch draws heavily from Hoffman's reports in "Death Down Below," 1972, 8–9.

30. Loewen, *Sundown Towns*, 162.

31. Ruby Berkley Goodwin, *It's Good To Be Black* (Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1953), 174–75.

32. Loewen, *Sundown Towns*, 162, 482–54; Angle, *Bloody Williamson*, 128–30; Kalisch, "Death Down Below," 8–9.

33. Hensen, "History of Franklin County," 78.

34. Loewen, *Sundown Towns*, 158, 161.

35. Thomas Mackaman, "The Foreign Element: New Immigrants and American Industry, 1914–1924" (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 2009), 228.

36. Booth, "The Relationship between Radicalism and Ethnicity," 262.

37. For works on the national revival of the Klan and the development of their ideology, see Thomas R. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011); Rory McVeigh, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right Wing Movements and National Politics* (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009); Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). For local accounts of Klan communities, Klan middle-class membership, and Klan rolls, see MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 1994; Masatomo Ayabe, "Ku Kluxers in a Coal Mining Community: A Study of the Ku Klux Klan Movement in Williamson County, Illinois, 1923–1926," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 102, no. 1 (2009); Craig Fox, *Everyday Klansfolk: White Protestant Life and the KKK in 1920s Michigan* (Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2011).

38. Angle, *Bloody Williamson,* 144–48.

39. Hensen, "History of Franklin County," 79–80.

40. "Big Klan Meeting Near Christopher," *The Zeigler Item*, September 13, 1923; "K.K.K. Meet Held at Sesser Last Saturday," *The Zeigler Item*, October 11, 1923; "Ku Klux Cross Burns in Zeigler," *The Zeigler Item*, July 31, 1924; "Klan Holds Another Meeting," *The Zeigler Item*, August 7, 1924.

41. "Murphy Smith Responds to Prudent's Empty Attack," *The Zeigler Item*, March 5, 1925; "Murphy Smith Elected by Majority of 55 over Fred Hall," *The Zeigler Item*, April 23, 1925.

42. Thurber Lewis, "The Frame-Up of the Zeigler Miners," *The Labor Defender* 1, no. 1 (1926), 5, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/labordefender/1926/v01n01-jan-1926-LD.pdf; Supreme Court of Illinois, "Case Files," Record Series 901.001, Illinois State Archives, File Number 43171, District Court Transcript, 312.

43. "Zeigler Mine Trials Will Start Tuesday," *The Daily Independent*, February 1, 1926, 1.

44. William Z. Foster, *From Bryan to Stalin* (New York: International Publishers, 1937), 169.

45. The paper existed as *The Worker* prior to 1924, itself a successor to *The Toiler*, but this edition was its first as a daily newspaper, prompting the change to *The Daily Worker*. All editions of *The Daily Worker* cited in this article came from the Marxists Internet Archive and can be found at https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/dailyworker/1924/index.htm. "Birthday Greetings to 'The Daily Worker,'" *The Daily Worker*, January 13, 1924, 4–5, 10; "Jugo-Slav Branch No. 7," *The Daily Worker*, January 13, 1924, 5; Supreme Court of Illinois, "Case Files," Record Series 901.001,

Illinois State Archives, File Number 43171, District Court Transcript, 640.

46. Karl Reeve, "Militant Miners Opposing Lewis, Murray, Green," *The Daily Worker*, August 26, 1924, 1.

47. Karl Reeve, "Defeat K.K.K. Disruption in Zeigler, Ill," *The Daily Worker*, August 26, 1924, 3.

48. Markwell, "'The Best Organized Labor State in America,'" 121.

49. Mackaman, "The Foreign Element," 88, 233–34.

50. Slaughter was also the president of Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees No. 508 of Roanoke, Virginia, and an assistant cashier for the Norfolk and Western Railroad Co. This letter was originally published as part of the *Samuel Gompers Letter Books* series, but it has since been digitized as part of the Samuel Gompers Papers Project. TLpS, reel 270, vol. 283, p. 535, SG Letterbooks, DLC, www.gompers.umd.edu/KKKtr.htm.

51. American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington D.C.: Law Reporter Printing Company, 1921, 281); American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington D.C.: Law Reporter Printing Company, 1922, 343–44).

52. Ayabe, "Ku Kluxers in a Coal Mining Community," 81–83.

53. Staley, *History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor*, 313.

54. Karl Reeve, "Reaction Rules Illinois Convention," *The Labor Herald* III, no. 8 (1924): 246, https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/laborherald/v3n08-oct-1924.pdf.

55. Thomas Wren, "Illinois F. of L. Plans Council for Unemployed," 1924; Thomas Wren, "Illinois F. of. L. Assails Defense on Eve of Test," *The Chicago Tribune,* September 12, 1924.

56. Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings: Forty-second Annual Convention*, 327. The September 9 edition of the *Carbondale Free Press* also printed a slightly abbreviated version of these resolutions, *Carbondale Free Press*, September 9, 1924, 1.

57. Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings: Forty-Second Annual Convention*, 327–329.

58. Karl Reeve, "Charge Labor Heads Sought to Shield Klan," *The Daily Worker*, September 13, 1924, 1.

59. Staley, *History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor*, 404, 337–38.

60. Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings: Forty-Second Annual Convention*, 329–30.

61. "Miners Start Fight on K.K.K. in Convention," *Alton Evening Telegraph*, September 9, 1924, 1.

62. Thomas Wren, "Illinois F. of L. Plans Council for Unemployed," 1924; Thomas Wren, "Illinois F. of. L. Assails Defense on Eve of Test," 1924.

63. Karl Reeve, "Olander and Farrington Join Forces in Defense of the Ku Klux Klan, Coal Miners Show," *The Daily Worker*, September 15, 1924, 2.

64"Dark Future for Illinois Miners," *The Chicago Tribune,* September 11, 1924.

65. . Staley, *History of the Illinois State Federation of Labor*, 337–38.

66. Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings: Forty-Second Annual Convention*, 423.

67. Reeve, "Reaction Rules Illinois Convention," *The Labor Herald* (October, 1924), 247.

68. Schmack, "Rural Radicalism," 2015.

The Elysian Market: The Moral Rhetoric of Northern Silk

John Stromski

When the United States House of Representatives proposed a formal resolution in 1825 to "inquire whether the cultivation of the mulberry tree, and the breeding of silk worms, for the purpose of producing silk, be a subject worthy of Legislative attention," it did so in hopes of establishing within the United States production of a commodity that had hereto been provided almost entirely by foreign suppliers.[1] The value of silk imports, from 1821 to 1825, was estimated at $35,156,494, a lucrative investment opportunity that prompted Congress's Resolution.[2] For several years, Congress debated whether legislative action should be taken to encourage the cultivation of silk, though a bill was never passed. Throughout the 1830s and into the early 1840s though, state governments and many Americans, especially in the North, saw in silk the prospect for more than just financial gain. Advocates of northern sericulture saw a potential way to minimize complicity with the slavery-driven cotton economy.

As historians point out, silk never became as lucrative a market as Congress had hoped; it registers as only a blip, a speculative bubble, in the history of northern agriculture and investment.[3] The primary contribution to the bursting of this bubble, historians Paul Gates and Marjorie Senechal note, was that silk advocates enflamed the "multicaulis mania" by driving up the prices of trees they themselves were selling, promoting the profitability of silk only to increase their own sales.[4] During the height of "the silkworm craze," speculation for *Morus multicaulis*, a newly discovered genus of mulberry tree that

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provides the leaves that silkworms feed on, drastically increased tree prices, and when blight in the early 1840s destroyed most of *Morus* trees, economic interest in silk largely came to an end.[5] However, as Senechal notes, "The sericulture dream did not burst with the bubble."[6] Similar to other forms of consumer activism within the antebellum era (such as the northern free produce movement and the southern non-intercourse movement), the idealism of silk that captivated its producers effected a broader reconsideration of the ethics of market participation.[7] Silk's effect on the northern market was hardly economic. Rather, I argue that the cultural work of the silk movement promoted economic and ethical independence from cotton, imagining a market-based means for supporting abolitionism.

The dual influence of ethics and economics on northern interest in silk can be seen in the Massachusetts State House of Representatives in 1844, when a Mr. Wright, representing Concord, described how silk presented an opportunity to relinquish the state's reliance on slave-grown cotton: "Our cotton manufacturer are dependant [sic] on the south for their raw materials; silk would be our own, and states like individuals, cannot be too careful to secure within themselves, means for their prosperity and greatness."[8] Tying the growth of silk to the pursuit of "prosperity and greatness," Wright views silk as economically liberating. Many northern advocates of the trade held a similar view toward sick: that it held the possibilty of transforming northern sentiments into a fully realized—and profitable—state. Indeed, discussions on the benefits of sericulture almost always rely on a sense of futurity to make their case, a vision that often could be described as utopian.

As sericulture began to be associated with a variety of reform groups (taken up in abolitionist periodicals like *The Liberator*, by the utopian-reform community the Northampton Association, and in the African American periodical *The Colored American*), it came to be viewed by many northerners as having the potential to provide an economic solution to a moral problem. In that regard, the rhetoric employed in periodical debates over the merits of sericulture reveals the silk debate functioning as a microcosm of larger sectional debates over slavery, capitalism, and ethics. At the intersection of northern agrarianism and idealism, the northern silk movement sought to counteract the South's attempt at economic independence post-1837 by positing a more ethical, anti-slavery economy.[9]

In this article, I discuss how advocates for the silk industry during the 1830s and 1840s, as well as northern reform communities, such as the Northampton Association, used silk to conceptualize an independent market wherein the value of labor and goods would be subject to new ethical standards, ones that certainly borrowed from free labor idealism of the time but that silk advocates portrayed as decidedly *northern*. Such a dynamic represents a desire to hold the marketplace ethically responsible to labor, demonstrating a belief that slavery could be effectively ended through full reliance on or usage of the market mechanism. I locate this belief as evidenced by congressional (both state and

federal) attempts to foster agricultural independence in the North through the growth of silk and statewide attempts to purify the northern economy of its relation to slave labor.

Thanks in large part to the work of historians such as Edward Baptist, Sven Beckert, and Walter Johnson, the scholarly discussion on the development of antebellum capitalism has rightly turned to the extraordinary influence of the growth, distribution, and trade of cotton.[10] The materials I discuss throughout this article—poems, journals, periodicals, society minutes, and literary essays—point to an alternative development of capitalism, one that never established a lasting foothold in the market but that nevertheless influenced the ways one section of the country began examining and questioning their relationship to their own labor, to the economy, and to slavery. After the Panic of 1837, some groups of northerners were questioning the financial and ethical cost of their continued entanglement with the cotton economy, and the northern silk movement provides one way to explore this question. To be clear, the silk movement was driven primarily by greedy businessmen and shady business practices, but the way they were able to sustain this movement was by tapping into a very real question that various sectors of the northern economy were asking themselves post-1837, namely, how to build an economy that more closely matched a distinct set of northern values, values not being shared by the South.

In its desire to reform market relationships, rhetoric surrounding the silk movement borrows from antebellum debates over free and slave labor, both North and South. Silk was certainly not the only medium for conversation over how to distance northern and southern economies or the influence of slavery on the northern marketplace. Lawrence Glickman shows in *Buying Power* that such a concern was foundational to the free produce movement of the antebellum North; Eric Foner, in *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, analyzes how such a concern was a cornerstone in formulating the identity of the white laboring class, and a wide array of antebellum periodicals, from *The Liberator* to *The Lowell Offering*, similarly note and express concern over slavery's influence on and presence within the northern economy.[11] Silk differs from these discussions in that silk advocates were less concerned with establishing a labor or class identity but rather promoted a sectional identity that could be adapted to fit bodies that were not yet a part of the market economy. Women, children, the elderly, the formerly enslaved, the disabled—advocates of northern sericulture imagined all to be united by their shared sense of "northernness," and with that came a certain set of rights and responsibilities.

The New Northern Agrarianism

The introduction of *Morus multicaulis* commenced what John Clarke called the third epoch of sericulture's history in the United States.[12] Centralized largely in the northern states, Clarke believed this new epoch would herald an era of success for silk cultivation, citing "evidence" that *Morus multicaulis* al-

lowed "two crops of silk [to] be raised in a single season."[13] In an article for the *Journal of the American Silk Society* (*JASSRE*), Gideon B. Smith claims that such rapid growth particularly suited the American market: "It grows so rapidly that we can plant it this spring, and get a crop of silk from it this *summer!* Is this an objection to an American? Is not the speedy return of the proceeds of an investment the greatest recommendation that the investment of capital can have?"[14] Smith's parallel of *multicaulis*'s growth and use to the returns on capital investment speaks to a question routinely posed about *multicaulis*: if the tree is so great, why is it not grown in other countries, and why was it not being talked up to the same degree in other parts of America?

Like Smith, other advocates routinely touted the mulberry's ability to grow anywhere in the Union, a new crop suitable for a new nation. Arguments for why silk should be grown in America employed a mixture of fantasy about America's agricultural prosperity and recognition of the poor quality of farmland along the northern Atlantic states. While pamphlets and magazines are replete with discussions about what makes America particularly suitable to growth of the mulberry tree, America was routinely contrasted to old Europe and China, the latter historically leading the silk trade in both quantity and quality. But it was just this sense of history that advocates of American sericulture sought to take advantage of, arguing that the newness of America's land allowed farmers to take advantage of *multicaulis*'s newness. "Silk could be made from the *morus multicaulis* in almost every section of the Union," Smith explains. "We have no prejudices to contend with, no old orchards of other trees to get clear of, no bad habits to eradicate, as in Europe."[15] To Smith, "The reason is obvious" why *Morus multicaulis* is not used in Europe because "they have their old overgrown white mulberry trees to dig up and throw away."[16]

Silk was especially attractive to farmers in the northern states at this time, faced with northern agriculture expanding further into the Midwest and with increased competition with southern cotton due to the cotton boom of the 1830s. Indeed, much of the farmland in the Northeast was losing its practicability for the individual skilled in husbandry. Apart from being unable to compete with the lower prices and larger acreage of farmland out West, northeastern farmland could not compete with the fertility of the Ohio River valley. Historians Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman explain that "with few exceptions, suitable farmlands did not exist in the East by this time."[17] All of this led to "a distorted picture of the Northeast" with its "thin, unproductive soil covered with rocks and boulders, its steep and rugged slopes . . . its long, harsh winters . . . its early frosts and short growing season, its nagging women, fretting children, tight-fisted and hard-hearted farmers, and shrewd storekeepers ever ready to cheat the unwary."[18] Such caricatures of northern farmland made silk an especially attractive crop, as advocates envisioned its ability to revitalize the northern landscape. Indeed, sericulture promised to resurrect northern agrarianism both economically and conscientiously.

Although advocates routinely touted silk's ability to be grown "anywhere in the Union," the rhetoric used to explain how to grow the mulberry at times seemed to be uniquely targeted toward northern farmers. For example, besides the caricature Gates provides above, he also gives an example from the Little Rock *Arkansas Gazette* that describes the North thus:

> Such barren lands, such rocks and sands,
> And then, good Lord! So hilly.[19]

It just so happens, regularly claimed *JASSRE*, that rocky, sandy, and hilly lands provide the very best growing conditions for *Morus multicaulis*.[20] The journal would at times specifically target the cultural and economic conditions surrounding northern agriculture, linking *Morus multicaulis* with the promise of economic and domestic revitalization. "There is still another view of this subject which is of great importance," claimed "An Address to the People of the United States" in the inaugural 1839 issue of *JASSRE*:

> In all of these [the Atlantic states] we find large quantities of land, either naturally poor, or so reduced by culture as to yield no profit to the cultivator. The consequence is, that the people of these states are rapidly emigrating to the more fertile regions of the west to seek a subsistence for themselves and their families. . . . Now it fortunately happens, that poor, sandy, and almost worn-out lands yield the very best of silk; and although the quantity will not be so large as from more fertile lands, the profits will be such as to leave no inducement to the inhabitants to leave the homes of their fathers.[21]

The article quickly assuages the concerns facing northern agriculturalists: the reduction in available land, the westward emigration of farmers and family members, and the condition of the land quality left in the North. Gideon Smith regularly touted *Morus* as the ideal crop for depreciated northern soil: "Sandy soils and high situations are always to be selected, if possible. The soil can scarcely be too sandy. Indeed the finest trees the writer ever saw, grew in a soil too sandy for any other crop."[22] Cultivating the mulberry in such conditions is conducive not only to the growth of the plant but also to the quality of the resulting silk, as the article "Mulberry and Sugar Beet" asserts: "The mulberry will grow on high, stony, sandy, and comparatively barren land; and although the poverty of the soil may decrease the quantity of foliage, it will improve the quality, and add fineness and beauty to the silk."[23] While Atack and Bateman describe how many northern farmers were increasingly diversifying their products to increase their profits, which in turn "produced higher income levels but demanded more work from the farmer," *Morus multicaulis* waded into this conversation as well, promising very little time and labor while simultaneously

revitalizing the soil.[24] Indeed, "Mulberry and Sugar Beet" promises sericulture "would introduce to the farmer new and valuable, and . . . profitable productions; which, in rotation with other crops, would have a doubly beneficial effect on our agricultural interests. It would improve our lands, increase the amount of productive industry, and condense, improve, and enrich our population."[25] However much the crop itself might restore fertility to the land, advocates of silk would frequently make clear that such changes would be brought about only if accompanied by a particularly northern ethos.

The Character of New England

The American Silk Society saw the potential to monopolize the silk trade and become exceedingly rich, though more frequently these financial gains were passed off as benefits to the American worker, who would be given "active employment" that would provide both financial and spiritual rewards.[26] Frequently in articles on silk that extolled the value of sericulture for workers, though, the benefits to the laborer are linked with a sectionalist ethos: the cultivation of silk brings increased utility and personal development to the unemployed in northern articulations of the debate, while in southern arguments, silk allows for increases to the labor and profits from slaves. With this sectionalist divide, northern special interest groups such as the American Silk Society promoted more ethereal, spiritual benefits that would be provided to the northern laborer, most notably a distancing from slavery. For example, Phillip Physick, a northerner, states in an editorial in *JASSRE* the ease with which the silk business, "in all its branches," can allow "men and women, boys and girls, young and old, the crippled and infirm, high and low, . . . [to become] actively and profitably employed, without causing a blush to mantle on the cheek of any."[27] As another article put it, the result of this equalization of employment opportunities would mean that "the whole community would be benefited by the services and labours of all such, and an impetus be given to the advancement of morals and intelligence."[28] The "advancement of morals and intelligence" was not an isolated or minor thread in this discussion, becoming a focal point in a formal resolution of the Executive Committee of the American Silk Society. At their annual convention in 1838, the Executive Committee declared that

> there are no occupations that promise more to ameliorate the moral and physical condition of a large portion of our population, and to elevate them in the scale of intellectual and moral worth, than those involved in the culture of silk. Poor children, indigent females, the lame and infirm of both sexes, and all ages, will find in this branch of industry employment lucrative, health and moral.[29]

Of course, the moralism that accompanied the proposed elevation of workers through agrarian labor is a common trope throughout the antebellum era in the North, a staple of free labor idealism. But the silk movement nicely illustrates a specifically *northern* form of moralism.

Take, for example, a more direct comparison between two competing arguments published in *JASSRE* on why to help two groups of "helpless" laborers who are unable to successfully contribute to agrarian production: the first group northern whites and the second southern slaves.

Example 1: "The Humbug" (1839)

> We shall behold a large helpless class of the community, that now can scarcely earn twenty cents a day with their needles, and upon which pittance they must live,—*live* did we say? no, endure life,—from which pittance they must pay house-rent, and support—or sustain life in half a dozen helpless little ones—these we shall see comfortably providing for themselves and families by making silk. Our worn-out old fields and waste lands, will then be covered with mulberry orchards, and dotted with the comfortable cottages and cocooneries of silk growers.[30]

In Gideon B. Smith's example, the landscape itself is transformed, revitalized, and repurposed toward the growth of silk, a utopian vision of a restored countryside leading to economic success and independence. The profits from such a venture affect not only the individual laborers, formerly "helpless" and struggling to "endure life" but now "comfortably providing for themselves and families," but also the entire North, collectively on the move to become economically prosperous and independent. The utopian vision that Smith presents is contrasted by the wealthy capitalist of the southern plantation in the second example.

Example 2: "Address of Rev. D. V. McLean, of New Jersey" (1839)

> On all the plantations of the south, too, there are undoubtedly many—children, aged, and infirm slaves, and *mothers*—who are of little or no value to their owners in the production of sugar and cotton. . . .
>
> Now, if these could be furnished with an employment by which they could simply support themselves, what a vast saving it would be to the planter? But how much more would his interest be promoted, if it is demonstrated that the labour of such a class, when applied to silk, is even more profitable than the labour of the most athletic field hands.[31]

For McLean, there are no "helpless" laborers, only slaves "of little or no value to their owners," conforming to the myth of what historian Jonathan Glickstein in *American Exceptionalism, American Anxiety*, terms economic exceptionalism. "Economic exceptionalism" describes a situation in which antebellum "disagreements as to the prevalence, and the relative efficacy and morality, of such [negative work] incentives coexisted with a mythology of American exceptionalism that alternatively extolled the salience and the benefits (both economic and therapeutic) of more exclusively positive labor incentives (e.g., the hope of improvement commonly held to animate northern wage laborers)."[32] In other words, the same labor that provides a moralist incentive of personal responsibilty and social ascension for the nothern "helpless" laborers is denied to the southern slave. The labor of slave is denied and redirected toward the capitalist slaveholder's profits. Indeed, the key comparison between advocacy for northern and southern sericulture is the moral versus monetary profits gained from cultivating silk.

According to some northern advocates and practitioners of sericulture, these moral benefits had the potential to extend beyond the individual laborer, as this labor was imagined to be a practical means of aiding the abolitionist cause. In William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist periodical *The Liberator*, an editorial titled "Silk Culture at the South" seriously considers the potential economic windfall that a national commitment to sericulture would create. Considering the possibility of the South deciding to partake in the trade and potentially overtaking the North in silk production, *The Liberator*'s response was simply "Speed it On."[33] Reprinted in *The Liberator* from the like-minded antislavery *The Emancipator*, the editorial argues that the growth of silk in the South would do more to abolish slavery than other forms of northern influence, as silk brought with it not merely economic capital but moral capital as well, which would far outweigh any diminished monetary profits in the North.

In a somewhat logically dubious passage, the antislavery editorial continues to predict that the futurity of the South's involvement in the business—that they "will surely engross" it—will further foster the mental and spiritual development of the slave. Considering the South's potential interest in silk, the passage tells how

> our southern exchange papers boast a good deal against the plans for silk culture at the North, and say the South will surely engross the business. Let them. One effect of it will be, to increase the intelligence of the slaves. Another will be to remove many poor women slaves from the crushing toils of the cotton field. . . . Speed it on.[34]

Despite the continuation of forced labor only redirected away from cotton and toward silk, such redirection, the editorial believed, would more closely align

slave laborers with the principles of free labor, eliciting free labor's intellectual and spiritual benefits.

The Liberator's own article, "Light in the South," presented sericulture in the South not only as a means of personal empowerment but also as a more effective substitute for abolitionism:

> A slaveholder told me the other day . . . that he *believed it* [silk culture] *would undermine the whole slave system* . . . and I trust you and I may see the day that the accursed thing is done away—for already *you are beginning to make us believe that it* SHOULD *be done, and* WILL *be done, but we had rather it would be brought about by silk than northern interference*.[35]

What makes silk so attractive to the abolitionist cause is here expressed as its ability to materialize an ethical stance disassociated from sectional politics; free from "northern interference," the ethics attendant to sericultural labor will manifest themselves. "Two great staples of the United States of North America," mused John Clarke in his 1839 *A Treatise on the Mulberry Tree and Silkworm and on the Production and Manufacture of Silk*, "are now in our diorama—*Cotton* and *Silk;* but which is to become the greater, is the question . . . of the two, cotton or silk, the latter eventually is to become the greater, the more important staple of this country."[36] Clarke's prediction shows the ways the idealism that northerners applied to sericulture could be transferred into practical means, an economic power reflective of northern ethics. As the northern abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* framed it, those practical means would become evidenced not by the profits stemming from sericulture but rather by the ethical strides its cultivation preceded, namely the abolition of slavery.

Silk eventually overtaking the profitability of cotton was, advocates of the industry claimed, inevitable. Besides the "ample testimony" that interest in silk was "steadily advancing with an increasing rapidity such that it was evident that it would soon have to dispute with every other staple within the limits of the Union," the articles published in *JASSRE* routinely viewed silk as filling an increasing void left by cotton.[37] One such article, republished from *The Knoxville Register*, states, "We look forward with confidence to the time, not far distant either, when silk will become one of our most profitable staples. As our cotton districts are fast moving south, we believe the culture of silk may and will be profitably introduced to supply the place of that article."[38] The prospect of the economic gains of silk usurping those of cotton are echoed in an article on the Chinese mulberry in 1834, quoting "an intelligent and enterprising gentleman in Northampton" as saying that "the time is not far distant, when New England will produce Silk equal in value to the Cotton of the South."[39] Besides the differences in labor between silk and cotton, here silk is defined as a staple crop explicitly competing with cotton for agricultural dominance. Cotton is depict-

ed as an "uncertain paymaster" whose area of growth is being pushed farther south, and silk had the potential to fill the voids cotton was leaving, promoting a distinct set of ethics that would ultimately prove more effective than the efforts of abolitionists.

Northern advocates of sericulture believed that if silk were to usurp cotton as the main cash crop of the United States, then the practices specific to the cultivation of silk would in turn instigate the abolition of slavery.[40] The best way to encourage abolitionism while profiting from silk was, as an editorial in *JASSRE* pointed out, to unify the moral qualities of the northerner with sericulture. "The Spread of the Culture of Silk," an 1839 editorial, specifically addresses sectional differences regarding silk cultivation, positing that the way to reconcile those differences lay not in the spread of the system of free labor but rather in the *character* of New England laborers:

> Were we called on to designate the portion of the United States where the business of growing silk may be most profitably pursued, in association with, or in substitution of other productions, we should probably include that portion of the slave-holding cotton region. . . . We say most probably these, because it would only be to transfer the labor which is there, from non-paying cotton growing to silk culture. The labour which is adapted to one is precisely adapted to the other, needing, however, nicer attention and management. Were it possible for the planters . . . to unite with natural advantages and slave labour the *exact habits* of the New England man, they would in silk making, beat the world.[41]

Silk promises financial prosperity to the South only if the region can change the ways they treat their laborers, to be more like the "New England man." Such changes not only would profit the South monetarily, as it would monopolize the world market—so the logic ran—but also would be regionally advantageous, enabling the South to hold another staple crop over the North and thus able to "beat the world." What differed between northern and southern sericulture were not the steps necessary to cultivate silk but rather the "*exact habits*" of the laborers. These "habits" could be found, as Emerson claims in his 1858 address "Farming," within the farmer: "If it be true," Emerson writes, that "slaves are driven out of a slave State as fast as it is surrounded by free States, then the true abolitionist is the farmer, who, heedless of laws and constitutions, stands all day in the field, investing his labor in the land, and making a product with which no forced labor can compete."[42] Within the North, cultivation of silk furthered the abolitionist cause not only by decreasing the demand for southern cotton but also by spreading the habits of the northern abolitionist.

While interest in silk cultivation did not really take off until near the end of the 1830s (after cotton had emerged as a major export and after the establish-

ment of northern textile mills in the 1820s), an early fable from Lydia Maria Child shows the ways in which silk's association with sectional politics was cultivated in times of national economic turmoil. In her "Fable of the Caterpillar and Silk-Worm" (1832), Child uses three different silk-producing insects as allegories for the varying profits gained from silk cultivation, profits seen by Child to be directly proportional to the character of the laborer.

The fable tells the story of three different insects: Spider, Caterpillar, and Silk-Worm. Caterpillar and Spider begin with a conversation about their new neighbor, Silk-Worm, belittling the speed and quality of her silk until a "gentleman" shows up to defend the Silk-Worm. Although all three of the insects produce silk, the Silk-Worm is clearly the newest participant in this manufactory, Spider inquiring of Caterpillar, "What sort of a weaver is your neighbor, the Silk-Worm?"[43] While Caterpillar and Spider extol their silk, they critique their competitor, Silk-Worm, for her lack of production. Caterpillar and Spider make clear that they can create a vastly larger amount of raw material than Silk-Worm can: Caterpillar "can weave a web sixty times as quick," and Spider daily recreates a web unequaled by Silk-Worm.[44] Both of these creatures feel as if their raw materials are not valued or rewarded as properly as they should be, reminiscent of the southern sentiment that led to the 1832 Nullification Crisis, wherein South Carolina threatened to secede after the passage of an economic tariff they thought unfairly favored the North. Indeed, Caterpillar and Spider are united in their critique of the less productive Silk-Worm.

But as the gentleman explains, the critiques of these "foolish creatures," based on the speed, production, or quantity of the raw material, are missing the point; "rail not at productions, which ye cannot understand!" the gentleman tells Caterpillar and Spider.[45] Caterpillar "boast[s] of [her] *rapid* performances," but these performances "contain the eggs that will hereafter develop themselves, and destroy blossom and fruit," a concern sharing resemblance to the fears of slave insurrection that were sweeping the South in the wake of Nat Turner's recent 1831 Rebellion and the argument Child makes in *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833) that it is her "conviction that slavery causes insurrections, while emancipation prevents them."[46] Slave labor may mean more "*rapid*" production, but it elicits eventual violence. Spider's product, on the other hand, beautiful though it may be, is "broken by a dew-drop," demonstrating its low quality.[47] A similar critique would be further expanded by Child the following year, when she published *An Appeal*, wherein she claims that freedom brings with it increased investment by the worker in the quality of the labor so that "the slave does not care how slowly or carelessly he works; it is the free man's interest to do his business well and quickly. The slave is indifferent how many tools he spoils; the free man has a motive to be careful."[48] Indeed, the gentleman's critiques of Caterpillar and Spider, that they mass-produce inferior products that will eventually lead to negative repercussions, are similar to the antislavery stance Child developed throughout her life.

The gentleman instead praises the product of Silk-Worm, who, "like genius expiring in the intensity of its own fires, she clothes the world in the beauty she dies in creating."[49] The unknown "neighbor" to Caterpillar and Spider, Silk-Worm's productions may require further labor—she may not even live to see it, expiring "in the intensity of its own fires"—but the end result "clothes the world in beauty," beauty the Caterpillar and Spider are unable to provide in the long term.[50] The utopian close of Child's fable, a world "clothe[d] . . . in beauty," is prescient of the free labor rhetoric that would be used to promote silk cultivation and the ways silk became an object of fascination to utopian communities like the Northampton Association.

The Northampton Association was rather unusual as far as nineteenth-century reform communities go, a stark contrast to the pastoral images of other utopian communities, such as Brook Farm and Fruitlands. However, through its commitment to sericulture, the Northampton Association found they could both provide a forum for abolitionism and be financially profitable. In sericulture, the Northampton Association had found a way to sustain their idealism while ethically participating in the marketplace.

Whereas other utopian communities like Fruitlands conscientiously abstained from the use of cotton due to its relation to slave labor, Northampton profited from that abstention. Apart from what the founders of the Northampton Association perceived to be the profitability of silk, the crop held a particular appeal to the more utopian inclinations of the community. For the Northampton Association and other utopian communities, the simultaneous cultivation of a crop and the intellect provided the backbone for self-sustenance, and cultivating silk was touted as an especially easy way to do this, available to all. Silk was especially amenable to the association's labor reform aspirations, as Senechal explains that "from 1832 to 1846 silk was the object of utopian visions, first the industrial aspirations of a charismatic and unreliable businessman, Samuel Whitmarsh, then the industrial egalitarianism of a utopian community led by the idealistic and rigidly reliable Samual Lapham Hill;" what interested Whitmarsh and Hill was the commonly discussed belief that "sericulture is a lifeline for the poor," which could be used to establish more egalitarian labor systems.[51] This aspect of the association was perhaps its closest tie to Associationism, using the factory as the phalanx wherein a large number of community members lived and worked.[52] The devotion to silk is what truly distinguished this association from other utopian communities, though, as "to abolitionists, silk had a further virtue. Though not a substitute for textiles made from slave-grown cotton, it was a 'free' product, made without reliance on slavery. . . . The most optimistic projectors of the silk industry could envisage its future role in a Northern industrial economy freed from dependence on the products of slavery."[53] Within the walls of the silk manufactory at the Northampton Association, the reformers hoped to transform not only northern agriculture but also northern industry.

The Northampton Association's prominence as a utopian community often goes unnoticed by literary scholars today, as the community did not produce

many literary works. However, the community was an attraction to many northern antebellum intellectuals, including prominent literary figures, speakers, and Transcendentalists.[54] Dolly Stetson, a member of the community, describes in a letter to her husband how the community was visited by the "eloquent fugitive" Frederick Douglass for a talk, one of many speakers on slavery, and one of Douglass's two visits.[55] Sojourner Truth lived at the association for three years, during which time her *Narrative of Sojourner Truth, a Northern Slave, Emancipated from Bodily Servitude by the State of New York in 1828* was written. One of the community's founders and leaders, George Benson, was brother-in-law to William Lloyd Garrison, who spent a summer living there. Lydia Maria Child spent time living nearby in Northampton between 1838 and 1841.[56] And the prominent abolitionist David Ruggles, who memorably helped secure the escape passage of the fugitive slave Frederick Douglass, also spent a number of years residing in the community. But apart from the intellectual pursuits available, for Dolly Stetson the true appeal lay in that the community provided the best possible means of building and spreading her family's "moral power," unable to be cultivated elsewhere because the family did "not have the wealth and station to render [it] worthy of notice."[57] Stetson had written such to her husband, James Stetson, when he broached the idea of leaving the community. Only within the reformist community and through the cultivation of silk did Dolly Stetson believe her family could increase their chances of enacting practical reform, especially as it related to abolitionism.

The success that the Northampton Association found, brief as it was, lay in that it integrated the growth and factory production of silk "and so avoid[ed] the social divisions that were growing up between farms and factories in New England."[58] Members of the community saw their profits from sericulture in more than just monetary terms; the real profits of Northampton's silk labor lay in its reason for Associationism, the development and usage of what Stetson called "moral power." In silk, Stetson, like other northern advocates of sericulture, saw potential to profit from their moral, antislavery beliefs.

Silk's Secret Amelioration

To be certain, the silk business was still a business; not all parties involved shared the same sense of idealism, and some promoters surely took advantage of silk-lined idealism to increase their own personal revenue.[59] However, that silk was not solely the object of a few greedy businessmen looking to take advantage of others or of radical idealists is evidenced by the ways advocates spoke of silk when they did not have such staunch capitalist or idealist aspirations. Certainly, critiques of silk advocates and journals that helped enflame the "multicaulis mania" are warranted, but once the idealism they were proffering took hold, it exceeded the bounds of both their control and that of the market, extending beyond the burst of the silk bubble. For the editors of the New York *The Colored American*, a weekly African American magazine that ran

from 1837 to 1841, silk offered hopes of financial success and independence for black Americans living in the North.

The Colored American, Donald M. Jacobs explains, appeared at a time when "the concern for the well-being of one's brethren remained strong within the Black community."[60] As a whole, *The Colored American* desired to improve the social and civic participation of its northern black readers, often publishing pieces, especially in its early issues, meant to educate its readers on American and world history. These yearnings affected the publication's discussion on agriculture, often emphasizing the communal nature of the profession. Indeed, *The Colored American* routinely touted and praised the profession of farming for its readers, regularly claiming, "Farming is the policy for colored Americans" and "That farming is the best policy, and the best occupation for colored Americans, we have always thought, *and always* SAID."[61]

For all of the suggestions that farming be pursued by its readers, *The Colored American* did relatively little to provide any practical means of pursuing the trade, at times offering pieces of advice on the joys of gardening and what vegetables could be grown and at one point running a single brief article urging the growth of "Mr. Thorburn's 'Chinese Seed Corn.'"[62] However, three years into the run of the publication, after regular praise, advocacy, and encouragement for its readers to engage in farming, *The Colored American* began a ten-part series on how to properly grow and cultivate silk, its single greatest attempt to provide readers with practical advice in how to become farmers and establish financial independence. Before the first article in the series, the editors commented on why they were devoting such a lengthy run and large amount of space to articles on silk:

> We are giving on our 4th page and shall continue to give weekly, large extracts from the . . . approved works on the growing and manufacturing of silk. This, to us, appears to be a . . . important subject. The silk business, no doubt, for years to come will not only be a very useful but a very profitable business. It can be commenced and carried on, in all parts of the country, with very little capital.
>
> We know of no business, except if be market gardening, which so commends itself to the situation and means of colored men. Its simplicity, its easy progress in extension, its manage— . . . by females, children and aged infirmity, . . . its saleableness all, all, commend themselves . . . our notice and experiment.
>
> We hope our people, as many as have it in their power, and have not a better business, will take hold of this subject. Brethren let us no longer be behind others in our enterprise

> and . . . God has made us equal, mentally and physically, to any other race of men. — Let us practically demonstrate the fact.[63]

In this rationale, the futurity of the silk trade parallels the future of the African American race. The ability of silk to be grown anywhere in the country—which other advocates had similarly praised—here is made to parallel the case for racial equality, as "God has made us equal, mentally and physically, to any other race of men"; just as silk can be cultivated anywhere in the country, so can it be cultivated by anyone. That the "silk business, no doubt, for years to come will not only be a very useful but a very profitable business" provides the vehicle for African Americans to likewise demonstrate their usefulness within and membership of society, which had been presented as the true benefit of "agricultural pursuits," allowing them to "practically demonstrate the fact" that "God has made us equal."

After the last article in the silk series was published, the paper ran a small piece commenting on the extracts. The article starts with employing the same fraternal language as that in the first article, using the words "brethren" and "our people." But whereas the cultivation of silk was previously described in terms of its relationship to the larger group, here in the closing remarks it is transformed into individual responsibility: "Who will remain poor and dependant when the road to wealth is so easy, and the labor required so inconsiderable?"[64] The larger group had worked to do its part—the paper had provided the extracts, which the editors hoped "have been filed by our brethren, and that they will be perused and reperused, until the simple method of producing one of the most important articles for profit in sale or beauty and durability in wear, is perfectly understood by them all"—but the remaining path to wealth lay in what the paper frames as the responsibility of individual empowerment. Although the profits of silk moved from the collective group to the individual, the ethics that silk developed flowed from the individual to the collective sectional community.[65] Growing silk required northern values, and once dependence on those northern values was proven to be profitable within the national market, so would the black race be empowered.

Even though sericulture never did outweigh the value of cotton, largely defeated in the early 1840s, it shows the ways in which the possibility of a new agricultural crop quickly became wrapped up in sectionalist debates over capitalism and slavery. Although cultivation of the crop did not necessitate the presence of a large slave labor force, the ways that the cultivation, utility, and profits of silk became split along sectional lines highlights not only cultural differences between the North and South in regard to the ethics of labor but also the ways capitalism was imagined differently throughout the antebellum era. The timing of the silk craze, in the years immediately following the Panic of 1837—the moment when the South was purposefully trying to distance itself from trade with the North, moving to monopolize the global cotton trade—

shows a divergence in the ways antebellum Americans conceptualized their relationship to capitalism: in the South, an emphasis on the profits for the owners of trade; in the North, a concern with each individual's means of economic development. Slavery not only affected economic development in these regions but also influenced the different ways each section imagined their relationship to the economy at large. As scholars on the history of American capitalism have shown, slavery impacted markets far beyond the southern plantation. What the discussions around antebellum silk show, though, is northerners trying to figure out how they can distance themselves from that market, to have not only an economy that is no longer responsible for or influenced by slavery but also a market that is more reflective of the "character" of the North, the imagined rights and ethics shared by the northern states through their prohibition of slave labor.

Notes

1. Richard Rush, *Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury*, *Transmitting the Information Required by a Resolution of the House of Representatives, of May 11, 1826, in Relation to the Growth and Manufacture of Silk, Adapted to the Different Parts of the Union* (Washington, DC: Gales & Seaton, 1828).

2. The 1825 Resolution compared silk to the diminishing value of American exports, particularly grains, which had in 1817 totaled "$20,374,000" and in 1825 brought in only "$5,417,997," a decrease of 376 percent (Rush, *Letter*).

3. Erika May Olbricht details how the possibility of silk revolutionizing the economy was a key point that silk advocates often made, dating back to the early seventeenth century. Historians of silk look at antebellum silk production as a wild and speculative fervor that had little positive benefit for investors, leading scholars to variously call it the "multicaulis fever" and "the silkworm craze" (Alfred T. Lilly, *The Silk Industry of the United States from 1766 to 1874* [Cambridge, MA: Press of John Wilson and Son, 1875], 8; Paul W. Gates, *The Farmer's Age: Agriculture; 1815–1860* [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston], 1960, 303). For more on early attempts of the Western silk industry, see Erika May Olbricht, "Made without Hands: The Representation of Labor in Early Modern Silkworm and Beekeeping Manuals." For a nineteenth-century history, see Lilly, *The Silk Industry of the United States from 1766 to 1874*. For a twentieth-century history, see Gates *The Farmer's Age*; Olbricht, "Made without Hands"; Eric C. Brown, ed., *Insect Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 223–41; and Lilly, *The Silk Industry of the United States from 1766 to 1874*.

4. Gates, *The Farmer's Age*; Marjorie Senechal, "Part One," in Jacqueline Field, Marjorie Senechal, and Madelyn Shaw, eds., *American Silk, 1830–1930: Entrepreneurs and Artifacts* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007), 3–85.

5. Specific dates for the collapse vary, though most scholars see the burst occurring in the early 1840s.

6. Senechal, "Part One," 30.

7. The silk movement has much in common with other forms of consumer activism of the antebellum era. For more on the history of consumer activism and the free produce and nonintercourse movements in particular, see Lawrence B. Glickman, *Buying Power: A History of Consumer Activism in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), esp. chap. 3.

8. "Silk Culture [1]," *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, March 23, 1844, 1 (*American Periodical Series Online*, accessed November 8, 2009).

9. For more on the influence of the Panic of 1837 on the development of southern capitalism, see Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), esp. chap. 10. For a great exploration of the ways the Panic of 1837 influenced literary discussions of cotton in the South, see Katie Burnett, *Cavaliers and Economists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2019).

10. See Edward Baptist, *The Half has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams*; and Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014).

11. Glickman, *Buying Power*; Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

12. These first of these epochs was from 1623 to 1783, the second from 1783 to 1830, and the third beginning after that. John Clarke, *A Treatise on the Mulberry Tree and Silkworm and on the Production and Manufacture of Silk* (Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co., 1839).

13. Ibid., 121. John Clarke was superintendent of the Morodendron Silk Company of Philadelphia.

14. *JASSRE* ran from 1839 to 1840 under the editorship of Gideon B. Smith. It should be noted that Smith, who was widely credited with the discovery of *Morus multicaulis*, was also engaged in the business of selling the tree. Although a large number of the articles throughout the periodical are Smith praising or defending sericulture and *Morus multicaulis*, the journal served as the official organ of the American Silk Society and printed minutes and details of the society's meetings. *JASSRE* also contains various articles and letters written by people whom Smith thought would help advocate the silk business. Gideon B. Smith, "The Morus Multicaulis," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 4 (1839): 146–48.

15. Gideon B. Smith, "Debates in the Silk Convention," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 1 (1839): 9–27.

16. Ibid.

17. Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman, *To Their Own Soil: Agriculture in the Antebellum North* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987).

18. Gates, *The Farmer's Age*, 23.

19. Ibid., 23n2.

20. In an uncanny similarity, Drew Swanson details how the growth of tobacco in the Piedmont region was often promoted in very similar ways. The similarities between silk and tobacco show how farmland along the Atlantic coast was frequently misused and often unable to compete with more profitable agricultural ventures farther West. Like silk, tobacco, too, promised a revitalization of unprofitable farmland. See Drew Swanson, *A Golden Weed: Tobacco and Environment in the Piedmont South* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

21. Gideon Smith, William Gibbons, and Samuel R. Gummere, "An Address to the People of the United States," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 1 (1839): 27–31.

22. Gideon B. Smith, "Cultivation of the Morus Multicaulis," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 3 (1839): 81–87.

23. "Mulberry and Sugar Beet," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 3 (1839): 105–7.

24. Atack and Bateman, *To Their Own Soil*, 10.

25. "Mulberry and Sugar Beet," 106.

26. "National Silk Convention," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 1 (1839): 1–5.

27. Philip Physick, "To Matthew Carey, Esq.," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 9 (1839): 303–7.

28. "Culture of Silk Furnishes Employment," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 11 (1839): 376.

29. "American Silk Society," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* no. 1 (1839): 6–7.

30. Gideon B. Smith, "The Humbug," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 10 (1839): 317–22.

31. D. V. McLean, "Address of Rev. D. V. McLean, of New Jersey, Before the American Silk Society, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, at Washington, Thursday evening, Dec. 12. 1839," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 12 (1839): 377–91.

32. Jonathan Glickstein, *American Exceptionalism, American Anxiety: Wages, Competition, and Degraded Labor in the Antebellum United States* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002).

33. "Silk Culture at the South," *The Liberator* 9, no. 30 (July 26, 1839): 120.

34. Ibid.

35. "Light in the South," *The Liberator* 9, no. 22 (May 31, 1839): 88.

36. Clarke, *A Treatise on the Mulberry Tree and Silkworm and on the Production and Manufacture of Silk*, 4–5.

37. Ibid., 121–22.

38. "The Spread of the Culture of Silk," *Journal of the American Silk Society and Rural Economist* 1, no. 1 (1839): 9–27.

39. "Article 2—No Title," *Maine Farmer and Journal of the Useful Arts*, September 26, 1834, 291 (*American Periodical Series Online*, accessed November 8, 2009).

40. For a parallel discussion on the how Afro-American culture throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries developed differently depending on the specific agricultural crops and practices being used, see Ira Berlin, "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America," *American Historical Review* 85, no. 1 (1980): 44–78.

41. "The Spread of the Culture of Silk," 87–88.

42. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Farming," in *Society and Solitude: Twelve Chapters* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 87. My reading of "Farming" builds on Stephanie Sarver's in *Uneven Land: Nature and Agriculture in American Writing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), where she claims that "'farming' is Emerson's attempt to apply his philosophy of nature to communal activities implicated in a social and economic complex" (17), showing the adaptability of farming in its New England context to a certain ethical philosophy.

43. Lydia Maria Child, "The Spider, Caterpillar, and Silk-Worm," in *The Coronal. A Collection of Miscellaneous Pieces, Written at Various Times* (Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1832), 181–82.

44. Ibid., 181.

45. Ibid., 182.

46. Ibid.; Lydia Maria Child, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, edited by Carolyn L. Karcher (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996).

47. Child, "The Spider, Caterpillar, and Silk-Worm," 182.

48. Child, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, 72–73.

49. Child, "The Spider, Caterpillar, and Silk-Worm," 182.

50. The Silk-Worm's death after the spinning of silk is a natural step in the life span of the silkworm, Senechal describing how by this point in time, the silkworm had been domesticated to the extent that "if their food didn't come to them, the worms would pine away and die. Even if the silkworm did spin a cocoon and was left to mature until it freed itself, the resulting moth would have ruined the silk in its process of escape, dying mere moments later. Senechal, "Part One," 33.

51. Ibid., 5, 27. Whitmarsh was responsible for the original Northampton Silk Company, which Hill and the other founders of the Northampton Association bought and repurposed for their community in 1841 after the company had declared bankruptcy.

52. Associationism, a related form of Fourierism, was a philosophy that influenced a large number of utopian communities throughout the antebellum era (including Brook Farm and Fruitlands). For more on Associationism, see Carl Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

53. Ibid., 143.

54. The Northampton Association occupies a rather unique position in its status as "utopian." Although not quite Transcendentalist and not quite Fourierist, the association was attractive to members representing both communities, as historian Marjorie Senechal tells how "Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, Samuel May, Wendell Phillips, and other sympathizers stopped by to see how the experiment was going" (Senechal, "Part One," 33). William Lloyd Garrison visited for part of a summer and regularly exchanged letters with Benson. As Christopher Clark puts it, the Northampton Association was part of a broader movement to create "practical utopias" (Christopher Clark, "'Real Community Letters': A Family, Its Correspondence, and a Utopian Community," in Christopher Clark and Kerry W. Buckley, eds., *Letters from an American Utopia: The Stetson Family and the Northampton Association, 1843–1847* [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004], 8). For more on the Northampton Association's status as a utopian community, see Christopher Clark, *The Communitarian Moment: The Radical Challenge of the Northampton Association* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 1–14.

55. Dolly W. Stetson, "Stetson Family Correspondence, 1843–1847," in Clark and Buckley, *Letters from an American Utopia*, 21–158.

56. Child's husband owned a nearby farm where he attempted to cultivate the sugar beet, a crop more directly espousing abolitionist causes. Child was not a member of the Northampton Association, though she did have many contacts there and helped procure a position for David Ruggles within. For more on Child and Northampton, see Clark, *The Communitarian Moment*, 51–52.

57. Stetson, "Stetson Family Correspondence, 1843–1847," 98.

58. Clark, *The Communitarian Moment*, 143.

59. The story of *Morus multicaulis* demonstrates this disjuncture particularly well. Gates and Clark argue that interest in sericulture was largely manufactured by speculation in *Morus multicaulis* from investors like Gideon B. Smith who were looking for quick and easy profits. Smith, a regular contributor to *JASSRE*, is often singled out as having especially stood to gain from the fervor over *multicaulis*, though he was just one of many contributors to journals "which published and republished short accounts of silkgrowing that were calculated to arouse the cupidity and interest of readers" (Gates, *The Farmer's Age*, 303). Through the efforts of advocates like Smith, the prices of the tree quickly and dramatically inflated, and despite their use as food for silkworms, there were many speculators and advocates for the trade who dealt almost exclusively in sales of *Morus multicaulis*, favoring direct monetary profits over the supposedly higher spiritual and moral profits from the cultivation of silkworms. When the tree was affected by a damaging and widespread blight in the early 1840s, there was a "sharp reduction in interest in the silk business" (306), and silk did not regain such a level of national interest until the end of the nineteenth century.

60. Donald M. Jacobs, *Antebellum Black Newspapers* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976).

61. "Important Subject," *The Colored American* 2, no. 4 (January 27, 1838): 3; "Husbandry," *The Colored American* 2, no. 6 (February 17, 1838): 3.

62. “Our highest ambition, in a pecuniary point of view, for our brethren, would be to see each family of them possessed of 200 acres of good land, in some healthy part of the United States, with good buildings and well stocked, and a plenty of ‘Mr. Thorburn’s “Chinese Seed Corn”’” (“Increase—Chinese Corn,” *The Colored American* 2, no. 34 [October 13, 1838]: 2).
63. “Silk Culture [1],” 1.
64. “Silk Culture [2],” *The Colored American* 3, no. 14 (June 1, 1839): 2.
65. Ibid., 3.

Innocent of Any Time: Modern Temporality and the Problem of Southern Poverty

David A. Davis

In 1936, James Agee and Walker Evans spent several weeks on special assignment for *Fortune* magazine observing three white sharecropping families in Alabama for an intended article about poverty in modern America. They exhaustively, intimately detailed the sharecroppers' lives, homes, and material possessions in text and pictures, developing a nuanced representation of how poverty affected the families. Their study was eventually published as *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, an experimental documentary that attempts to represent their perception of the sharecropping families. The original version of the sprawling 30,000-word article about the families was published as *Cotton Tenants: Three Families* in 2003, and this earlier draft of the text contains a footnote that illuminates the relationship between time as a force of modern capitalism and temporality as a component of the sharecroppers' lived experience. The comment reads, "Though each family has a lowprice alarmclock and as a rule keeps it wound and is respectful of it, the clock is almost invariably an hour or two fast or slow, and they are innocent of any time except the sun's."[1] This note reveals layers of variable temporal experience, juxtaposing the families' seemingly anachronistic cyclical temporality with modern linear temporality. It suggests that the families experience time differently from most other Americans, which invites us to wonder how and why their experience may be different and what the clock means to them.

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In the decades after the Civil War, advancing technologies of transportation, communication, production, finance, electrification, media, and timekeeping rapidly changed the conditions of daily life in the United States, compressing time and space and causing people to experience temporality in divergent ways. Agricultural communities tended to experience time according to organic celestial and seasonal rhythms, measuring work and life according to units of days and harvest cycles. Industries measured production according to discrete units of hours, minutes, and seconds, which required precise, mechanical measurements of time. By 1920, the majority of Americans lived in urban areas, and the majority of America's domestic product came from manufacturing, so most Americans shared an experience of time as mechanically measured, commodified, and detached from organic rhythms. This linear experience of time became normative in the United States by the first part of the twentieth century, because most Americans used clocks and watches, rather than the sun and moon, to organize their daily lives. Modern, mechanical temporality had a totalizing effect, and the traditional, agricultural experience of time, which had previously been normal, became deviant, signifying poverty and backwardness.

In literary representations of poor Southern farmers, cyclical temporality is one of many markers of the farmers' deviation from the American mainstream, along with other signs of primitivism, such as privies, mule-drawn plows, and kerosene lanterns. This essay explores two works of literature that illustrate poor Southern farmers' perception of time to draw some conclusions about temporal heterogeneity in modern America. These literary works dramatize the tension between diverging perceptions of temporality, which offers readers an opportunity to understand both the theoretical operation of time and the material experience of time. The representation of clocks and time in Evans and Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Richard Wright's short story "Long Black Song" demonstrates that the processes of modernization advanced unevenly, that differences in socially constructed temporality led modernist writers to emphasize the apartness of their subjects, and that poor Southerners had a complicated, commodity-based relationship with modern capitalism.

The Uneven Progress of Time

The notion of multiple competing experiences of time predates the emergence of temporal mechanization. Michael O'Malley explains in *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time* that in the American imagination, cyclical patterns of seasons and days, which suggest infinity, often contend with linear patterns of beginning and ending, which suggest finitude. Linear time aligns with ideas of progress, moving forward into an inevitable future, but cyclical time resists progress, maintaining repetitive stasis. These alternate concepts of time have created ideological tension historically. Thomas Jefferson, for example, valorized cyclical time as the natural rhythm of agriculture, but Alexander Hamilton advocated linear time as the measure of progress in manufacturing.[2]

Their competing visions reflect a running conflict regarding the ideology of progress through much of the nation's early history. Agrarians tend to regard linear time contemptuously, extolling cyclical time as God's ordained time, while industrialists view linear time as the measure of business and progress.[3] Clocks can signify both cyclical time, because of their circular faces, and linear time, because of their mechanical movements. However, they became strongly associated with linear time, because as mechanisms they required manufacturing and as tools they regulated the processes of industrialization.[4] Alexis McCrossen documents in *Marking Modern Times* that as the United States industrialized, mechanical linear time took precedence over organic cyclical time, and by the early twentieth century, clocks had become common symbols of modernity.[5]

Mechanical time governed the processes of modernization: factory workers made hourly wages, railroads ran on timetables, telegraphs and telephones sent messages over vast distances instantly, and watches and clocks became virtually ubiquitous. By the 1930s in America, the word *time* practically meant linear clock time. That does not mean, however, that technologies of modernization and linear temporality became universal in all places simultaneously. Agricultural regions of the United States, particularly the Southern United States, continued to adhere to cyclical time, measuring time's passage more often in seasons with almanacs than in hours with clocks. The normalization of linear time, which was part and parcel of America's rapid urbanization and industrialization, made most of the nation's rural, agricultural areas—most of the nation's physical geography—anachronistic.[6] Farmers were not unaffected by mechanical time, but the task-oriented methods of harvesting and planting required significantly less concern about hours and minutes than the process-oriented methods of manufacturing. Clocks did play an important role in the Southern United States in the early twentieth century, particularly in those sectors of the rural social structure that interfaced with manufacturing and finance. Bankers, merchants, cotton factors, and large planters needed to be keenly aware of linear time, but small farmers, particularly sharecroppers and laborers, who made up the majority of the region's agricultural workforce, were less dependent on linear time. Farmers followed the seasons, sharecroppers signed annual contracts based on crop cycles, and day laborers were paid based on production, not hours. They worked, as the expression goes, "from can see to can't."

This temporal discontinuity demonstrates the central point that Barbara Adam makes in *Timewatch:* "There is no single time, only a multitude of times which interpenetrate and permeate our daily lives."[7] Temporality, as Valerie Rohy explains in her entry "Time" in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, is a social construction that is subject to political and economic considerations, and it intersects with other forms of social construction that influence identity, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and geography.[8] In effect, each person has a distinct experience of time that reflects that person's social positionality.

These individual perceptions mesh together to form a collective experience of temporality to establish what Homi Bhabha describes as nation time. He notes, however, that within the constituent elements are numerous points of conflict. "The problematic boundaries of modernity are enacted in these ambivalent temporalities of the nation-space," he writes. "The language of culture and community is poised on the fissures of the present becoming the rhetorical figures of a national past."[9] Southern rural poverty, I argue, creates one of these temporal fissures where we can examine the dynamics of temporality. Poverty appears to foreclose the figures in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and "Long Black Song" from participating in the same experience of temporality as their modern observers, which suggests that they are a spatial anachronism. However, as we will see, the sense of anachronism is a function of the modern observer projecting normative temporality onto the poor subject. What appears to be an anachronism proves to be a function of economic privilege.

The inconsistent usage of mechanical time in the South reflects the uneven process of modernization. In *Mastered by the Clock*, Mark Smith explains that antebellum plantation owners embraced industrial capitalism by adopting mechanical clock time to manage slave labor and increase production.[10] Emancipation effectively ended the use of industrial-style work gangs, however, and the plantation system devolved into sharecropping, or the leasing of small plots of land to families in exploitive labor arrangements, which slowed the region's economic progress for the next several decades, so most Southerners adhered to cyclical time. "The emergence of new forms of cotton-growing labor in the United States was, in the wake of the emancipation of the world's preeminent cotton growers, the single most important change within the empire of cotton," Sven Beckert writes.[11] As the mode of cotton-growing labor adapted to postemancipation conditions with new means of exploitation, other elements of the cotton economy continued to modernize. In the absence of large-scale industrial systems, the South's most significant engagement with modern temporality involved railroads, which transported cotton and other commodities, and textile mills, which had their own impacts on temporality. Before railroads connected distant cities, every community set its time arbitrarily, so noon in one place might be 11:30 a.m. in the neighboring community. On November 18, 1883, the day of two noons, times were functionally standardized nationwide, illustrating one of the obvious examples of capitalist time-space compression.[12] Meanwhile, textile mills developed in the Southern piedmont near the end of the nineteenth century, and they operated as self-contained factory villages regulated with whistles to mark the beginning and end of the workday and paid with subsistence wages based on hours worked. Beyond these interventions, however, the South remained mostly rural and agricultural well into the twentieth century, so Southerners had less need to conform to linear time. The region's delayed development led President Franklin D. Roosevelt to label the South "America's number one economic problem" in 1938.[13]

That same year, Wright published *Uncle Tom's Children*, a collection of stories about black life in the South that includes the story "Long Black Song." In the story, a white salesman visits the cabin of Silas and Sarah, intending to sell them a graphophone with a clock built into the case. They already have a clock, a broken eight-day clock that their small daughter uses as a plaything—her banging on the clock punctuates the story—but they do not use mechanical time, which confounds the salesman. He asks how they keep time, how they know when to get up in the morning and when it's night. Sarah answers him, "Mistah, we don need no clock," and he responds, "Well, this beats everything! I don't see how in the world anybody can live without time."[14] Sarah and Silas use cyclical time; they work by the sun and sleep by the moon. Their broken clock demonstrates that they are not ignorant of mechanical time, but it has no utility for them, so they are unwilling to invest in having the clock repaired. Silas has been a frugal and comparatively successful farmer, and they own their own farm in a time when and place where the majority of farmers are sharecroppers, so they could probably afford to own a simple clock if it were necessary. The clock lacks economic utility, however, because Sarah and Silas live agricultural lives without direct contact with industrialization. Still, the traveling salesman's presence indicates that commercialism has penetrated the rural South. His surprise that they function without mechanical time indicates the pervasive normativity of modernity, which marks poor Southerners as deviant, even when they are functional participants in capitalist production.

Agee also portrays poor Southerners' perception of time as cyclical and deviant in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Writing late at night in one of the families' cabin, he describes his encounter with cyclical time:

> It is the middle and pure height and whole of summer and a summer night, the held breath, of a planet's year; high shored sleeps the crested tide: what day of the month I do not know, which day of the week I am not sure, far less what hour of the night. The dollar watch I bought a few days ago, as also from time to time I buy a ten cent automatic pencil, and use it little before I lose all track of it, ran out at seventeen minutes past ten the day before yesterday morning, and time by machine measure was over for me at that hour, and is a monument.[15]

Agee describes losing the perception of linear time as a disorienting sensation, and he feels disconnected from modern temporality, which has receded into a memory. In the sharecroppers' cabin, mechanical time, as he has become accustomed to it, is reduced to a mere trapping of capitalist materialism, and the dollar watch that determined how he spent his time in the city is a superfluous affectation. His feeling of disorientation illustrates his connection to modern normativity, which has been ingrained into his consciousness. An alternate experience of time for him is unsettling.

Like Silas and Sarah in Wright's story, the sharecropping families Agee observed are not ignorant of mechanical time. For example, he lists a broken clock in his obsessive catalog of the Gudgers' home. In "the room beneath the house," the packed, bare dirt among the pilings underneath the house where random bits of trash and detritus have accumulated, he finds, "bent nails, withered and knobbed with rust; a bone button, its two eyes torn to one; the pierced back of an alarm clock, greasy to the touch; a torn fragment of a pictured print; an emptied and flattened twenty-gauge shotgun shell . . . and thinly scattered, the desiccated and the still soft excrement of hens."[16] The Gudgers, or some family who lived in the cabin before them, owned a clock once, but as the clock parts embedded in the abject waste that has filtered from between the floorboards of their home onto the ground indicate, it is not essential to their daily lives.

Agee's and Wright's representations of cyclical temporality depict poverty and a material lack that mark the families as outside the mainstream of modern commercial capitalism. Wright and Agee both address the issue of time in the context of commercialization, and they use it to demonstrate the effects of poverty. These families do not use clocks; they also lack electricity, sanitation, nutrition, media, education, healthcare, and automobiles, so they seem detached from American modernity. They exist in an alternate form of modernity, but their rural, agricultural existence is not a simpler, idyllic, pastoral way of life, as writers such as the Southern agrarians might portray it to be.[17] It is a difficult way of life that many advances of modernity could potentially simplify and improve if they were made accessible to the poor Southerners. In effect, although these Southerners coexist with modernity, their everyday existence is more consistent with an earlier, superseded way of life, which makes them appear anachronistic. Their persistent poverty challenges the advance of modernity, demonstrating that it is contingent upon geography, mode of production, wealth, and other factors.

In *The Assault on Progress*, Adam Johns analyzes "the teleological understanding of the relationship between time and technology."[18] He contends that in the United States since the middle of the nineteenth century, the advance of progress in the form of mechanization has developed a totalizing ideological overtone. Politicians, reformers, religious leaders, and technocrats have systematically invoked technological progress as a means of solving social problems until the advance of technological progress has become synonymous with social progress and delayed technological progress—such as the digital divide that isolates poor Americans from the Internet—has been deplored as a social and political problem. The poor Southerners' use of cyclical time, which some intellectuals once touted as God's time or natural time, by the middle of the twentieth century had become an indicator of abject poverty, and the federal government set out to correct the South's developmental delay through an elaborate bureaucratic government system based primarily on technological development. The New Deal programs that created jobs for poor Southerners during the Great Depression, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Rural

Electrification Administration, implemented poverty alleviation through modern technology. These programs were in place when Wright and Agee wrote their depictions of poor Southerners, so the language of poverty, progress, and technology resonates in their work.[19]

When the salesman expresses surprise that Silas and Sarah live without a clock and when Agee describes his disorientation at being without a watch, they are manifesting their anxiety with alternate perceptions of temporality. They, like other mainstream Americans, are conditioned to a linear perception of temporality. Anthony Giddens offers an explanation for why an alternate perception of temporality creates anxiety. He writes, "The commodification of time . . . holds the key to the deepest transformations of day-to-day social life that are brought about by the emergence of capitalism. These relate both to the central phenomenon of the organization of production processes, and to the 'work-place,' and also the intimate textures of how daily social life is experienced."[20] He suggests that the same temporal processes used to measure units of production in a factory setting carry over to determine how people experience every other aspect of their daily lives, governing when people eat, sleep, socialize, and carry out all of their other functions. At the root of this process is the capitalist system of exchange that assigns production value to a linear unit of time, but the Southerners' poverty fundamentally contradicts the capitalist construction of temporality.

For poor Southerners, the shift to linear time in wage labor settings caused anxiety. In *Red Hills and Cotton*, for example, Ben Robertson discusses the development of textile mills in upcountry South Carolina. He describes the replacement of cotton fields with mill villages and factories, and he focuses on the time whistle as the most disruptive impact of industrialization. "I would sometimes wake up and hear the whistles blowing—long before day—and I still remember how uneasy I would feel," he writes. "We ourselves got up before daylight, but there was something alarming in being ordered to rise by a factory whistle. It was the command that frightened, the imperative in the note. It was a sound that we had never heard before in our valley."[21] The textile mills attracted poor farmers, offering them consistent hourly wages processing cotton into finished goods, but their poverty in the mill villages was almost as profound as their poverty in sharecroppers' cabins.[22] The whistle plays an important role here in that it adds a coercive element to the clock, one that regulates the workers' time, making them virtually parts of the machinery. The whistle, which textile factories began using in the 1300s, enforces time discipline, to use E. P. Thompson's term, and conditions the workers to abandon cyclical time and conform to the normative experience of modern linear temporality.[23]

The tenant families in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* live at the margins of time discipline. Two of the men work at a nearby sawmill "on condition that they stay with it until the mill [is] moved and subject entirely to their landlords' permission," which is contingent on them hiring hands to replace their labor on the farms.[24] At the end of the book, Agee recounts an anecdote in which he

drives Gudger to the sawmill, a distance that he usually walks. He remarks to Agee that "we got here in good time" and takes out a watch to check the time: "twenty-three past six."[25] The pocket watch indicates that Gudger works within a wage labor system, but he is encapsulated in an agricultural system, and his role within the wage system is temporary and conditional. His precarious position between systems and his usage of two timescales limns the inevitable obliteration of rural agricultural labor by new forms of industrialization, contingent labor, and technology.[26]

Southern poverty did not constitute a national social problem until the technological lag between poor Southerners and mainstream Americans became so great that poor Southerners impinged on America's social and economic development. The relative absence of functional clocks, which Lewis Mumford called "the key-machine of the modern industrial age," in the homes of poor Southerners and their lack of reliance on linear time signified the semipermeable boundary between modern Americans and people living in a coeval nonmodern state.[27] Poor Southerners' persistent use of cyclical time marked them as America's national other, because they deviated from modern mainstream temporality. They illustrate Bhabha's point that a nation is an inherently fabricated construction, stitched together from mismatched constituent parts to produce an incoherent yet distinct whole. He writes,

> "The scraps, patches and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a coherent national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects. In the production of the nation as narration there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual ambivalence of modern society becomes the site of writing the nation."[28]

The variable experience of time demonstrates that temporal perception is a social construction and subject to the same vectors of deviance and normalization as other identity categories. Once the majority of Americans adopted linear, mechanical time, those who experienced time differently were considered deviant, problematic, and backward.

Time and the Other

In *Time and the Other*, Johannes Fabian formulates a theory about how anthropologists differentiate between their own perceived temporality and the temporality their subjects are perceived to inhabit.[29] He argues that anthropologists emphasize the apartness of their subjects, denying their spatial and temporal coevality and creating allochronic discourse, a language that presupposes

the asynchronous relationship between the anthropologist and the interlocutors. He identifies three concepts of time: physical time, the linear sequence of time measured with clocks; typological type, the arbitrary naming of vast epochs such as Neolithic; and intersubjective time, the projected temporal difference between speakers. These temporal concepts allow anthropologists to experience other cultures in synchronous physical time, sharing precisely the same time and space, but to represent other cultures as experiencing delayed temporal development in intersubjective time. Thus, an anthropologist could describe a tribe that exists in the present day as being Neolithic or use the term *primitive* to describe contemporary people.[30]

Allochronic discourse allows the observer to represent the observed culture in terms of the observing culture's development. This relegates the observed culture to a nonparticipant role in the discourse, in which the modern anthropologist tells the modern reader about the observed culture's state of development through its practices and structures. This hermeneutic relationship forecloses the observer's opportunity to consider the state of his own cultural development and reduces the observed culture to a static, discrete system of signs. Fabian, however, advocates turning to materialist anthropology, conceptualizing the observed culture as taking place in a synchronic relationship with the observer. *To other* the subject implies that it exists in a detached sphere of reality, but the materialist perspective raises complicated questions about the discontinuity between the observer's experience and the subject's experience, which both makes the observer more self-aware about the circumstances of his or her own social development and endows the subject with the complexity of a dynamic and responsive social system.

Fabian's theory matters here because poor Southerners are often subjects of allochronic discourse. Agee and Wright are not anthropologists per se, but their works portray a prevailing attitude that the poor Southerners exist in an alternate temporal state that diverges from modernity.[31] Although linear clock-measured time moves in one direction at a consistent rate, time can be experienced in multiple ways. "The experience of time is integral to human experience," Adam explains in *Timewatch*, "[but] the way we perceive and conceptualize that experience varies with cultures and historical periods."[32] Thus, she argues, studies tend to divide temporalities between "our time" and "other time," yet multiple times are experienced simultaneously, and the notion of our time tends to foreclose the sense of cyclical time, privileging linear temporality. "Having lost touch with our own cyclicality, we project it on to our objects of investigation: we construct it as 'other time.'"[33] The poor Southerners occupy precisely the same physical time as modernity, but according to the authors, they do not share in the same temporal experience as modernity. They are portrayed as the other, which implies that they not only use time differently but also exist on a different timescale. Both the writers and the poor Southerners, however, are experiencing multiple forms of temporality at the same time.

Several critics have commented on the peculiar qualities of temporality in literary modernism. In *The Culture of Time and Space*, Stephen Kern introduces the concept of simultaneity, which describes the public intrusion of personal experience across time and space through the means of technology, such as the vicarious global experience of the Titanic sinking or the Hindenburg exploding.[34] In *Mapping Literary Modernism*, Ricardo Quinones describes the paradox of time, a "phenomenon whereby time by virtue of uniformity becomes transformed into space," so the standardized measurement of time is detached from the experience of it.[35] Bryony Randall introduces the term "dailiness" in *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* to describe the repetition and spatialization of time in modernist texts, particularly those that use the day as an organizing structure, such as *Ulysses* or *Mrs. Dalloway.*[36] Lloyd Pratt counters in *Archives of American Time* that "despite the often well articulated wish that the nation share a consistent experience of time around which its members might unite, the available evidence contradicts the idea that this experience of national simultaneity actually came to pass."[37] He proposes, instead, a pluralistic experience of modern time that complicates the notion of linear temporality. In *The Nation's Region*, Leigh Anne Duck discusses the ways that Southern writers, including Zora Neale Hurston, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, and Wright represent the South's allotemporal chronotope, in which the region's temporality appears to exist "outside that of the nation and its economy."[38] I suggest that modern temporality—the mechanized time that standardized human experience and distinguished premodern from modern societies—was unstable, recursive, and contingent on utility, poverty, and spatialization. Mechanical technology in the form of uniformly set clocks made time appear linear, but the experience of time challenged the appearance of linearity.

Poor Southerners contradicted the linear perception of modern temporality, and Agee and Wright both use allochronic discourse to deny their coevality. Agee does this directly and self-consciously, describing his role as a spy while observing the sharecropping families—that is, as an outsider intending to relay the most intimate and humiliating details of their living conditions to the public.[39] "I am being made witness," he writes, "to matters no human being may see."[40] He attempts to respect their dignity, so he conducts an obsessively detailed inventory of the Gudger family's house (Gudger is the pseudonym Agee uses for the family of Floyd Burroughs) after they have gone to the fields for the day, treading gently, illicitly, among their belongings.[41] "They have gone," he states as he moves through the house, "and it is now my chance to perceive this, their home, as it is, in whose hollow heart resounds the loud zinc flickering heartbeat of the cheap alarm two hours advanced upon false time."[42] Agee's term "false time" raises several questions. Is the false time he mentions linear time or cyclical time? Does the clock's ticking increase his self-consciousness, making him aware of time's passing, as well as his trespassing? Does his heightened awareness amplify the sense of temporal multiplicity, the allochronic divergence between his own sense of time and the sharecroppers'

sense of time? Does the clock belong to the family, or did he bring it to mark their probable return from the fields? The passage is sufficiently ambiguous to raise more questions than it answers, but his evident awareness of time passing in a peculiar context in which linear time has no utility makes him simultaneously experience at least two temporalities, one mechanical and one not, one the same and one the other.

Wright also depicts multiple temporal forms in "Long Black Song." The clock graphophone plays music from a wax cylinder,[43] and when the salesman demonstrates it for Sarah, it plays the first verse of "When the Roll Is Called up Yonder:" "When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound / and time shall be no more / And the morning breaks / eternal, bright and fair // When the saved of earth shall gather / over on the other shore / And when the roll is called up yonder, / I'll be there."[44] The song articulates a millennial Christian vision of finitude, specifically the revelation or ending of time, and as the only song in the story, it comments—apocalyptically—on the story's title. Hearing the song, Sarah has a vision of cyclical, organic time: "She leaned back against a post, trembling, feeling the rise and fall of days and nights, of summer and winter; surging, ebbing, leaping about her, beyond her, far out over the fields to where earth and sky folded in darkness."[45] Wright juxtaposes her visceral, emotional sensation of time with the salesman's preoccupation with mechanical time.[46] He wants to know what time her husband will be home, because he has "to be in Lilydale at six o'clock in the morning."[47] The salesman, who looks like a little boy to Sarah, is selling the clock graphophones to pay for school in Chicago, and his perspective on the poor Southerners reflects modernist sensibilities. He regards them as other, and Wright complicates his perspective by using multiple temporalities in the story.

The multiple temporalities that Agee and Wright use are examples of intersubjective time, and they are part of a process in which the reader participates to recognize the apartness of the poor Southerners. The texts invite the reader to deny the poor Southerners coevality, to imagine them existing in an alternate, more primitive typological time. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, in addition to its extensive narrative documentary, includes photographs taken by Evans that force the reader to gaze upon the poor Southerners' primitivism, seeing their squalid homes, meager possessions, and filthy children directly.[48] The photographs enhance the readers' sense of participating in the observation, asking the viewer to recognize the apartness of the subject. One of the photographs in the collection led to a telling controversy. The picture shows a clock on a mantel, and Errol Morris and James Curtis, author of *Mind's Eye, Mind's Truth: FSA Photography Reconsidered*—a book that argues some documentary photographers deliberately, artfully manipulated images—discussed this photograph as part of a series of interviews on Depression-era documentary photography in the *New York Times* in 2009.[49] Curtis claimed that Evans may have deliberately planted the photograph in the picture, noting that it is not mentioned in Agee's exhaustive catalog of the home's contents, which casts doubt on the project's

Figure 1: Walker Evans, Fireplace in bedroom of Floyd Burroughs' cabin in Hale County, Alabama, 1936. Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

veracity.[50] In light of the comment about each family owning a low-price alarm clock, the omission was most likely an oversight on Agee's part, but the conversation between Morris and Curtis highlights the reader's position as voyeur in the text. The photographs in the book are part of a broader political agenda designed to cultivate political support for the New Deal by publicizing the living conditions of poor Americans, the mission of an agency called the Farm

Security Administration (FSA).[51] The photographs focused the nation's gaze on poverty, specifically on Americans whose lives lagged behind the normative conditions of modernity because they lacked electricity, sanitation, nutrition, education, transportation, and temporality.

Allochronic discourse tends to privilege linear experiences of temporality over cyclical temporality, which normalizes linear temporality. In the South of the 1930s, however, cyclical temporality was still normal; poverty and ruralism were still normal. Millions of Southern farmers were sharecroppers, only a small percentage had access to electricity and running water, and many lived in destitution.[52] For them, the trappings of modernity were abnormal, remarkable, and different, such as the airplane that Sarah watches cross the sky.[53] Poor Southerners were part of modern capitalism despite their poverty, but they used a different timescale from that of mainstream America, which made them appear different and hampered their involvement with modern consumerism. In *Time, Labor and Social Domination*, Moishe Postone analyzes the dialectic of labor and time, offering a theory that helps to explain the issue of allochronic discourse in relation to poor Southerners. He distinguishes between abstract time—a socially constructed, consistent framework for measuring outputs of labor and production within a capitalist system—and historical time, "a form of concrete time that is socially constituted and expresses an ongoing qualitative transformation of work and production, of social life more generally, and of forms of consciousness, values, and needs."[54] Historical time measures the Marxist materialist movement of history, and abstract time, which is similar to linear time, is the capitalist means of using time to measure production. To the extent that production can be increased within a segment of time, abstract time is a crucial component of the means of production.

Poor Southern farms occupied precisely the same historical time as mainstream Americans, but their system of production functioned on an abstract timescale, which made them appear to be deviant. Mainstream American capitalism measured labor in hours and days, but poor Southerners in an agricultural economy measured production in seasons and harvests, laboring each day "from can see to can't."[55] Although linear time did not govern their units of labor in a way that made clocks necessary, they were still capitalist producers functioning in the same economic system. The crops that they produced were among America's leading exports and a key driver of the nation's gross domestic product. The crucial difference is that poor Southerners were paid according to a model that deviated from the norm of wage-hour compensation. The sharecropping families that Agee and Evans observed worked on seasonal contracts with their landowner. In a typical sharecropping contract, the landowner provided a cabin, seed, fertilizer, a mule, and tools, and the family provided labor to raise a crop. At settlement, they divided the proceeds, but the system was rife with labor exploitation. Most sharecroppers took on a crop lien with either their landowner or a local merchant to buy their food and other necessities on credit until settlement. Crop liens often carried usurious interest, and sharecropping

families frequently found themselves earning little, or sometimes in debt, after settlement. Silas, meanwhile, owns his own land, and the story takes place on the day that he has taken his crop to market to sell. As a small farmer in a cash-crop system, he would only have access to money immediately after selling his crop, and that capital based on last year's production would be necessary to finance next year's production. Poor Southerners were subject to what Noel Castree calls "the temporal fix:" the use of credit in place of wages to finance a prolonged capitalist mode of production.[56] The temporal fix limited their access to wages and impeded their engagement with the consumer economy, which had ramifications for their everyday life, because they only had access to funds during specific parts of the year. Poor Southerners, nonetheless, were active participants in modern capitalism, and they inhabited the same temporality as mainstream Americans except with a longer timescale, which made their relationship between work and wages obscure.

Buying Time

Poor Southerners did not necessarily need a clock to measure their labor, but they might have wanted to own one. Although the families in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* were destitute and their living conditions were crude by modern standards, they were not immune to commodity fetishism or precluded from desiring or purchasing a clock. The old eight-day clock that Sarah's baby beats in "Long Black Song" is a similar vestige of commodity fetishism, and the desire for a new clock suggests a yearning for consumer trappings of modernity to disrupt the family's squalor. Ted Ownby explains in *American Dreams in Mississippi* that the modern technologies of infrastructure, advertising, and distribution made material fetishism possible in America's poorest and most remote communities.[57] Movies and mail-order catalogs brought commodity fetishism into the poor Southerners' homes; even if they could not afford something, they could see it, and when they could afford it, they bought it. Modern capitalism simultaneously isolated poor Southerners from modernity and connected them to networks of consumption.

Even if poor Southerners did not need a clock for its use value as a timepiece, they may have desired it for its material value—its thingness. In *A Sense of Things,* Bill Brown argues that "objects captivate us, fascinate us, and compel us to have a relationship with them," and the desire for things "is a social relationship neither between men nor between things, but between something like a social relation between human subject and inanimate object, wherein modernity's ontological distinction between human beings and nonhumans makes no sense."[58] The desire for things is an often irrational desire that can override financial imperatives. Viviana A. Zelizer explains in *The Social Meaning of Money* that people have a complicated, often irrational relationship with money, and expenditure is a means of expressing desire.[59] The clock is the point where materialism, temporality, capital fetish, and aesthetics coalesce in one particular

thing. It clearly has a symbolic resonance that is greater than its functional or exchange value. Clock fetishism may be a useful indicator of the progress of modernization, because these devices synthesize industrial development with capitalist commodification.[60]

The Gudgers were not immune to object desire, and they may have wanted a clock, but the economic realities of tenant farming during the Depression would have made it a luxury item. Although a timepiece would be a necessity for a factory worker, it was an unnecessary expense for a farmer. According to Agee, "The best that Gudger ever cleared is $125," as his share of the crop after settlement, and "that was in the plow-under year," when the Agricultural Adjustment Act paid farmers to reduce the size of their crops in 1933.[61] "Most years he has not made more than $25 to $30; and about one year in three he has ended in debt. Year before last [1934] he wound up $80 in debt; last year, $12; of Boles, his new landlord, the first thing he had to do was borrow $15 to get through the winter until rations advances should begin."[62] The Gudgers were destitute and dependent, $117 dollars in debt before the crop was planted, and entirely unlikely to clear that debt when the crop was harvested. The clock on the mantel in Evans's picture of their home, though, was inexpensive, a model ironically called "fortune" that was manufactured by Westclox between 1933 and 1937 and that retailed for $1.45.[63] Since the clock appeared a bit worn and not brand new, the Gudgers could have purchased it in their flush year, 1933; they could have purchased it used for less than its original price; or they could have purchased it on credit. Sharecroppers were subject to commodity desire, and as Rupert Vance documents in *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, they were not famous for fiscal restraint and would often purchase unnecessary items, such as "automobiles, nostrums, horse doctor books, enlarged family portraits, expensive family Bibles, and large wall maps of the state and the nation," sometimes before buying necessary foodstuffs or farming implements.[64]

The salesman in "Long Black Song" deliberately appeals to Sarah's commodity fetishism. He shows her the clock, and she has an emotional reaction: "Lawd, but it was pretty! She saw the face of the clock under the horn of the graphophones. The gilt on the corners sparkled. The color in the wood glowed softly. It reminded her of the light she saw sometimes in the baby's eyes. Slowly she slid a finger over a beveled edge; she wanted to take the box into her arms and kiss it."[65] She desires the clock in a mixture of maternal and sexual overtones, but the clock costs $50, which the salesman offers as installments, "five dollars down and five dollars a month;" after he has sex with Sarah, he reduces the price to "forty instead of fifty."[66] Silas, meanwhile, makes a good price on his cotton crop for that year, clearing $250, of which he spends $150 to buy ten additional acres of land, leaving $100 to make the next year's crop and provide for the family. His land purchase is a rational economic act, because it will allow him to increase the family's earning potential.[67] The purchase of a clock would be highly impractical, but the story makes it clear that the cost is only part of a more complex system of racial and sexual dynamics. The salesman

Figure 2: Gary Biolchini, Westclox: An Identification and Pricing Guide (Altgen, PA: Schiffer, 2003). Reprinted with permission from the author.

takes Sarah as if she is available to him, using the clock as a means of seduction through materialism, and Silas reacts to the clock as a sign of betrayal, smashing it, aggressively evicting Sarah from their home, and killing the salesman when he returns to collect the money.

The clock in Wright's story leads to a tragic racial confrontation, which invites us to speculate about the fundamental relationship between poor Southerners and modernity. Allochronic discourse allows writers and readers to imagine that poor Southerners occupied an alternate temporal realm because they used and experienced time differently, but poor Southerners were actively engaged in the capitalist processes of modernity in precisely the same ways as wage laborers in factories, albeit without the necessity for time discipline. Jack Temple Kirby argues in *Rural Worlds Lost* that the South's apparent delayed development was a consequence of its engagement with modernity.[68] The Southern plantation economy that endured well into the twentieth century and that is the setting for both *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and "Long Black Song" provided cheap labor and raw materials for the developing global capitalist system. "Plantation societies," he writes, "had little need for cities, local manufacturing, or technology. They were underdeveloped, in present-day parlance, by their very modern design."[69] One could thus argue that modernity delayed the South's development. At the same time that poverty impeded the South's modernization, modernization required the impoverishment of Southerners. Southern poverty became a problem, however, when northern industries looked to expand into the South as a consumer marketplace, at which point poor Southerners' reduced buying power made them an economic liability. Thus, we see the preposterousness of companies selling $50 clock graphophones to poor Southern farmers who earn only a few hundred dollars in a good year.

As material objects, the clocks demonstrate the encroachment of modern technology into the rural South. Spreading infrastructures of electrification, communication, and distribution compressed time and space in the South too. Giddens marks the conversion from premodern societies into modernity with the detachment of time from space that, through the intervention of technologies of transportation and communication, allows the phantasmagoric penetration of the social conditions of one place by another place distant from it, a precursor to globalization.[70] Southern farm communities were often distant from the metropolitan centers that they served, but modern infrastructures collapsed the spatiotemporal distance between poor Southerners and mainstream, modern Americans. A clock in a Southern farmer's cabin, even a broken clock, visibly indicates the pervasive extent of capitalist consumerism in America.

The clocks in these texts illustrate poor Southerners' complicated relationship with modernity. The irony is that they are depicted as other from the perspective of mainstream America because of their poverty, but their poverty is a result of their particular role in the modern system of capitalism. They produce commodity crops that will be the raw materials for textile mills. Most theories of capitalism and temporality, such as David Harvey's theory of time–space compression and Thompson's theory of time discipline, focus on time and the factory worker. Agricultural workers were part of precisely the same system, but their longer timescale limited their access to wages and hampered their

participation in consumerism. For these poor, rural farmers, modernity is poverty, and the same processes that made linear time normative in industrialized, urbanized areas reinforced their adherence to cyclical time, making them appear anachronistic. Their commodity fetishism makes clear that they were as modern as mainstream Americans, only with less need to schedule their time and less money to buy goods. Modernity spread unevenly, creating gaps in living conditions and discontinuities in perception, but poor Southerners were part of the same system of capitalist production that made linear temporality normal and made clocks necessary.

Notes

1. James Agee and Walker Evans, *Cotton Tenants: Three Families*, ed. John Summers (Brooklyn, NY: Melville House, 2003), 89.

2. Michael O'Malley, *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time* (New York: Viking, 1990), 28.

3. Early American writers joined in the controversy regarding mechanical time. In Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "The Old Clock on the Stairs," the timepiece measures out mortality, and in Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Devil in the Belfry," a clock dominates a small community to the point of replacing the residents' free will with automation. Images of time—sun, moon, sundials, and shadows—have long been symbols for time, but the clock adds an additional resonance of time as a manmade entity.

4. O'Malley, *Keeping Watch,* 30. As G. J. Whitrow accounts in *Time in History: The Evolution of Our General Awareness of Time and Temporal Perception* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), the association between clocks and both cities and factories began as soon as clocks came into use. In the early 1300s, clocks were most often found in town squares, and as early as 1335, a clock was used to summon textile workers to a factory in Artois (108).

5. Alexis McCrossen, *Marking Modern Times: A History of Clocks, Watches, and Other Timekeepers in American Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

6. The social gulf between urban America and rural America in the early twentieth century was enormous. For illustrations of how life differed in the areas, see Ronald Kline's excellent book *Consumers in the Country: Technology and Social Change in Rural America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), which describes the infiltration of electricity and transportation infrastructure into rural areas; Jane Becker's *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998),which describes the transition of subsistence farming communities into avatars of primitive culture; and Douglas Reichert Powell's *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), which describes the emergence and persistence of the rural–urban divide in American culture.

7. Barbara Adam, *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 12.

8. Valerie Rohy, "Time," in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies,* 2nd edition, ed. Bruce Burgett and Glen Hendler (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 242–45.

9. Homi Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 142.

10. Mark Smith, *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery, and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

11. Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 292.

12. Aaron Marrs describe the effects of temporal standardization on the South in "Railroads and Time Consciousness in the Antebellum South," *Enterprise & Society* 9, no. 3 (September 2008): 433–56.

13. The full text of "The Report on Economic Conditions of the South" can be found in David Carlton and Peter Coclanis, eds., *Confronting Southern Poverty in the Great Depression* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996).

14. Richard Wright, "Long Black Song," in *Early Works* (New York: Library of America, 1991), 334.

15. James Agee and Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 51.

16. Ibid., 147–48.

17. In the essay collection *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* (Baton

Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), twelve self-identified Southern agrarians made a case for the idealism of the rural Southern way of life against the advance of industrialism. Their ideas have influenced a trend in American political conservatism that continues to idealize the American heartland as an embodiment of traditional social values.

18. Adam Johns, *The Assault on Progress: Technology and Time in American Literature* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 206.

19. For a fuller sense of the cultural context of Southern poverty before World War II, see Richard Godden and Martin Crawford, eds., *Reading Southern Poverty between the Wars, 1918–1939* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), and Suzanne Jones and Mark Newman, eds., *Poverty and Progress in the U.S. South since 1920* (Amsterdam: Vu University Press, 2006).

20. Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (New York: Palgrave, 1995), 131.

21. Ben Robertson, *Red Hills and Cotton: An Upcountry Memory* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1960), 274.

22. Life in the textile mill villages was difficult, and employers frequently exploited entire families of workers, using young children for tedious and dangerous jobs and evicting families who caused problems. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James L. Leloudis, Robert R. Korstad, Mary Murphy, and Lu Ann Jones, eds., *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), documents the hardships mill workers endured.

23. E. P. Thompson's classic essay, "Time, Work–Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (1967): 56–97, describes the process of habituating workers to time discipline, an element of capitalism that transformed people from autonomous agents into laboring entities.

24. Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise*, 121.

25. Ibid., 430.

26. According to Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson in *And Their Children after Them* (New York: Pantheon, 1989), advancing modernity had disastrous consequences on the families Agee interviewed. As the cotton economy declined, the families scattered, many of them struggled with unemployment, disabilities, and homelessness, and at least one person committed suicide. The development of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which generated electricity and provided flood control for much of the South, also displaced thousands of families. Even when delayed modernization finally reached the rural South, its effects were not always beneficial.

27. Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. 1934), 14.

28. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 145.

29. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

30. Fabian is responding in particular to the work of structuralist anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, but his theory has application in many instances in which one entity conceptualizes another entity based on its perceived differences.

31. In the 1930s, anthropologists were conducting ethnographic studies in the South. Two prime examples are *Class and Caste in a Southern Town* by John Dollard and *After Freedom* by Hortense Powdermaker.

32. Adam, *Timewatch*, 29.

33. Ibid., 41.

34. Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 314.

35. Ricardo Quinones, *Mapping Literary Modernism: Time and Development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 68.

36. Bryony Randall, *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 20.

37. Lloyd Pratt, *Archives of American Time: Literature and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 5.

38. Leigh Anne Duck, *The Nation's Region: Southern Modernism, Segregation, and U.S. Nationalism* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 133.

39. Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise*, 7.

40. Ibid., 136.

41. In *The Making of James Agee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008), Hugh Davis describes *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* as a "surrealist ethnography," because it collapses Agee's fascination with avant-garde art and Marxist political ideals.

42. Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise*, 137.

43. The wax cylinders were obsolete by the time Wright published the story, which adds an interesting interpretive feature to the story. In *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), Mark Goble writes, "to have his fiction turn on an outmoded technology was one way for Wright to register the uneven development of the black South" (223).

44. Wright, "Long Black Song," 335.

45. Ibid., 335.

46. In *Mama Learned Us How to Work: Farm Women in the New South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), LuAnn Jones describes the economic agency of Southern farm women. Women like Sarah typically performed essential domestic labor—cooking, cleaning, laundry, and child labor—but they were also involved with agricultural labor and, in many cases, they had access to their own money. Peddlers often traveled with rolling stores to farm housing selling domestic products, such as kitchen tools and sewing supplies. The salesman in this scene builds on this same dynamic, but the impractical product he sells is highly unusual.

47. Ibid., 336.

48. Wright collaborated with Edwin Rosskam on a textual and pictorial documentary of black life in America, similar to *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, titled *12 Million Black Voices* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

49. James Curtis, *Mind's Eye, Mind's Truth: FSA Photographs Reconsidered* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), and quoted in Errol Morris, "The Case of the Inappropriate Alarm Clock," *New York Times* (October 20, 2009), http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/the-case-of-the-inappropriate-alarm-clock-part-3/.

50. See the detailed list of items on the mantel, including a spool of thread, a cracked shaving mug, a pink comb, and a calendar, in *Let Us Now Praise*, 172–73.

51. This collection of photographs is influential for its complex interrelation of social, political, and cultural objectives. For analyses of the photographs, see William Stott, *Documentary Expression in Thirties America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Paula Rabinowitz, *They Must Be Represented* (New York: Verso, 1994); Cara Finnegan, *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and FSA Photographs* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003); and Jeff Allred, *American Modernism and Depression Documentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). The collection can be found online at http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsahtml/fahome.html.

52. Howard Odum documents the demographic and material composition of the Depression-era South in *Southern Regions of the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936).

53. Wright, "Long Black Song," 332.

54. Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 294.

55. Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise,* 340.

56. Noel Castree, "The Spatio-temporality of Capitalism," *Time & Society* 18, no. 1 (2009): 46.

57. Ted Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830–1998* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

58. Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 29.

59. Viviana A. Zelizer, *The Social Meaning of Money* (New York: Basic Books, 1998).

60. Clocks have long been signs of conspicuous consumption. David Landes gives a thorough history of clocks, focusing both on their technological development and their aesthetic functions, in *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1983), and David Jaffee discusses clocks as items of commerce in early America in *New Nation of Goods: The Material Culture of Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

61. Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise*, 118.

62. Ibid., 118.

63. Quoted in Morris, "Inappropriate Alarm Clock."

64. Rupert Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1929), 240.

65. Wright, "Long Black Song," 334.

66. Ibid., 334 and 339.

67. In *The Shadow of the Plantation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), Charles S. Johnson writes, "the appearance of success, together with an uncertain appreciation of his proper social status, may provide annoyances, which take on serious nature and in the end deprive the too successful Negro of his holdings" (121). To a great extent, Wright's story is an illustration of this principle. Silas is already exceptional in that he owns his land and has cleared a profit, but the salesman appears to assume that he would waste his earning on an expensive, superfluous object. Wright, instead, portrays Silas as an effective economic agent, yet the commodity fetish initiates a series of unfortunate events that result in the loss of not only the farm but also his life. This depiction suggests that materialism is an inherently destructive force.

68. Jack Temple Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South, 1920–1960* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 25.

69. Ibid., 25.

70. Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 18.

Book Reviews

Editorial note: Book reviews are edited for typographical errors, and otherwise are printed as received.

Reviews

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN LITERATURE. Edited by Yogita Goyal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2017.

Who can say how long the term "transnational" will be employed in American literary studies. Likewise, there is little agreement on precisely when such a term is historically most applicable and exactly which authors and texts embody or encompass the transnational. That is to say, for now, there is good reason to enlist a range of experts within multiple subfields of American literature to examine, critique, challenge, support, and expand the term. Whether the transnational turn becomes an extended pivot to something else or whether it is flexible and plastic enough to embody a range of somewhat contradictory and equally elastic terms become part of the difficulty (and impossibility) in genre or terminology prophecy.

The Cambridge Companion to Transnational American Literature consists of an introduction by the book's editor, Yogita Goyal, and fifteen essays divided into four main parts: the "Shape of the Field," "Literary Histories," "Critical Geographies," and "Literature and Geopolitics." The term "transnational" is the most alive and ripest when:

1. it becomes evaluated within conceptions of pluralist, imperialist, and multicultural histories and realities within the United States (in particular);
2. the inevitable annoyance and questioning of why that one (undeniably powerful) country overshadows the literary output and importance of other American countries (North and South) within the most expansive geographical conception of American Studies;
3. when so-called localized texts are included in the transnational turn (ably examined by Jessica Berman's essay looking at Claude McKay and Faulkner); and
4. the contested, overlapping, imbued, enmeshed, and internally fracturing literary sites, replete with multivocal, hybrid, and

> porous texts, authors, characters, settings, and themes, can all be subsumed under the transnational concept.

Shelley Fisher Fishkin, for example, examines how classic US fiction (Twain and Melville) get translated abroad and how such translations dissect, appropriate, or critique US imperialism or a call for greater freedom in the localized context (see especially her important inclusion of Iraqi Poet Saadi Yousef's use of Whitman). Fishkin also analyzes the impact travelling has on US writers like James Baldwin and why the "US" label is not permeable enough.

Other fascinating and helpful essays include (the always creatively stalwart) Viet Thang Nguyen, here examining Pacific Rim and Asian Literature; María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo's "Hemispheric Literature"; Destiny O. Birdsong and Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo's "Black Atlantic and Diaspora Literature", and John Alba Cutler's "Borders and Borderland Literature." As gleaned from the titles, these are clear representatives of such expansive, multifaceted sights, and the authors and texts examined in these chapters further enflesh the term "transnational." Outside Timothy Marr's keen analysis of Muslim identity amidst American identity through novels like *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, I was less engrossed in the final version of the other essays, but were glad important topics like "American Indian Transnationalisms", or "Transnational Feminism" were also included.

Thus, where chapters eschewed a plethora of extended jargon and trendy (or more often, overused) critical terms and closely examined interesting texts and themes pertinent to an umbrella term like "transnational", an engaging and illuminating chapter generally resulted. I thus highlighted ones I found successful. When the evaluation of concrete texts was outweighed by internal reflection and grappling with terminology, this particular reviewer was less engrossed. Note: while one of my diplomas reads an M.A. in British and American Literature (Georgetown), we were studying then (1999–2001) what some are calling Transnational American Literature now. Naming and classifying an academic term, like a specific diagnosis, can be valuable, but whether it changes anything is the more important question. This reviewer would need more explicit political and moral investigations that somehow do not silence the poor, generally white voices that feel left behind (emblematic in recent popular non-fiction works like *Hillbilly Elegy*, *White Rage*, and *White Trash*) yet name, blame and (inevitably), confront the structures, laws, wars, and (even literary) terms which deny the value, dignity, and equality of all people (emblematic in movements like Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, the Dreamers, and other social justice initiatives). Here, in particular, the "transnational" not only has immense moral potential, but can help steer and refocus what it means to be "American" or what makes something "American" with its celebration of diverse voices, open borders, and what I would call, a movement towards, across or through—(*trans*)—solidarity, hinting or even courageously prophesizing what lies beyond, to a time when peoples, cultures, and nations truly embrace the transnational in thought, word, and deed.

Peter Admirand
Dublin City University, Ireland

W. E. B. DU BOIS: An American Intellectual and Activist. By Shawn Leigh Alexander. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.

It is unlikely that David Levering Lewis' monumental two-volume biography of American black sociologist, author and activist W. E. B. Du Bois (*W. E. B Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1865-1919* [1993]; *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and*

the American Century, 1919-1963 [2000]) will ever be superceded. However, Shawn Alexander (African/African-American Studies, University of Kansas) has produced a marvelous concise version of Du Bois' life, one that will provide an excellent refresher course for those already familiar with the subject, as well as a fine short introduction to Du Bois for those who need one.

Alexander has scoured Du Bois' multiple and multifarious writings over his 70-year career, read all of the existing literature on Du Bois and has written a well-organized, clearly-written and short yet thorough overview of his subject, accompanied by a thorough 12-page bibliographical essay. Hopefully Alexander's work, along with Lewis' massive (1400+ page) study will help to rescue Du Bois from his Cold War status as the American equivalence of an "un-person," which he was consigned to for his repeated criticisms of American foreign policy and especially for advocating "peace" at a time when the enthusiastic embrace by the Soviet Union of a "peace campaign" led the U.S. government to view such advocacy as "un-American." Thus, Du Bois was prosecuted and had his passport revoked on the highly-strained claim that his Peace Information Center was an agent of the Soviet Union and that he had failed to register as a foreign agent, but the government's case was so weak that it was dismissed by the judge at trial.

Embittered by this experience and the un-ending discrimination faced by American blacks, Du Bois eventually joined the American Communist Party (ACP) and left the United States for Ghana, where he died in 1963 and was honored with a state funeral, attended by representatives of every embassy and consultate in the Ghanian capital of Accra, with the exception of the U.S. When the ACP organized the W. E. B. DuBois Club as its youth group in the mid-60s, "liberal" Johnson administration Attorney General Nicholas invoked the cold war Internal Security Act of 1950 to attempt to force the group to register with the government as a "subversive" organization and former Vice President Richard Nixon alleged that the communists had sought to confuse American youth into joining by misleading them into thinking the group was a "boys club."

As for the bulk of his book, Alexander traces Du Bois' career from his early work as a Harvard researcher and his Ph.D. studies at Fisk University, then his emergence as a leading young sociologist and expert on American blacks, especially marked by his landmark books, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and *Black Reconstruction* (1935), which pioneered an interpretation of reconstruction which American historians largely embraced only 50 years later. Along the way, DuBois was a founder of the NAACP and editor of its influential newspaper, *The Crisis,* for 25 years (1910-35), a post which, along with his numerous other writings and hundreds of lectures, made him the leading American black spokesman following the death of Booker T. Washington in 1915.

This is a fine study, which deserves a broad audience and would be an excellent choice for college textbook adoption.

Robert Goldstein
University of Kansas

BLACK ON BOTH SIDES: A Racial History of Trans Identity. By C. Riley Snorton. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2017.

On Transgender Day of Remembrance in 2017, C. Riley Snorton wrote an essay asking, "What [do] we mean when we 'say their names?'" In *Black on Both Sides*, he offers ways to think through an answer to this question, as the text is a "looking for" and a "looking after" the "theories and politics that emerge at the limits of current operations for making biopolitical and necropolitical sense of black and trans death." (xiv) Through

a deft analysis of a vast and heterogeneous archive, Snorton interrupts dominant narratives of transness, blackness, and the co-constitutive genealogy of these categories by offering up grammar for black and trans life both historically and temporally. His deep and nuanced argument requires readers to examine how "category of transness is a racial narrative . . . [how] blackness finds its articulation within transness," as well as how both of these categories are "inextricably linked yet irreconcilable and irreducible projects." (8) While his engagement with disability studies is perfunctory, overall he demonstrates his ability to move deftly among scholarship from a range of disciplines in a way that asks the reader to rethink blackness, transness, and temporality.

Beginning with fungibility and fugitivity, he elucidates how both gender and sex are racial arrangements. Snorton brings "black" and "trans" into conversation by examining how both have been "constituted as fungible, thingified, and interchangeable." (6) He demonstrates how genealogies of blackness and transness are parallel and interrelated formulations in which "captive and divided flesh function[] as malleable matter for mediating and remaking sex and gender as matters of human categorization and personal definition." (11, 20) In this remaking, Snorton challenges notions of immutable gender so often rooted in white epistemologies, arguing that it is crucial to consider how "chattel persons gave rise to an understanding of gender as mutable and as an amendable form of being." (57) Within this framework, the ungendering of blackness is a site in which gender became subject to rearrangement, thus providing opportunities for fugitivity through performances of transness. Enslaved people utilized this ungendering as a "critical modality of political and cultural maneuvering" evidenced by "the frequency with which narrative of fugitivity included cross-gendered modes of escape." (56, 58) This refiguration and fugitive potential of gender provides a grammar for thinking through the racial history of trans identity in a U.S. context and how these genealogies inform our present moment.

Snorton's explication of black gender as "anagrammatical" within the frame of Black modernity challenges the reductive ways in which binary sex and gender are read back in time through the filter of whiteness, and in ways that dismiss black experiences of fungibility. He calls attention to how the "color line was produced and policed by black women's reproductive capacity," arguing that this reality "necessitates an encounter with the figure of the black maternal as a character and as the ground of nonbeing that engenders black manhood." (108)

Unlike most scholarship engaging trans history, Snorton moves quickly through and beyond Christine Jorgensen's story, focusing instead on media constructions of black transwomen that illustrated "the impossibility of a 'black Jorgensen,'" exposing how "anti-blackness [was] a critical paradigm for making sense of Jorgensen's figuration." (157) Snorton skillfully identifies the ways in which transwomen of color articulate their genders in ways that subvert linear logic, as achievable outside of medical and legal intervention. Ava Betty Brown's narrative, for example, "points to how knowledge systems unrecognized by colonial authority . . . suggest a different, and perhaps decolonial, understanding of the body she inhabited." (162) In this way, Snorton centers "other ways to be trans, in which gender becomes a terrain to make space for living." (175)

Snorton concludes by broadening our capacity to imagine and "construct more livable black and trans worlds." (14) Ultimately, he argues that this is what we must do when we "say their names." As such, he attends to Phillip DeVine's death and its framing in the Brandon Teena archive. Snorton names the absence of DeVine in articulations of Brandon's story as a "symptomatic disavowal of blackness and anti-blackness." (182) DeVine's death as a black man is directly connected to the "interstitialities of black and trans life and black and trans death," where "antitrans violence is also and always already

an articulation of antiblackness." (184-5) We are called to remember and say the names of black, trans, and black trans individuals in a way that demands a radical dismantling of the conditions that produce the death of these individuals. Ultimately, Snorton's book is a glimpse into what a future might look like where black trans lives will have mattered. (196)

Liam Oliver Lair
West Chester University

OMAR NELSON BRADLEY: America's GI General, 1893–1981. By Steven L. Ossad. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2017.

The purpose of this book is to bring new light to the life of Five Star General Omar Bradley and to revise the traditional narrative of his life. Ossad observed that: "Omar Bradley has for too long been relegated to the shadows cast by his larger than life contemporaries or has been explained away as an example of a nice guy who made it to the top through hard work. That perception is not only wrong, it does a disservice to Bradley and those who can still learn from his example (16)." Ossad believes the story of Bradley's life has been dwarfed by that of Eisenhower and Patton. He seeks to provide a more complex, a more nuanced portrait of the man who commanded the largest operational command ever assembled by the United States, the 12th Army Group, and led in the biggest campaign ever fought by the U.S. Army, the Battle of the Bulge. This book is, in part, a study of command.

Steven Ossad is a military historian and biographer. He coauthored, *Major General Maurice Rose: World War II's Greatest Forgotten Commander*. He has also published articles in military history journals.

Ossad's book divides Bradley's life into three parts. Part I, "Becoming a Commander," chapter 1 through 5, covers Bradley's early life, life at West Point, assignments as an officer, learning the trade of soldier in the U.S. Army, Corps Command in North Africa, and the invasion of and campaign in Sicily. Part II, "The Liberation," chapters 6 through 10, covers the Normandy invasion, the breakout at St. Lo, the advance across France, the Battle of the Bulge, and the final victory in Europe. Part III, "Shaper of the Post War World," chapters 11 and 12, cover the post-war period, head of the Veterans Administration, the emergence of Cold War, service as the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Korean War, and retirement. Part I is the most original part of the book. In it Ossad developed a character analysis, which portrays Bradley as a man incapable of admitting his mistakes, incapable of admitting he was wrong. While identifying character flaws, Ossad's overall appraisal of Bradley is positive. He believes the General has been overlooked and under-appreciated for his many contributions and accomplishments. Part II, the war in Europe follows traditional assessments. Operation Cobra has been viewed as Bradley's most brilliant act of generalship, and the Battle of Bulge, where U.S. forces were surprised by the size and ferocity of the German counterattack, has not been considered Bradley's finest hour.

Part III is the most problematic. There are errors in the book. For example, on page 368, Ossad wrote: "The new act [National Security Act of 1947] replaced the short lived National Military Establishment with new institutions, the most important being the Department of Defense." This is not accurate. The 1947 act created the National Military Establishment, and the 1949 amendment created the Department of Defense. (See: *The Department of Defense: Documents on Establishment and Organization, 1944–1978*, edited, Alice C. Cole, et al, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Historical Office, 1978, p. 63, 84). On page 382, Ossad wrote: "Secretary of Defense George Marshall agreed

not only that his old advisory had opposed administration policies but that his failure to clear his 24 March 1951 statement with the President and the intended violation of the December order were grounds for dismissal." In a "Memorandum for the Record," dated 25 April 1951, prepared by General Bradley, it states: "Secretary Acheson and Mr. Harriman thought he [General MacArthur] should be relieved at once. General Marshall and I recommended against such action." Both Marshall and Bradley ultimately supported the relief, but both had to be convinced. There are also problems of interpretation. On the desegregation of the Army, Ossad wrote: "By the end of 1953, when he left office, only 5 percent of African American soldiers were serving in segregated units. That, and what followed, is one of Omar Bradley's greatest legacies to the US military, which turned out to be one of the most vital and successful engines of social change in our history." Bradley deserves little credit for the integration of the Army. Desegregation of the Army did not take place until 1951 in the midst of the Korean War at General Ridgway's request. Had Truman's 1948 Executive Order Number 9981 been implemented in good faith, the process would *not* have taken place in the midst of a war, and the Korean War, not the Vietnam War, would have been the first war the United States entered with an integrated Army. The fact is that South Koreans, foreigners, were integrated into the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea before African Americans. (See Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War*. New York: A Da Capo Paperback, 1967, p. 192, 193.) And, there are other problems.

Subjects such as the relief of General Douglas MacArthur, the National Security Act of 1947, and the integration of the Armed Forces cannot be adequately covered in 2.5 pages, the space Ossad allocates. These issues are distorted and mistakes were made. Because of these errors and misinterpretations I could not recommend this book to my students.

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Notes on Contributors

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Sandra R. Heard is currently the 10th grade dean and chair of the History and Social Sciences Department at the Potomac School in McLean, Va. Heard earned a Ph.D. in American Studies at The George Washington University. Her research primarily focuses on the interplay of consumer culture, race and politics. She has taught classes on urban history, sexuality, identity formations, government, civil rights, and social movements in the US. Before starting her career as an educator in the D.C. area, Heard worked as an architect and community organizer in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Benjamin Schmack is a PhD candidate in the American Studies Department at the University of Kansas. Schmack's dissertation focuses on the historical rivalry between American Communists and the Ku Klux Klan and what their frequent clashes reveal about hate and extremism in the United States. He earned an MA in History at Northern Illinois University in 2015. He is also an active union member and former Secretary of AFT Local 6403.

John Stromski is an independent scholar. His book project explores the ways slavery influenced representations of Northern labor throughout the nineteenth century.

Sharon R. Vriend-Robinette is an independent scholar living in Grand Rapids, MI. Her scholarship focuses on twentieth century cultural race-relations in an effort to understand how oppression, power and agency interact. She has been employed in higher education in West Michigan for over twenty years. Professionally and personally, Vriend-Robinette works to insure education systems are equitable and inclusive and that learners at all levels have access to opportunities.