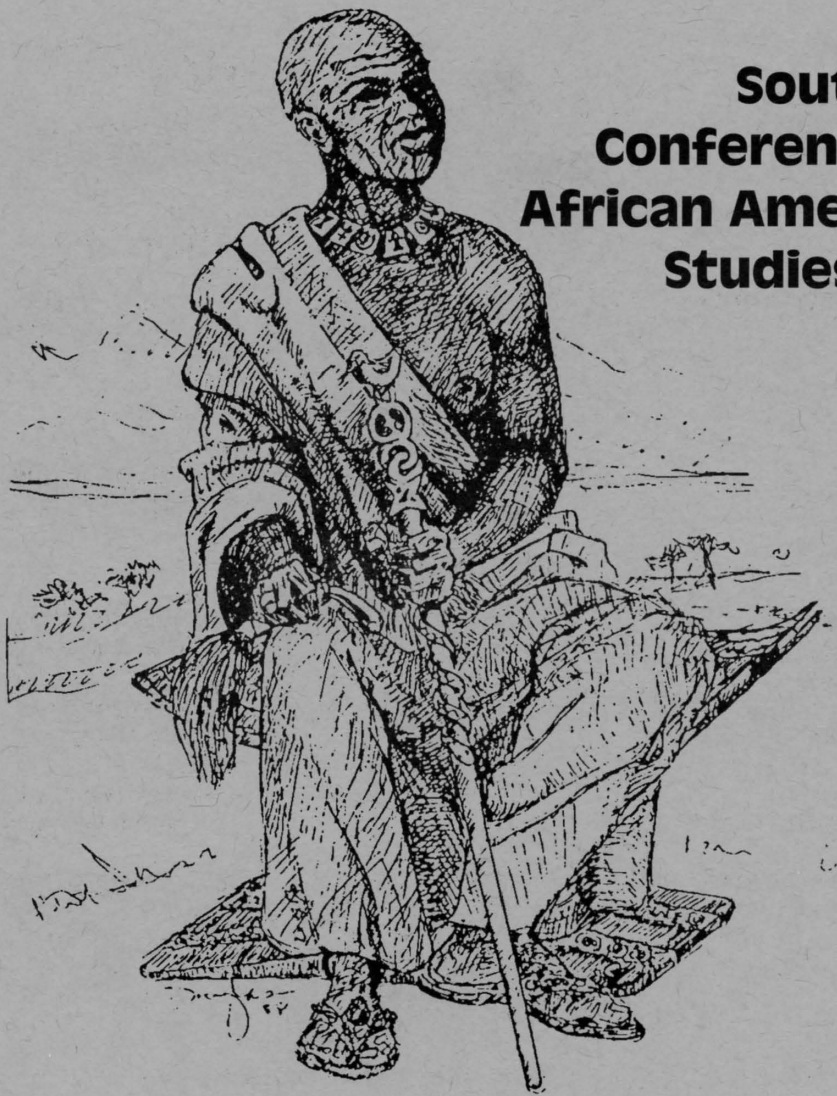
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THE GRIOT: The Journal of African American Studies

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IN ANCIENT AFRICA...
'GRIOT' WERE THE COUNSELORS OF KINGS, THEY CONSERVED THE CONSTITUTIONS OF KINGDOMS BY MEMORY ALONE... IT WAS FROM AMONG THE GRIOTS THAT KINGS USED TO CHOOSE THE TUTORS FOR YOUNG PRINCES... FOR WANT OF ARCHIVES (THEY) RECORDED THE CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF KINGS...

SUNDIATA, DJIBRIL T. NAINE

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Black Political Incorporation and the 1967 and 1968 Cincinnati Uprisings

James N. Upton and Judson L. Jeffries

Using the 1967 and 1968 Cincinnati uprisings as case studies, the political dimension of urban violence is presented by examining the anatomy of these rebellions in the context of African American political incorporation in four municipal areas: the police department, fire department, city council and board of education. In doing so we attempt to establish causal links between the likelihood of unrest and the level of Black political incorporation.

Introduction

The 1960s was one of the most tumultuous periods in American history, as many cities were the sites of violent upheaval. The exact number of urban uprisings is difficult to ascertain. Brian T. Downes states that between 1964 and 1968 there were 329 disorders in 257 cities.[1] The Civil Disorder Clearing House used a different definition and counted, for 1967 alone, 233 uprisings in 168 cities. Still another source reported that between 1964 and 1971, 752 uprisings were recorded in Black communities in 316 American cities. Whatever the exact figures, a considerable number of African Americans were dissatisfied with American society and expressed that dissatisfaction through violent means. The vast majority of these conflagrations, however, were less severe than portrayed by the media. Fewer than one in ten involved a person being killed and only about half of the incidents saw more than ten people arrested. Yet in a small number of rebellions, such as the conflicts in Newark, Watts or Detroit, the level of violence, theft, vandalism and arson was astonishing in its scope.

The frequency and magnitude of these uprisings sent academics scurrying to produce a body of work that attempted to [among other things] identify the forces that gave rise to such violent upheaval. As a result, scholarly writings on American uprisings are in no short supply, but for the sake of time and space a review of that extensive and widely documented literature will not be rehashed here. Oddly, Cincinnati, a city that also experienced tremendous upheaval, has, for reasons that are unclear, not received, the kind of scholarly attention devoted to other cities. Moreover, even though large cities such as Los Angeles, Detroit and Newark have received the lion's share of scholarly attention, one facet of this literature that has been conspicuously absent is the lack of middle-range theorizing[2] regarding the political dimension of urban violence. Few can deny that, politics, values and interests were linked to the revolts of the 1960s. At its core the political nature of urban disorders involves questioning the legitimacy of public authority and demanding greater incorporation into the political system. These factors have not been sufficiently addressed in much of the research about urban uprisings. For example, the political ramifications involved in theories that use notions of deprivation and frustration as products of urban violence need rethinking in order to adequately explain this societal phenomenon.[3] Likewise, the historical-economic and structural-situation approaches must be considered in light of their political significance.[4]

Political Incorporation

The minority political incorporation model of Browning, Marshall and Tabb has served as a theoretical benchmark for research for more than twenty five years.[5] The model holds that for members of a minority community to feel they are part of "the system," they must come to occupy positions of government authority. Minorities who see a dearth of faces that mirror their own in positions of power do not feel they have a stake in the system. Rather, they feel excluded at best and discriminated against at worst. Consequently, residents who do not have a vested interest in the system and who view them-

selves as not only locked out, but deliberately marginalized are likely to express their frustration via non-traditional channels.

Political Incorporation serves both substantive and symbolic functions. The election, appointment and/or hiring of a minority to a position of authority such as city council, police department and the like offers the promise that their concerns will be taken seriously. The idea is that because African Americans have in common a shared sense of oppression, Black representatives will address Black concerns with a greater sense of urgency than non Black representatives. Political Incorporation also serves a symbolic purpose. About Blacks, Michael B. Preston argues that Black elected officials form a link between government and black citizens in a way that whites cannot provide. As more Blacks assume positions of influence, Black citizens feel less estranged from government. African Americans learn by way of their representatives how the system operates and how it can be made to operate on their behalf. Preston furthermore points out that Black elected officials act as role models: and reverse the image of white superiority; they serve to show whites that Blacks can govern just as effectively as whites.[6]

Uprising severity and Black Incorporation

The purpose of this paper is to determine the extent to which the level of Black political incorporation in Cincinnati is related to uprising severity. In this context, uprising severity is a dimensional event, not a unitary phenomenon. That is, one violent episode may not be as intense as another. By viewing acts of violence on a continuum from the least severe to the most severe, uprisings are not isolated or spontaneous acts of violence. Rather, they reflect, on one hand, an endless struggle on the part of African Americans[7] for a redistribution of goods and services and on the other, a determination on the part of the dominant power holders to deny African Americans their share of the bounty. This, in essence, is the perspective of an interactional political-power relationship as presented in this article. As illustrated previously, the problem with most theoretical conceptualizations of urban violence is that they ignore the essential point that uprisings are not just products of frustration and deprivation but, rather, are products of a political system. Rebelling as a form of violence is conceived of as anger directed at the inadequacy of the political system to concede and process demands, and to make political and economic allocations in a responsive and equitable manner.

Why Cincinnati as a case study

Using Cincinnati as our case study, we put the theory- that uprising severity is linked to the degree to which minorities believe they are incorporated into the political system- under close scrutiny. Cincinnati was chosen as our case study for these reasons: First, contrary to popular belief Cincinnati has had a history of violent upheaval and that history has received scant attention in scholarly circles. Second, Cincinnati has languished in the shadows of more popular and bigger Midwestern cities such as Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago; hence we argue that less is known about the political dynamics and impact of the uprisings that occurred in Cincinnati during the 1960s. Third, when scholarly discussions of 1960s uprisings arise in classrooms or at academic conferences Cincinnati is often omitted. Finally, we chose Cincinnati to present a different side of the city than is readily acknowledged. In 2001, Black communities erupted in response to the killing of Timothy Thomas by a Cincinnati police officer. Thomas's killing marked the fifteenth killing of a Black male by Cincinnati police officers over a five year period. Many in scholarly circles who watched news of the uprising wondered, why, in the face of such repression, did it take Blacks so long to erupt. Some reasoned that historically, Blacks in Cincinnati Blacks docile. As this article shows the events of the late 1960s suggests otherwise.[8]

An overview of Cincinnati is essential in order to put the city, its African

American residents and the 1967 and 1968 uprisings in their proper context.

Cincinnati: where life ain't what it seemed

Cincinnati was founded in 1788 and experienced rapid growth during the first half of the 19th century becoming the largest city west of the Alleghenies.[9] Cradled in the southern Bend of the Ohio River, Cincinnati, flourished as a river town with the bulk of its commercial and manufacturing establishments resting on the banks of the Ohio. For Blacks, Cincinnati seemed like a beacon of freedom and opportunity. According to Zane L. Miller, the three largest nationalities to settle the area were Germans, Irish and African Americans.[10] By 1850, the city ranked fourth in the nation in manufacturing, perhaps, most noted for its breweries.[11] The Irish and Blacks shared the Ohio River bottoms with wholesale houses and factories, while the Germans occupied the district dubbed Over-the-Rhine. The biggest influx of immigrants occurred between 1890 and 1910. Without the necessary resources in place to build healthy and prosperous lives, some racial and ethnic minorities, found themselves in a situation similar to the one in which they had hoped to escape. While life in the city proved difficult for some, the African American experience was especially rough.

Despite the fact that legal discrimination in many areas of the city was struck down by developments such as the repeal of the Black Code laws[12] in the 1880s, one local Cincinnati newspaper proclaimed in DuBoisian fashion that the "Color-line is everywhere." Virtually all hotels, restaurants, drinking places, theaters and amusement parks were closed to African Americans and by 1910 housing was completely segregated.[13]Cincinnati's Black community responded to racial discrimination by developing its own social and political organizational life. Between 1880 and 1900, numerous civil rights groups emerged. The most powerful of these groups was the *National Progressive League*, which in 1897 claimed 1,000 members.[14] Perhaps the most prestigious Black political club was the *Douglass League*; it often took an independent line in local politics and had its own clubhouse. Also during that time Blacks formed the Civil Rights League to fight for the right to use public accommodations. However, like the Irish organizations, these Black organizations did not have much cache outside of their own circles.

After World War II and the high tide of the civil rights movement, many manifestations of socially sanctioned racism withered away, and places of public accommodation began opening up to people of all races. While employers no longer openly rejected job applicants on the basis of race with the same fervor, the kinds of jobs that were open to Blacks remained an issue. For example, in 1948 half of the companies in Cincinnati, each of which employed more nearly two thousand workers, did not hire Blacks, and those that did, employed them only in menial jobs. The "job ceiling" still kept Blacks tied to the bottom rung of the economic ladder. And although the Black population increased considerably after 1950, Cincinnati's limited voting system kept Black political representation low.[15]

Ironically, although segregation boundaries loosened during the 1950s and 1960s few Blacks [due to a dearth of promising job prospects] possessed the necessary resources to move into middle class or previous all-white communities. Still, previously majority white neighborhoods such as Avondale and Over-the-Rhine slowly started becoming less white. In the early 1960s Avondale underwent a transition from predominantly Jewish to heavily Black. The Over-the-Rhine area which covers parts of three communities—Over the Rhine (first settled by German immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century, hence the name), West End (the core of Black social and cultural life until it was devastated by urban renewal during the 1960s) and MT. Auburn (an historic neighborhood to the northeast of Over-the-Rhine, overlooking and blending into it) followed suit. In 1950 Over-the-Rhine had been home to 30,000 people, 99 percent of whom were white. During the 1960s Blacks from the West End had moved into the neighborhood together with whites migrat-

ing out of the Appalachian mining communities of Southeast Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

As further documentation will show, many of these same conditions that plagued Blacks in the late 1880s and early 1900s, also existed in the late 1960s.

Rethinking Conceptualizations of Urban Violence

One problem with many theoretical conceptualizations of urban violence is that they overlook the fact that uprisings are not simply products of economic and demographic factors; they are also the result of a lack of political incorporation. Moreover, Peter Lupsha points out that urban unrest results:

> ...as an anger arising from a rational evaluation of the situation. It is an anger directed at the inability and inadequacy of the Political system to process demands, and to make allocations in a responsive manner. It is the gap between the theory and the practice of government in the United States that is one of the root causes of urban violence.[16]

Conceiving of urban uprisings as political meaningful acts-in a struggle between power holding groups- and those who have historically been denied access to levers of power, is a promising and suggestive framework for interpreting urban uprisings. Approaching urban upheaval from a political framework suggests that the phenomenon is not one sided. Some analyses explain violence solely in terms of a defense of the established order rather than in terms of a demand to alter the existing power structure. The activities of those defending the established order may manifest themselves through institutional, organizational or individualistic means. According to Joe Feagin and Harlan Hahn, urban upheaval should be examined in view of the interactional effects between emerging minorities and the existing power holders, and government agents that purportedly represent them. Moreover, a political framework "emphasizing groups with different and competing interests also provides a more satisfactory perspective on the role of government authorities in fostering and channeling the emergence and development of violent protest." They conclude that, the "crucial role of authorities interacting with those challenging their authority has been given little attention in existing theories about urban uprisings."[17] In other words, Black insurgents are not simply victims of perceived [or real] government repression, but are active agents who can impact the conditions under which they live.

The political perspective offered in this article has two distinct advantages over many existing theories in that it illustrates the following: 1) an awareness of the socio-economic conditions (i.e., spiraling unemployment, severe segregation and inadequate schools, etc), and political ramifications of the power structure (i.e. an inability to receive redress by the criminal justice system, disparate policing, and lack of access to levers of powers, etc) in fomenting a climate that gives rise to violent protest and 2) the interactive character of relationships between minorities and the dominant power holders in urban areas. By incorporating these two factors into an analysis of urban violence, the researcher is afforded a better vantage point for explaining and understanding the dynamics of urban upheaval, as well as its structure and conditioning elements.

Gradations in uprising severity in urban centers are reflective of other differences in "riot-torn" cities. Specifically, they are reflective of the level of political consciousness of oppressed groups and the extent to which local governments are not only reflective of the minority population, but represent the needs and interests of that oppressed group. These differences are based on two assumptions: 1) the level of violence will be related to the degree to which African Americans believe they are incorporated into the political system and 2) the extent to which government, on the basis, of that assessment, is willing to engage in certain types of activi-

ties to remedy the matter. Thus, if a city experiences a major uprising, African Americans are highly conscious of their underrepresentation [18] (especially in the city's most visible departments and government units)to the extent that they are willing to engage in extra-legal activities as a way of demanding greater incorporation. If a minor uprising occurs, then one might expect African American incorporation to be higher and the level of alienation, anger and frustration to be lower. Hence, uprising severity as a dimensional concept can help explain both the political behavior, and the attitudes and dispositions of those who live in depressed African American communities.

The concept of uprising severity becomes very important in explaining uprisings as political acts and, consequently, understanding their political dimensions. The following analysis underscores the importance of politics as a force in an uprising situation, and points out the empirical value of making distinctions between different levels of violence. By making these distinctions, policy makers would do well to avoid legislation that does not address the grievances of those most likely to revolt. It is necessary, therefore, to first categorize uprisings in order to better formulate policies that take into account their differences. The level of frustration and anger, as well as the response of power holders, may presumably be less in one uprising than another. Hence, if policy-makers develop initiatives designed to deal with all uprisings in the same manner, those policies will be inherently ineffective as they will inadequately address the needs and interests of their particular constituents. The important implication is that there are distinctions in uprising severity that are relevant in formulating policies to meet specific and unique local conditions.

Hypotheses

Using the Kerner Commission's index to measure uprising severity, the following hypotheses are proposed:

> Hypothesis One: The lower African American representation in city police departments, the more severe the uprising.
>
> Hypothesis Two: The lower African American representation in city fire departments, the more severe the uprising.
>
> Hypothesis Three: The lower African American representation on the city council, the more severe the uprising.
>
> Hypothesis Four: The lower African American representation on the school board, the more severe the uprising.

The independent variable (proportional representation) is used to analyze uprising severity in Cincinnati during the years, 1965-1969. The *Kerner Commission* ranked the uprisings during this period into three categories—major, serious, and minor[19], which will be used as a basis for analysis. This five year period was selected because the majority of the major, serious and minor uprisings that occurred during the 1960s took place during this timeframe. The following is a brief description of the three categories:

Categorizing Uprisings

Major uprisings: These are characterized generally by a combination of the following factors: 1) law enforcement officers or civilians killed; 2) types of criminality including any of the following—sniping, looting, vandalism, arson, interference with firemen; 3) four or more arrests made; 4) involve local police, state police or national guard; 5) action resulting in property damage; and 6) violence lasting two or more days.

Serious uprisings: These are characterized generally by: 1) law officers and/or civilians injured; 2) types of criminality including any of the following—looting, vandalism, arson, interference with firemen; 3) four or more arrests made; 4) police action involving local police, state police or national guard; 6) action resulting in property damage; and 6) violence lasting two or more days.

Minor uprisings: These are characterized generally by: 1) types of criminality including any of the following—looting and vandalism: 2) less than four arrests made; 3) police action involving local police; 4) action resulting in property damage; and 5) violence lasting less than one day.

Black Incorporation and the Queen City

We maintain that African American incorporation or the amount of political power African Americans wield in city government can be quantified and measured by the proportion of political and/or elected offices and jobs in specific areas. This type of representation is referred to as "Stone's Index of proportional Equality."[20] According to Stone, the first law for measuring the political power of an ethnic or racial group is that there must be a direct relationship between its proportion of the population and its proportion of all political jobs and elective offices; thus, Black political representation must be commensurate with its proportion of the population.[21] The four areas [police department, fire department, city council and board of education] were chosen as they were the most high profile government bodies in Cincinnati. Moreover, these are the institutions about which the average citizens is most knowledgeable and are the agencies with which the average citizen was most likely to come into contact.

The four political variables selected for this study, in part, reflect targets identified by the rebels themselves. While the uprisings did not represent an organized attempt to overthrow the existing political structure, they did not however lack a political purpose. In almost every uprising, the absence of African American police officers and firefighters were apparent not only to those who engaged in the rebellion as well as the African American population, generally. City councils and school boards are influential decision-making bodies, affecting the lives of city residents. Stanley Lieberson and Arnold R. Silverman's comparison of uprising and non-uprising cities between 1913 and 1963 generated support for the proposition that the functioning of local government is important in determining whether an uprising will follow a precipitating incident[22]: a) cities with more racially integrated police forces had fewer uprisings; b) cities which had more representative forms of local government, e.g. district elections of city council members and school board members versus city-wide elections, had fewer uprisings; and c) cities with large percentages of Blacks who are self-employed in retail trade such as stores, restaurants, or tavern owners had fewer uprisings. Hence, we can conclude from Lieberson and Silverman's study that Black representation, on the above indicators, influences whether or not an uprising will follow a precipitating incident, and it follows that if Black proportional representation reduces the probability that an uprising will occur, Black proportional representation may also reduce uprising severity.

Rising up Angry: Cincinnati Revolts twice in as many years

Although many people, including scholars do not associate uprisings and rebellions with the city of Cincinnati, the city does have a history of violent upheaval. As mentioned earlier Cincinnati was the site of two uprisings in the early 1800s—one in 1829 and another in 1841. More than one hundred years would pass before the city experienced another major disorder. The first of two revolts that occurred in Cincinnati during the late 1960s happened in 1967. However, the seeds for rebellion were planted two years earlier. Racial tension began to mount in the city beginning in 1965 when an African American man was believed to have murdered a white female secretary.[23] In December, 1966, an African American musician, Posteal Laskey, was arrested and charged with the secretary's murder. In May 1967, he was convicted and sentenced to death. The prevailing sentiment within the African American community was that the city was too racially charged for Laskey to have received a fair trial. They were further aroused when it became known that a white man, convicted of murdering his wife, received a much lesser sentence.

The Black community protested, because the differences in the sentences seemingly reflected a double standard of justice.[24]

A protest demonstration led by Laskey's cousin, Peter Frakes, led to his arrest and being charged with blocking traffic. Many African Americans viewed Frakes' arrest as additional evidence of police misconduct, under the guise of the city's anti-loitering ordinance. Between January, 1966 and June, 1966, Blacks accounted for seventy percent of those persons arrested under this same ordinance. The apparent selective enforcement of the ordinance often accompanied incidents of police brutality.[25] Frakes' arrest served only to spark another massive protest on June 12, at an Avondale junior high school.

An examination of events prior to the Laskey-Frakes incidents; not only reveals substandard social, economic, and political conditions for Black Cincinnatians, but a pattern of political marginalization. Although the city's Black population had reached an all-time high by 1967, the lone Black city council person lost his seat in 1966 (see Table 3). Oddly enough, there were two Blacks on the city council during the 1950s, when the Black population as a whole was significantly smaller. This was undoubtedly due to a proportional representational system that was later changed to an at-large electoral system. The *Kerner Commission* in its study of Cincinnati pointed out that Blacks attributed the lack of Black city council representation to "dilution of the Negro vote through abolition of the proportional representation system of electing the nine councilmen."[26] Moreover, by 1967, although forty percent of the city's school children were African American, the school board comprised of one Black member (see Table 4) and "of more than eighty members of various city commissions, only three or four were Negro."[27] Furthermore, picketing by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at city construction sites to protest the lack of Black membership in building trade unions yielded few results.[28]

Some middle-class African American leaders began to lose influence in the Black community as the promise of jobs never materialized.[29] According to the *Kerner Commission*, almost fifteen percent of the city's Black residents were unemployed compared with four percent unemployment for whites: "two of every five Negro families were living on or below the poverty level."[30] The Black teenage unemployment rate was estimated to be well above twenty percent. As a result, of such a high unemployment rate among Black youth, there were various disturbances throughout the city. For instance, many truck deliveries were interrupted, suggesting that perhaps Blacks were not unaware, that for the most part, the trucking industry discriminated against Blacks; hence few truck drivers were African American. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission confirmed such charges, pointing out that less than two percent of truck drivers in the Cincinnati area were Black. These and other grievances surfaced at the June 12, 1967 protest demonstration in defense of Laskey and Frakes. As the police mobilized nearby to monitor the rally, some Blacks were perhaps reminded of the history of police abuses of power against African Americans in Cincinnati, and violence erupted (see uprising severity, table 5). Whites arrested during the upheaval were charged with disorderly conduct, for which the maximum sentence was thirty days in jail and a $100 fine. On the other hand, some African Americans were charged with violation of the Riot Act, thus receiving a one year prison sentence and a $500 fine.[31]

African American leaders immediately requested an open meeting with city council members in order to present them with a list of grievances and demands. Included were "demands for repeal of the anti-loitering law, the immediate release of those arrested during the disturbance, full employment for Blacks, and equal justice in the courts."[32] The request was rejected, thus intensifying the uprising. The following afternoon the city council held an open session. The chamber overflowed with residents as different speakers took turns criticizing the city's administration. At some point, the National Guard started dispersing those

who were waiting [outside of the chamber] for their turn to testify. When word of this spread; those inside walked out of the city council meeting in protest. By June 18, 1967, the police and National Guard quelled the uprising. Of the total 404 persons arrested 338 were 26 years of age or younger. Of the adults arrested, 29 percent were unemployed.[33] Arrest records indicate that the uprising cut across age, class and gender.

Violence erupted again in Avondale on July 3-4, 1967. Young Black militants, rumored to be incensed over the fact that there were no Black fire fighters, began to set fires and throw bricks at police officers and fire fighters as they arrived to extinguish the fires. Twenty-seven fires occurred over two days, causing an estimated $1 million in damage[34] (see uprising severity, Table 5). The same pattern of violence occurred again in Avondale in late July. The primary targets were fire and police department personnel. Twenty-two fires occurred during those two days of upheaval, causing an estimated $282 thousand dollars in damage (see uprising severity, Table 5), and the police "accidentally" shot a Black bystander in the vicinity of the fire.[35]

Results

In interviews with Chief Bert Lugannani and a Captain of the Cincinnati Fire Department, they reported that there were no Blacks in the Fire Department prior to 1968. They maintained that Blacks were unable to pass the civil service examination in order to qualify. However, one Black applicant did pass the test in 1967, yet was not appointed. The Captain claimed the reason the Black applicant was not selected was that was he was "probably too far down on the list to be appointed."[36] The Cincinnati Fire Department did hire two African American fire fighters in 1968, and three in 1969, bringing the total number of fire fighters to five out of a total of 935 fire fighters (see Table 2). In the Annual Fire Division Report of 1973, Chief Lugannani reported matter of factly that there were "no ready solutions to the problem of attracting more Black applicants who can qualify as Fire fighters."[37] He explained that:

> with the type of competitive examinations legally required and the number of Fire fighters jobs available (25-30 a year) ...'racial integration of the fire service will be painfully slow.' In this context the appointment of three Black Firefighters in 1968, as compared with none in 1967, can be regarded as progress.[38]

Cincinnati experienced another major uprising in the spring 1968 [April 4-11], which was similar to the June 12-18 uprising in 1967. Like the year before, violence erupted in the communities of Avondale, Walnut Hills, Evanston, MT. Auburn, Clifton, Millville, and the West End. Various factors seem to have triggered the violence: 1) the alleged murder of an African American woman by a white police officer, 2) the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and 3) the high rate of unemployment. One Black and one white were killed during the uprising and 304 people were arrested[39] (see uprising severity, table 5).

In the wake of the uprising, two Blacks were elected to city council in 1968, and by 1970 a Contract Compliance Office was approved by city council members. This office was delegated with the responsibility of ensuring proportionate representation of racial minorities on all city related contract jobs. The office had the authority to take away a city contract from a corporation if its work force did not reflect proportionate representation. Sherman Kinney, Jr., Assistant Director of the Office of Contract Compliance, conceded that his office had limited success, though, in enforcing contract compliance, primarily because the office was understaffed. He pointed out that of the $61 million awarded in city contracts during the uprising years, 1965-1969, there were few Blacks working under these contracts. This, despite the fact that Black contractors were made to feel; as if they would receive their fair share of work, as a result, of the Riverfront Stadium project.[40] It was not until 1973, that the Office was able to

enforce effective contract compliance.[41] Kinney also contended that construction and building related contracts were the most difficult to enforce because of discriminatory policies in building and trade unions.[42]

As tables 3 and 4 indicate, African Americans comprised twenty two percent of the city council in 1968 and twenty eight percent of the board of education in 1969. The crucial seats won on the city council in 1968 may, have in part reflected the positive vote in favor of establishing a contract compliance office. On the other hand, the Cincinnati school board was unsuccessful in passing a much needed school bond referendum. Some believe that the defeat of the school bond can be traced to the strong lobbying of a conservative "tax payers" interest group that had successfully elected two of its members to the school board in 1966. As a result, racial violence in the schools increased dramatically, in number and severity, during that year.[43] And finally a proposal to improve police—community relations received little support from city administrators. This proposal sought to hire more Blacks and replace police patrols in the African American community with personnel chosen by a police-community relations review board.[44]

According to the *Kerner Commission's* index of uprising severity, Cincinnati experienced two major uprisings and two serious uprisings (see Table 5). The first major one appeared to have tapered off into two serious uprisings during the summer of 1967. The second major uprising occurred in the spring of 1968. Some of the trends reflected in Black political representation before and after the uprisings in Cincinnati are described below.

Blacks have historically been underrepresented in police departments throughout the country. Not surprisingly, Black Representation within Cincinnati's police department did not increase after the 1968 uprisings (see table 1), thereby rejecting the thesis that the lower Black representation the greater uprising severity. For years, Blacks were grossly underrepresented on Cincinnati's police force, despite the fact that the first Black joined the department in 1886 and the first Black promoted to Sergeant came in 1949.[45] Still, over the course of the next eighty years or so the numbers of Black officers remained abysmally low. For example, in 1968 only sixty four out of 983 police officers were African American. Blacks comprised twenty eight percent of the city's population, and represented six percent of the police force before and after the uprisings.

The Fire department's record was worse than that of the police department. There were no Black fire fighters in Cincinnati prior to 1968 (post-uprising year)(see table 2). Three Blacks were hired in 1968 and two Blacks were hired in 1969, totaling five Black firefighters in the year 1969 out of a total of 935[46] fire fighters, representing less than one percent respectively. In the fire department's case, the hypothesis is confirmed: the lower the Black representation on the Cincinnati fire department, the more severe the uprising.

Cincinnati's city council and school board followed a similar pattern of exclusion. Blacks held one seat on the city council in 1965 reflecting eleven percent of the total number and no seats during the period 1966-1967. As a result, of the April, 1968 uprising two Blacks were elected to the city council suggesting that the uprisings may have been the impetus for creating greater Black representation. Moreover, the two Blacks retained their seats on the city council in 1969, representing twenty percent of the total number. The data, then, suggest that the lower the Black representation on the city council, the more severe the uprising.

At first glance one might think that Blacks were represented well on the city's school board as they comprised fourteen percent of its membership. However, the raw numbers tell a different story. From 1965 to 1968 Cincinnati's school board had only one Black member. An additional African American was elected in 1969 (post-uprising year), bringing the total percentage equal to that of the city's Black population (see table 4), rejecting the theory that the lower the Black representation the more severe the upheaval.[47]

Conclusion

Overall, the data generated in Cincinnati lend some support to the proposition that the extent to which Blacks were underrepresented had an impact on the intensity of the uprisings. However, it is not possible to establish this point conclusively. Some evidence of the importance of uprisings in this context is the fact that as uprising severity decreased, Black political representation was reduced to the previous pre-uprising year(s), perhaps because there was no uprising to stimulate continued efforts on the part of the African American community to sustain the victories already gained. This pattern of increased representation during the post-uprising period supports the notion that uprisings are an important political resource for oppressed groups. However, additional research of a longitudinal nature is needed to confirm the general level hypothesis that the lower Black representation, the more severe the uprising.

One additional point, for clarification, is that the mere numerical representation of Blacks in positions of authority may not necessarily, lead to substantial changes for African Americans. If substantive improvements are not achieved, it is possible that greater Black representation may actually heighten Black people's frustration. Hence, the level of Black representation may not translate into a one-to-one correspondence with uprising severity. Thus, in order to test for a *direct* correlation between these two factors, it is necessary to engage in intensive empirical research in a host of different cities across time. However, it can be argued that in order for the African American community to feel any sense of political incorporation, at least a minimum level of representation is necessary, and it was this lack of incorporation in Cincinnati that was, at least, partially responsible for the severe upheaval.

Table 1
Black Representation on Police Department

Year	Total Police Department	Total Black Policemen	% Black in Dept	% Black in Dept
1965	891	54	6	28
1966	897	57	6.3	28
1967	974	61	6.3	28
1968	983	64	6.5	28

Sources: Annual Reports: Division of Police, Cincinnati, 1964-1967, 1968-1973

Table 2
Black Representation on Fire Department

Year	Total Fire Department	Total Black Firemen	% Black in Dept	% Black in Dept
1965	935	0	0	28
1966	935	0	0	28
1967	935	0	0	28
1968	935	3	.32	28
1969	935	5	.53	28

Table 3
Black Representation on Board

Year	Total City Council	Black Councilpersons	% Black on Council	% Population Black
1965	9	1	11	28
1966	9	0	0	28
1967	9	0	0	28
1968	9	2	22	28
1969	9	0	22	28

Sources: Annual Report, Fire Division, 1964-1967, 1968-1973, Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission, Ohio; also see City Roster-Active Employees, May 16, 1974, also personal interview, Captain Miller, Fire Department, Cincinnati, Ohio

Table 4
Black Representation on Board of Education

Year	Total School Board	Total Black Members	% Black School Board	% Population Black
1965	7	1	14	28
1966	7	1	14	28
1967	7	1	14	28
1968	7	1	14	28
1969	7	1	14	28

Sources: Black Elected Democrats of Ohio, State Hose Annex, Columbus, Ohio; also, Hamilton County Democratic Party, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

Table 5
Uprising Severity (Cincinnati)

Date	Killed		Injured		Types of Activities				
	Law Officers	Civilians	Law Officers	Civilians	Sniping	Looting	Vandalism	Arson	Interference w/Firemen
1967									
June 12-18	0	1	25	38	yes	yes	yes	216	yes
July 3*4	0	0	1	14	no	yes	yes	27	yes
July 27-28	0	0	2	1	no	yes	yes	22	yes
1968									
April 4-11	0	2	12	10	no	yes	yes	90	yes

Sources: Black Elected Democrats of Ohio, State Hose Annex, Columbus, Ohio; also, Hamilton County Democratic Party, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

Date	Arrests	Police Action Called			Damage	Violence
		Local Police	State Police	National Guard		
1967						
June 12-18	404	yes	yes	yes	yes	major
July 3*4	11	yes	no	no	yes	serious
July 27-28	25	yes	no	no	yes	serious
1968						
April 4-11	304	yes	yes	yes	yes	major

Sources:
(a) U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders, before the permanent subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations, Senate, on S.R. 150, 90th Congress, 1st Session, 1967, pt. 1.
(b) Thomas F. Parker, ed., Violence in the U.S., Volume 1 and 2: 1956-71 (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1974).

Endnotes

1. Brian T. Downes, "A critical re-examination of the social and political characteristics of riot cities." Social Science Quarterly Vol. 51 (December): 349-360.

2. Middle range theories are theories from which hypotheses are generated.

3. The theories to which we referred include 1) The Criminality (Riffraff) Theory, The Under or Lower Class Theory, The Recent Migrant Theory, The Teenage Rebellion (Youth) Theory and the Conspiracy Theories

4. The historical-economic approach focuses on long-range trends and the systematic aspect of urban violence, rather than individual attitudes and perceptions. According to this perspective, "people tend to riot because their political and economic alternatives have been cut off, often by conditions beyond their control. Changes in the structure of law, changes in the relationship between the citizen and the polity, changes in technology, and changes in monetary structure, are all examined in this approach as explanations or urban violence." Although the examination of historical and economic changes may provide some insight as to why uprisings may or may not occur, such a framework does not provide an adequate explanation of variation in rebellious behavior. Indeed, John G. White's (1968): 164) assessment of rebellion and non rebellion cities in an attempt to isolate factors causing urban violence concludes that "most of the variation in riots seemed to be accounted for by total population, percentage non-white, median family income, and population density."

The structural-situation approach is the most common research approach to the examination of urban violence. This approach is based on the assumption that "there is an interaction, and interactional effects, between persons and the structure of a given situation" (Lupsha, 1969: 286). Examinations of aggregate data, population growth and

density, unemployment, income level, occupation, and so on, are typical examples of attempts to make statements about the situational concomitants to violent behaviors. The work of Stanley Lieberson and Arnold R. Silverman (1965), are typical examples of this approach. Lieberson and Silverman make an attempt to determine why uprisings occur where they do rather than in other cities of comparable size and location. They concentrate on demographic, housing, occupational, and municipal government characteristics in an attempt to determine the effects these units have on influencing where a riot will occur and why uprisings occur. This approach appears to be very useful as an aid to understanding the source and nature of urban violence and must be included in attempts at middle-range theorizing.

5. Rufus Browning, Dale Rogers Marshall and David H. Tabb, Protest is Not Enough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

6. Michael B. Preston, "Black Elected officials and Public Policy: Symbolic or Substantive Representation? Policy Studies Journal Vol. 7: 197-200.

7. The words Black and African American are used interchangeably throughout this paper according to sound and context.

8. Black communities in Cincinnati also erupted in violence in both 1829 and 1841.

9. Andrew R. L. Cayton, Ohio: This History of a People (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2002); Daniel Aaron, Cincinnati, Queen City of the West (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1992).

10. Zane L. Miller and Bruce Tucker, Changing Plans for America's Inner Cities: Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine and Twentieth-Century Urbanism (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1998).

11. Zane L. Miller, Ross Cox's Cincinnati: Urban Politics in the Progressive Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

12. Although the Northwest ordinance of 1787 prohibited slavery in the north and west of the Ohio River, the Ohio Legislature passed the Black laws in 1803 and 1807 to restrict Blacks' opportunities. The laws discouraged Blacks from settling in the state. Those who chose to make Cincinnati their home were cordoned off from whites, prohibited from attending public schools, or receive public assistance, among other things.

13. James N. Upton, Judson L. Jeffries and Cathy McDaniels-Wilson, p. 2.

14. Miller, 1968, p. 36.

15. Henry Taylor, Race and the City: Works, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati, 1820-1970 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

16. Peter A. Lupsha, "On Theories of Urban Violence," Urban Affairs Review (March 1969), pp. 292-294.

17. Joe R. Feagin and Harlan Hahn, Ghetto Revolts: The Politics of Violence in American Cities (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1973) 42.

18. Underrepresentation means that the number (percentage) of Black that hold positions is not comparable to the number of Blacks in the total population.

19. Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 113.

20. Chuck Stone, Black Political Power in America (New York: Dell Publishing Company Inc., 1970), pp. 64-65.

21. Ibid.

22. Stanley Lieberson and Arnold R. Silverman, "The Precipitants and Underlying Conditions of Race Riot," American Sociological Review (December 1965), pp. 887-898.

23. The Eugene Ruehlmann Papers Show the Dramatic Changes in Cincinnati in the 1960s <URL: http://www.libraries.uc.edu/liblog/2010/02/05/the-eugene-ruehlmann-papers-show-the-dramatic-changes-in-cincinnati-in-the-1960s/>

24. The Kerner Commission, p. 47.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid, p. 47-48.

27. Ibid.

28. Personal interview, Sherman Kinney Jr., Assistant Director, Office of Contract Compliance, City Hall, Cincinnati, Ohio, April-1976. (It was as late as 1971 before the city council established a city contract compliance office.)

29. Examples of such leaders would be Clyde Vinegar of the Cincinnati chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, William Bowen of the NAACP and John E. Hansan of the Ohio Valley chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

30. The Kerner Commission, pp. 47-48.

31. The Kerner Commission, p. 50.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. U.S. Congress, senate, Committee on Government Operations, Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders (S.R. 150, 90TH Congress, 1st session, 1967, part. 1)

35. Ibid, pp. 47-52.

36. Personal Interview, Chief Bert Lugannani and Captain Miller, Cincinnati Fire Department, Cincinnati, Ohio.

37. Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission, Annual Report, Fire Division, 1973, Cincinnati, Ohio, pp. 2-3.

38. Ibid.

39. Thomas F. Parker, editor, Violence in the U.S. Volume 2, 1968-1971 (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1974), p. 27; also, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations.

40. The Eugene Ruehlmann Papers

41. Personal Interview with Sherman Kinney; also see Annual Report, 1965-1969, Department of Purchasing, City Hall, Cincinnati, Ohio.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. The Kerner Commission, p. 155.

45. W. Marvin Dulaney, Black Police in America (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996) 116-117.

46. It seems odd that the total number of fire fighters did not change from 1965 to 1969. How this is so is not clear especially since like any other organization employees within the fire department retire, quit for various reasons, get fired and the like. Departments also fluctuate in size due to recruitment, death and other factors. How the number of firefighters remained at 935 over such a long period of time is puzzling.

47. What are the numbers and define black representation. We need more than the percentages.

Dundus: Disabling the Concept of Race in Namba Roy's *Black Albino*

Vida Robertson

> My father was a wonderful teller of African stories... I vividly remember him telling us that when Ashanti mothers gave birth to albino babes they were regarded as types who were mixed up with magic. They were ill-omens who were exposed until they died.
>
> —Cluade McKay
> "Boyhood in Jamaica"

Within the scope of the African Diaspora, the Caribbean has come to signify an indeterminate and transitional space where individuals from various African tribes have been divested of their diverse, indigenous identities and translated into a homogenous color caste—African slaves[1]. Accordingly, these dislocated people of Africa came to characterize the Caribbean as an unstable, mystical space where the colonized and the colonizer, the slavers and the enslaved, engage in a fierce struggle for survival along its archipelagoes and island chains. The native languages, cultures, and customs of these diverse African peoples were forcibly supplanted first by the Spanish, and then by the English. What emerged were two antagonistic communities whose cultural idealisms amalgamate into what would appear to be mutually exclusive racial identities: white and black. In the logic of the Caribbean, English whiteness and African blackness constitute racial opposites thereby precluding all other racial identities which contest the racial dichotomy as unnatural—racially dysfunctional or, as this essay will argue, racially disabled.

In Black Albino (1961), Jamaican sculptor, painter and novelist Namba Roy challenges the efficacy of essentialist notions of race in the Caribbean, in particular the Maroon notion of race in Jamaica. Roy rejects the idea that the displaced African people of the Caribbean possess some indispensable attribute which racially defines them as black. So in recognition of the destructive effects 1950s British anti-Jamaican sentiments[2] were having on his community, Roy narratively usurps the fundamental assumptions of Maroon identification by employing the racial disability of the black albinic body[3]. As a literary apparatus, black albinism, for Roy, illuminates the destructive effects of race and racism on the eclectic Maroon people of Jamaica. His aim is to relieve his community of the self-hatred, cultural misconceptions and fragmentation produced by the systemic oppression of race. Namba Roy's tale of redemption not only celebrates the rich African history and resilience of his Accompong Maroon tribe but, more profoundly, it also attempts to liberate the African diaspora from the vicious tyranny of radical Afrocentric notions of racial, and I would argue physical, "ability" or normalcy. Black Albino is a revolutionary call for a more inclusive articulation of what it means to be a Maroon, to be black and to be a community. Roy urges his reader to discard not only white supremacy, but also the most divisive and destructive tenets of biological determinism, in order to embrace the rich diversity of a post-racial, post-ableist[4] Jamaica.

Namba Roy takes a great cultural risk in utilizing Tamba, a black albinic protagonist, in his work. To bring Tamba's racial disability into stark relief, Roy artfully situates his albinic protagonist in the Accompong tribe's royal family. The juxtaposition of a black albinic child in a privileged social position creates a deliberate intra-racial tension in the novel. As the only son of their heroic chieftain, Tamaso, Tamba would be revered and beloved by his fellow Maroons as a future leader. However, Tamba's albinism disqualifies him as a suitable successor. His very presence causes a great amount of angst and serves as the narrative catalyst in the novel.

The Black Albinic Body

Since albinism in many African diasporas is perceived as the result of

witchcraft, an albinic protagonist is overly determined by negative stereotypes. Linguists Frederick G. Cassidy and David DeCamp note that individuals with albinism are "a source of horror to the folk throughout Jamaica, [many] believe that an albino is conceived as a result of intercourse during menstruation" (1229). Similarly, in her critical meditation on skin, Claudia Benthien explains that:

> albinos have traditionally been the object of special superstitions. In many religions, they were regarded as superhuman; normal social rules did not apply to them. For example, they were prohibited from marrying, were expelled from society, and oftentimes were even killed right after birth. (Benthien 170-1)

What Benthien, as well as Cassidy and DeCamp, make clear is that, in an African cosmology, the black albinic body is viewed as a non-African expression of subjectivity. Because of the stark absence of pigmentation, individuals with albinism are barred from customary social, political and religious practices if they are not already the victims of community-sanctioned infanticide. Ngaire Blankenberg historicizes Benthiem's observations when she argues that "the Albino was White before the White man came...this White Black person has existed for centuries and continues to exist, the fluidity of his being-ness point(s) to a rupture in the core African identity of race (13). Blankenberg suggests that the white blackness of the albinic body is the precursor for racial difference in an African racial paradigm. Thereby, African subjectivity itself is a delineation of the perceived racial dysfunction of the black albinic body. The "fluidity of beingness" of black albinism ruptures the essentialized definition of what it means to be an African, as well as, undermines the mutual exclusivity undergirding African and English identity. For this reason, the black albinic body serves as a critical site for illuminating the ideological discontinuities in a radical Afrocentric theory of race. It provides the cultural critic with a distinctive perspective positioned on the very fringe of marginality.

In Roy's novel, black albinism represents, what Judith Butler, in another context calls, the "constitutive outside" of the authentic Maroon identity. Butler explains the "constitutive outside" as the:

> exclusionary matrix by which subjects are formed thus requires the simultaneous production of a domain of abject beings, those who are not yet "subjects," but who form the constitutive outside to the domain of the subject...In this sense, then, the subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, "inside" the subject as its own founding repudiation. (3)

The black albinic body stands as the "abject" whiteness which qualifies African blackness. It serves as the foundation on which Maroon identity is established, yet albinic Africans are neither African nor Maroon. Tamba's black albinic body "form(s) the constitutive" or "abjected outside" of Maroon subjectivity. Tamba's "chalky white face" and "milky white" hair, eyebrows and head exclude him from being an authentic African (Roy 25). Although his father is a "jet black," "full-blooded son of Africa" and his mother... excluded any doubt of her pure African strain," Tamba is not considered African himself (Roy 12). Through a process of exclusionary forces the black albinic body emerges as a racial enigma—the White Black person. Insomuch as the black albinic body is ideologically situated in this way, it becomes a political canvas on which Maroon society transmits its most profound fears and desires.

Race and Disability

As a protagonist, Tamba, uniquely serves as a literary trickster[5] in the text. Cultural critic Lewis Hyde explains that

the "trickster is the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox" (7). As a trickster figure, Tamba's black albinism allows him to function as a racial doppelganger which unveils the ideological utility of the Maroon's racial identity. His paradoxical racial construction places him outside the narrowly erected definitions of identity. Tamba is neither black, white nor mulatto[6]. Although culturally, he epitomizes Maroon identity, it is his albinism which defines him. Tamba's inability to properly signify an African identity renders him ideologically impotent and therefore racially disabled. Thus, the racial ambiguity and ambivalence of Tamba's albinic body facilitates an unprecedented examination of racial discourse. The narrator alludes to this uncanny ability to deconstruct racial discourse when he explains that Tamba is "a dundoes—a raceless child with a color which belonged to neither of his parents... (His) face had none of that pink which even children of full-blooded Negroes show at birth, but a whiteness which was completely convincing of its permanency (Roy 26-27). Tamba's very introduction into Maroon society is characterized by his physical deficiency. The lack of "pink" pigmentation situates the child outside the normative bounds of race. The permanent whiteness, or racelessness, of albinism compels a paradigmatic shift in both the Maroon's definition and aesthetics of blackness.

Drawing from recent scholarship in the field of disability studies, I argue that the racial construction of Tamba is one that treats albinism as a kind of racially marked extraordinary body. Such bodies illuminate the function—that is the utility—of race. As Rosemarie Garland Thomson explains, ""disability is a representation, a cultural transformation or configuration, and a comparison of bodies that structures social relations and institutions." (6). Thomson's theory urges us to recognize that the disabled characterization of the black albinic body structures the social and institutional power of this Maroon tribe. Hence, my investigation of Tamba seeks to examine how his black albinic body transforms both the concept of race and disability. As Thomson suggests, we, the reader, must turn away from the orchestrated spectacle of the disabled body and look more critically at the manner in which the comparison of bodies configure Maroon society. With this Namba Roy's project becomes clear. Tamba's racial disability incapacitates the racial matrix by contesting the conflated notions of race, color and community, and thereby it destabilizes the notion of race as an inherited biological trait. Racial disability is an unimaginable reality which tests the ontology and epistemology of race itself via the rhetoric of disability.

As is often the case of disabled characters, Tamba's physical differences represent both excess and lack. Not only is Tamba's body comparable in size, shape and function to the normalized physique of the average Maroon, but he possess the culturally revered sixth finger on his right hand. According to Maroon custom, this sixth finger is culturally indicative of his exceptional aptitude as a warrior and leader. As both a cultural paragon and a disabled character, Tamba concurrently occupies two contradictory identities. As a literary trickster, he is simultaneously classified as both a superhuman and a subhuman, thereby creating a peculiar textual reverberation which enunciates the liminal space where racial identity and disability converge. Such an overlap in systems of oppression compel a reexamination of the very processes of subjugation and a reevaluation of our prima facie notions of both race and disability.

Disabling Race

Roy's novel begins as Chief Tamaso, leader of the Accompong Maroon tribe, eagerly anticipates the birth of his long awaited son. The Chief's protracted inability to produce a male heir provides his arch-rival, and blood-brother, Lago, with an opportunity to call into question his legitimacy as a leader. In the ensuing physical confrontation, Lago sustains a crippling injury when his back is broken. Resolved not to kill his "blood-brother", Tamaso rejects Lago's plea for a merciful death, indirectly sentencing him to live the

remainder of his life as a misshapen "hunchback" (Roy 35). Soon after this confrontation, Tamaso's wife, Kisanka, gives birth to Tamba. Set on revenge, Lago convinces the villagers that the strange color of Tamaso's son is an omen against their leader. Lago has Tamaso and his family banished from the village. He then takes command of the army and assumes leadership of the tribe. Under Lago's leadership, the Accompongs grow negligent in their duties and are soon overcome by the English army. The English completely destroy the village. Only later will Lago redeem himself by sacrificing his life to free his captured tribe members. Battles waged in the name of difference, then, are fought not only within the family and within the tribe, but also against the forces of colonization, establishing the narrative as deeply structured by violence.

Paramount to this narrative arc is the Maroon belief that "only the physically perfect survived" hence any child designated as "deformed" was to be killed by the midwife at birth (Roy 23-24). Although Tamba's albinism is deemed unworthy of death, his birth causes the midwife to act "as if some great evil had shown its head beside the bed of confinement." With great difficulty and fear of punishment, the aged midwife Nahne explains to her leader Tamaso that the pigment of his long awaited son "is not like that of our people." With this she explains that the "child's face is whiter than that of a bakra[7], and its hair is like the cotton that comes from the great cotton trees on the hills" (Roy 24). The midwife Nahne states that "it" "is not like that of our people." Her language highlights the ontological rift created by the black albinic figure. Being that Tamba's racial identity is not in accordance to the Maroon racial dichotomy, his humanity is effectively suspended. This suspension of humanity converges with Benthien's analysis on the cultural significance of pigmentation concludes that albinism's "absence of any kind of color makes the body into something that is radically open to interpretation" (168). The ontological rift Tamba's birth creates in the Maroon's racial paradigm can only be reconciled by ideologically and rhetorically rescinding his humanity. Nahne's seemingly innocent statement typifies the contextualization needed to sustain the Maroons customary practice of isolating, stigmatizing and destroying "deformed" bodies. The practice of infanticide is an overt act necessary to repress all human articulations that do not meet the community's definition of physical perfection. It must be noted that the mere presence of marked or physically different bodies in the novel does not disturb the community. Many soldiers and citizens bare the scars of war and slavery. However, the birth of disabled bodies, those seen as a sign from beyond, irreparably threatens the Accompng tribes' perception of their own humanity. By methodically excluding the disabled bodies of fellow Maroons, the tribe galvanizes its notion of the "physically perfect." This exclusionary process both dissuades the existentialist threat of black albinism and compels an intimate human characterization of race.

Unwilling to accept the exclusionary polemics of his native tribe, Tamaso stands as an agent of critical inquiry. Tamaso openly challenges his tribe's essentialist notions of race. Rather than distancing himself from his newborn son, Tamaso embraces him. He has no doubt whatsoever that he is the father of the child (Roy 30). His willingness to both acknowledge and unconditionally love his son runs counter to Maroon custom. When first presented with his son's indeterminate color, Tamaso playfully disarms the exclusionary definition of what it means to be a Maroon. During the initial conversation with the midwife Nahne, she says "It is his color, Tamaso, it is not like that of our people!" Tamaso cleverly replies "but no picni[8] has ever been born with the color of his people..." (Roy 24). With this quip, Tamaso discursively dismantles the mythologized homogeneity of the Maroon's racial identity by critiquing a fundamental inconsistency in the prevailing racial paradigm. His newborn son creates an opportunity to call attention to the clearly recognizable variations in Maroon skin pigmentation. Tamaso's seemingly offhand joke alludes to the expansive history of the black diaspora. In the dynamic history

of the African continent, war, migration, colonization and slavery have prompted innumerable transformations in the population. The tribe's mythical notion of blackness does not synchronize with the varied pigmentations represented in this ancient, diverse, and sexually-exploited community. Thus, the Maroons, as do their African ancestors, consist of a wide range of pigmentations all ideologically bound by a common identity. For Roy, it is not color that creates community; it is the presence of a common cultural consciousness.

As if to substantiate Tamaso's quip, Roy also exhibits his heterogeneous philosophy of community in the mixed raced construction of the fair-skinned lieutenant Jacob. Jacob is "a friend of Tamaso and one of his most trusted lieutenants" and "the only man in the village who could have been called a mulatto." Jacob is a tall and slim man "with a color which made it easy to guess that perhaps as much as half the blood in his veins was that of a bakra." Nevertheless, the Maroon people never "treated him differently from themselves, and he did not seem to expect it otherwise" (Roy 36-37). Roy explores the complex variations of skin pigmentation that comprise this community of "black" people. Maroons ranging from the "jet black" hue of Tamaso to the "mulatto" complexion of Jacob are acknowledged as full-fledged members of the tribe. As a matter of fact, "there were a few men and women on the hill who showed the traces of the blood of the bakra," and yet the tribe did not perceive their racial identity any different than their own (Roy 162). Maroons of all shades imagine themselves as a collective and unified people. Nonetheless, Tamba's racial disability falls outside the inclusive practice of this eclectic paradigm. As the anthropologist Charles Carnegie puts it, "what the dundus lacks is visible 'blackness' in any of its permissible shadings; he is therefore seen either as lacking, as reflecting poorly on, or as letting down 'the race'" (472). The absence of any perceivable pigmentation "reflects poorly on...the race." Carnegie's analysis allows us to see that Tamba's actual complexion is not the issue. Rather, it is his failure to properly participate in nation building is more accurately the point of contention. Tamba's racially disabled body lets the race down by its inability to distinctively personify racial affiliation. Namba Roy facilitates a theorization of race as something bodies do—not a quality that bodies possess. Considering this, Roy's racial narrative transforms into an interrogation of normality. Both racial and ableist systems of oppression are established on normative ideals of the body. Roy is fundamentally interested in critiquing the ways in which his Accompong cultural paradigm appropriates bodies as a means of constructing a national narrative.

Keeping with this theme, Roy constructs Tamba's father and mother as characters marked by physical difference as well. Ironically, Tamaso's and Kisanka physical abnormalities are emblematic of their valor and strength. Tamaso is characterized as having a "gift of the gods (given) to a family of great warriors" (Roy 40). Similar to his son, the extra finger on Tamaso's eating hand is believed to be a sign of his tactical expertise as a leader and gallantry as a warrior. Tamaso's prowess, strength, courage, and empathy make him an extraordinary character. As David Mitchell in "Narrative Prosthesis and the Materiality of Metaphor" explains, "disability serves as a symbolic symptom to be interpreted by discourses of the body...(it) inaugurate(s) the need to interpret human differences both biological and imagined" (16). In the case of Tamaso's abnormality, his sixth finger furtively makes the reader aware of the ideological practice of interpreting physical difference. As a character, Tamaso serves as the literary referent which foregrounds the cultural perspectives that interpret his difference. By narratively placing Tamaso, the cultural paragon, outside the bounds of normality, Namba Roy illustrates how disability functions as a symbolic symptom of culture. Roy utilizes Tamaso as a means of rehabilitating the body from the effects of normalization.

Similarly, Kisanka, Tamba's mother, also suffers from a physical abnormality, however hers is not genetically inherited. Kisanka is disfigured and disabled by the torture techniques of the English

(Roy 45). Because she was unwilling to expose Tamaso's plans for rescuing her fellow Africans from the bakra plantations, the soles of her feet are held over an open flame until she is rendered unconscious. Resolute in her conviction to liberate her people, Kisanka is tortured to the point that "she [now] limp[s] on the toes of one bare foot, the heel never touching the ground" (Roy 12). Like the distinguished shuffle of a wounded soldier, Kisanka's physical abnormality personifies her strength and loyalty. Her disability stands as the embodiment of her unyielding commitment to her husband and the freedom of the Maroon people.

In the same manner, the villainous Lago, Tamaso's arch-rival, is also characterized by his disabled body. Like Tamaso and Kisanka, Lago's physical abnormality personifies his disposition as a character. During his confrontation with Tamaso, Lago is thrown from a steep slope severely injuring his back. His disfigurement is emblematic of his shameful display of Maroon virtue. Lago's disabled body serves as a symbol of his arrogance, his cowardice, and his ignorance. Consequently, Lago is described as a mean spirited, grotesque figure whose injuries have left him with "a kind of hunch" (Roy 57). His "neck had sunk between his shoulders, and his body was twisted as if the upper part was a bit of a misfit on the lower" (Roy 57). This description of Lago's incompatible halves is indicative of his disjunctive disposition. While phenotypically a Maroon, Lago's shortsight and all-consuming self interest fails to live up to the high standards of the tribe. Throughout the novel, Roy highlights a broad range of physical abnormalities as a means of illustrating the various ways physical difference is interpreted by discourses of the body.

Cleverly, Roy inserts Tamba into this diverse continuum of disabled characters as a means explicating the ideological function of race. The unusualness of Tamba's racial disability, coupled with his other physical differences, creates a profound ideological disjunction. To quote Mitchell, Tamba's "disability serves as the 'hard kernel' or recalcitrant corporeal matter that cannot be deconstructed away...by philosophical idealisms" (17). In Roy's novel, Tamba's albinism disjoins the association of color and race by materializing a "recalcitrant" body which cannot be deconstructed away by racial discourse. His corporeal reality necessitates an immediate reconfiguration of the Maroons social and institutional paradigm. Race is exposed as one of the vehicles through which the human body is produced and enters the domain of cultural intelligibility.[9] It can no longer be understood as a peripheral, epidermal manifestation of an already acknowledged material body; rather, race is one of the mechanisms through which the body comes into being. The tribe's treatment of Tamba and his family illustrate the manner in which race generates the requisite bodies demanded by the social and institutional configuration of the national narrative.

Tamba's white skin restructures his entire family's relationship to the community. Tamaso's failure to produce a "normally" pigmented son brings into question the legitimacy of the Maroons' belief in the superiority of the six finger warrior. Kisanka's fidelity is questioned and she is repeatedly castigated for giving birth to a "monster" (Roy 105). And, Tamba is banished from the village because his body does not effectively signify the Maroon ideal. As Blankenberg asserts, the black albinic body "represents those... whose ancestry and cultural identifications are at odds with [their] physicality, forcing a reevaluation of categories, that assume these things are indivisible" (Blankenberg 42). Tamba's inability to conflate race and color, ancestry and physicality, disability and culture, transforms the Accompong's social relations and institutions.

The narrator describes how irresoluble ambivalence has prompted several tribal traditions and institutional practices which engender fear and disgust toward the white African body. As a means of preserving their definition of blackness, Maroon society embraces dark pigmented skin as normative, beautiful, healthy and good. In contrast, white skin is demonized as deathly, evil, and ugly. Roy portrays the annual celebration of the African festival of

Junkunu as a typical example of this practice. The legend surrounding this festival states that:

> ...before the measuring of time, in the land of their fathers some strange white animals now known as horses, invaded the land, with riders on their backs. They must have been spirit horses, evil ones, for they were white, and white was the color of bad spirits. The white horses and riders swept through the land, and after them came drought, death and famine. (Roy 73)

The adoption of this festival fortifies the essentialized racial binary proposed in the Maroons ideal. Not only is white unexplainably the "color of bad spirits" but white is also undeniably evil. The spirits in the legend are evil by virtue of their color. During these yearly festivals, dancers hold a large carving of a white skeleton while the tribe throws "worthless things" at it. Their hope is that "the white monster spirits will stand afar and see how the people despise even the image of them, and they will be ashamed and depart from the land" (Roy 74). By encoding whiteness as a "monster," the narrator exposes not simply how the community thinks about racial difference, but how race, itself, serves a particular ideological purpose. This legend shapes the Maroon cosmology by confirmings the tribes' innate identity, physical normativity and natural superiority.

Tamba's black albinism, like the monstrosity of racial whiteness, generates great fear and suspicion among the people (Roy 72). He is blamed for "causing the illness and death" that has recently overtaken the tribe. Tamba's disability signifies the tribe's worst nightmares. In an unprecedented display of solidarity, Namba Roy truthfully acknowledges the plight of albinic Maroons. He carefully documents the manner in which the black albinic subject is culturally discarded as a "worthless thing" in society. Roy textually demonstrates that an essentialist African ideology makes it virtually impossible to either articulate or embrace an albinic African subjectivity. As a consequence, Tamba emerges from the racial matrix as the evil "other" who is intrinsically different and deficient. Predictably, Tamba, like the Junkunu, is ejected from the village to the mountainous wilderness adjacent to the tribe.

Successfully extricated from the national narrative, but still residing in the Cockpit Mountains, Tamba's albinism is met with open hostility and violence. His racial nonconformity is perceived as an act of betrayal, fostering vehement rage in his fellow Maroons. On his way to retrieve water from the nearby river, Tamba experiences this for the first time.

> 'Black bakra!'
> 'Spirit!'
> "Dundoes!'
> 'Picni-with-the-old-man's-hair!'
>
> They laughed at the bewilderment and shame on his face. They mocked the whiteness of his skin and the pinkish color of his eyes, but all through the attack, there was fear in their eyes. Fear of this stranger who was like no-one they had ever seen before, and whom, it was said had caused the illness and death of many of the kin and perhaps the parents of many amongst the crowd. They forgot he was the son of Tamaso. The father was not with the boy so it was impossible for them to associate him in their minds with this strange monster. (Roy 88)

Tamba's familial association with his revered father, his standing as a Maroon by birth and culture, and his position as a defenseless child are all nullified as a consequence of his albinism. By disabling Tamba's racial identity, Namba Roy illuminates the destructive nature of Afrocentric essentialism. By foregrounding the Junkunu festival, Roy demonstrates the way that disability and difference are discursively generated by culture. The "son of Tamaso" is transmuted into a

"strange monster" by normalizing of black skin. As Carnegie asserts 'blackness has gradually become one of the fundamental attributes of Jamaican nationality" (Carnegie 472).

As a liminal figure in the text, Tamba transforms the racial typography by underlining the performativity of blackness. Roy demonstrates the absurdity of racial categorization by altering Tamba's appearance. In this illustration, Tamba is playing alone near his family's new camp grounds and Roy explains:

> There was a small fireplace beside the leanto built against a great almond tree. Tamba went there and carefully rubbed all over his white face with crushed charcoal, talking to himself as he did so. After a while he began working on his hands and arms to the elbows, but he went no further. Then he turned to his goat Bahbah, and Bangie (his dog) for their opinion... Is my face like that of my mother and father now? ... Do I look like the picnies of the village? (Roy 94)

Namba Roy artfully paints a picture of albinic liminality. Tamba stands before the reader as a half black, half white spectacle. His face and arms to the elbow are black while his forearms, hands, torso and legs are white. As Tamba rubs the charcoal on his face, his white body performs blackness and thus begins to traverse the racial divide. Tamba is both black (charcoal) and white (skin) and yet belongs to neither black nor white communities. It is at this nexus of race and culture that Tamba becomes a racial enigma which transcends and circumvents the exclusionary politics of biological determinism. As a black bakra or white Maroon, Tamba makes it possible to access multiple and contradictory subjectivities. His disability grants him the unique ability to transverse the racial matrix. He is the quintessence of contradiction. Through Tamba' s racial duplicity and ambiguity, Namba Roy invites his reader to imagine a post-racial Jamaica—one that is "both" and "neither" English or African.

Since his skin always simultaneously signifies "race" and "the body," Tamba also subverts the notion of disability. Tamba's transformation from a pale-skinned "monster" to a charcoal black adolescent corresponds with his transformation from disabled to abled-bodied (Roy 105). Not only does the charcoal-smearing moment in the novel foreshadow Tamba's assent, it also critiques the naturalization of disability. By simply concealing his disability with charcoal, Tamba performs racial able-bodiedness and emerges as a fully functional Maroon. Able-bodiedness, like race, is therefore something to be performed—not possessed. It is not a natural, fixed or biological feature of humanity. Bodies do not have able-bodiedness. Societies require able-bodiedness of its members. Disability is thus a socio-political designation given to bodies that fail to meet the arbitrary standard set in the cultural construction of normalcy. Roy rejects the notion of disability as an indication of individual's natural capability; he reasserts it as a form of social performance. Lago cruelly relays this view in his castigation of Kisanka:

> Is not this child of thine feared and made an outcast by every child in the village? Do you think that there is any picni who would want him for a brother? Or any woman child who will want him for her mate? ... 'Thy child shall die alone, Kisanka! ... It will be a great day for the picnies of the village when they learn that thy monster who is of no race no longer lives, to bring fear and curse upon them! (Roy 104-105)

Lago explains that the tribe has no use for Tamba precisely because he is of no use to the community. Tamba is perceived to be of no value as a brother, as a husband, or as a fellow tribesman. His presumed lack of utility justifies his status as a pariah. The tribe's perception of Tamba's performance of Maroon-ness is what constitutes his disability—not his actual capability.

Roy underscores the inherent flaws of this supposition by suddenly shifting the social context of the novel. Guided

by information obtained by the capture and torture of Lago, the English armies successfully attack the Maroon village. In the subsequent battle, the Accompong village is overrun. Desperately, the Maroons send their children deep into the Cockpit Mountains in order to escape the assault. Now isolated from their parents and the social mechanisms that actively shape their lives, these runaway children attempt to reconstruct a Maroon social paradigm. In the new social sphere, the necessities of the present circumstance come into direct conflict with the ideology of the past. As would be expected, Lago's two sons try to dissuade the other children from associating with Tamba by reminding them that he is a "witch[10]" (Roy 187). This attempt to reassert his designation as racially disabled is unsuccessful because of Tamba's extraordinary knowledge of Maroon survival techniques. Tamba's exceptional education in military strategy by Tamaso, coupled with his training in medical arts by the tribal medicine man Tahta, sufficiently prepared him to survive in the mountainous forests. His mentors' hope was "to build the child up into almost a superior being, so as to counterbalance his handicap." Tamba learned "the art of stalking... how boil food without water...how to make fire with flint... how to treat the broken limbs of animals, (and) how to make bows and arrows (Roy 101-102). Tamba's remarkable knowledge and skill make him the defacto leader of the children. His previous station as a pariah is effectively overridden by his adroit ability to provide safety and provisions for his fellow Maroons. Reminiscent of his father, Tamba "saw to it that all his plans were broad enough to take in his uninvited guests" (Roy 188). Although his physical difference is readily apparent, Tamba's designation as a disabled individual changes as a circumstance of his environmental change. Roy reveals normality as an ideological tool in service of a national narrative. Disability, Roy shows, is not a consequence of nature; it is the byproduct of the body's compulsory compliance to a normative ideal.

In a stroke of irony, Roy narratively renders the "normal" children of the tribe culturally disabled. Their inability to perform vital aspects of their Maroon identity disqualifies them as "useful" Maroons. These children do not function properly in their new mountainous exile. They are unable to successfully negotiate the demands of their environment thereby classifying them as physically impaired. In this satirical moment, Roy affirms that normality and disability are not biological opposites. Rather, each is an ideological characterization that varies with each culture and environment.

Roy ends the novel by gesturing toward a more inclusive Jamaica. In the final chapter, Tamba, in an effort to provide food for his new tribe, contracts leprosy. This highly communicable disease sentences him to a life of humiliation and seclusion. Tamba's newly contracted leprosy places him in an identical social position as his albinism previously did. In a narrative sense, Tamba's leprosy[11] serves as a metaphor for black albinism. Namba Roy recreates the conditions of Tamba's birth as a sort of literary déjà vu. As was the case with albinism, Maroons with leprosy are intensely feared, exiled and subject to communally sanctioned execution. Again destined to die alone, Tamba sequesters himself in a deserted cave where he anticipates his fellow Maroons assembling to stone him to death. Seemingly doomed to fulfill Lago's curse that "he would die alone, (and) friendless," Tamba awaits his tragic fate (Roy 201). The other children gather around the mouth of the cave and to his surprise:

> one by one they came, took his now unresisting hand and rubbed it on their naked bodies. The girls were the last to come, and when they had taken part in this ceremony of their own making, they sighed as if they had just got rid of a heavy load.
>
> It was the boy Jo (Lago's son) who broke the dead silence that followed (emphasis mine). 'Now there is no need to run away, 'Little Brother,' he said softly. 'For now each one of us has rubbed ourselves on thee!' he said triumphantly. (Roy 203)

In this instance, this neoteric Maroon tribe, unlike their parents, chose to embrace their physical differences. Unwilling to construct their flourishing community on capricious physical delineations of the body, this new generation of Maroons recognize the speciousness of their parents outdated ideology. They surrendered the exhausting notion of "physical perfection" by empathizing and accepting their "Little Brother" for who he was and not what they needed. By embracing Tamba's abnormality, disease, and difference, this emergent Maroon community "triumphantly" validates physical diversity in all its forms. As the children encircle Tamba, they rub away the fictitious notion of biological determinism and inaugurate a rich and eclectic national narrative. Roy displaces the mythos of normalcy by forfeiting his culture's fetishized notions of the body. In his novel, essentialist dogmas give way to the lived, corporeal experiences of the community.

Black Albino is a beautifully written romantic tale that openly interrogates the manner in which the body is co-opted by the corresponding idealisms of race and able-bodiedness. By setting his novel at the cultural crossroads of the 18th century Caribbean, Namba Roy provocatively interrogates the manipulative interplay of normalcy, radical Afrocentricity, and ableism on the bodies and minds of Jamaican subjects. He adroitly evokes black albinism as a narrative mechanism which thwarts and unveils essentialist suppositions that undergird this complex society. As a literary trope, the black albinic body allows us to more accurately understand the effects our normalizing national narratives have wrought on the lives and bodies of so many.

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1. This is well documented in Robin Blackburn's The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800.
2. Directly following World War II, large numbers of workers from Jamaica and Barbados are recruited to help in post-war reconstruction. Although the nation deeply needed the influx of cheap labor, many sectors of British society denied West Indian immigrants access to labor unions, social clubs and housing. Accordingly, racial riots erupted in many British cities such as London, Birmingham and Nottingham and racist organizations like the White Defense League and the League of Empire Loyalists propagated fascist, anti-immigration legislation. In both recognition and support of the political movement to [re]humanize albinism, I have consciously refrained from the use of the term "Albino." This term relegates albinic individuals to oversimplified constructions of their existence similar to offensive terms like cripple and idiot. Although, these terms have formal definitions, each dehumanizes the individual by equating their entire existence to their condition.
3. discrimination or prejudice against individuals with disabilities
4. Tamba is the name of the eldest child and only son of Namba and Yvonne Roy. Tamba Roy is a Head teacher, educational consultant, author and professional storyteller in Nottingham England.
5. The trickster figure is a literary trope found throughout world mythology. In Jamaica, this figure is often personified in Anansi/Ananse the Ashanti Spider. The trickster is deceptively clever at undermining and reversing authoritative roles of power and prestige. This unruly character utilizes his/her talents to exploit the cultural hierarchy as a means of exposing injustice, securing freedom or teaching restraint. Trickster figures reorganize the way we understand the world.
6. African American writers have long utilized the "mulatto" a hybrid racial identity that challenges the immutability of a black and white dichotomy (e.g. Charles Chesnutt. Frances Watkins Harper, Langston Hughes...). While these literary attempts do problematize racial aesthetics they equally reestablish race as a biological and natural phenomenon. Hence, many mulatto characters are said to "pass" or pretend to be white. The concept of passing assumes static and mutually exclusionary racial categories.
7. A Jamaican term for a white plantation owner.
8. young child
9. This theorization of race is borrowed from Judith Butler's analysis of sex/gender in Bodies that Matter.
10. The term witch speaks more profoundly to the belief that the albinic body is the result of (and vessel for) witchcraft. It does not carry the gendered connotation expressed in the North American usage of the term.
11. Leprosy, or Hansen's Disease, is a condition of the skin which causes disfiguring skin sores, nerve damage and progressive loss of function in the hands and feet. A common symptom of Hansen's Disease is the appearance of white blotches on the skin. Due to this leprosy and albinism are often stigmatized in similar ways. Many biblical scholars believe that the leprosy spoken of in the Old Testmaent scriptre is actually vitiligo—a progressive form of albinism.

A. Roman Gladney

The Process

I saw you today, but I don't think you felt my eyes traveling your body longer than a lost man in search to find himself
Elegance, Beauty, and a rich smile that would make Bill Gates forfeit his wealth
I like you. Or am I just infatuated with the way that you can do the simple things ...
LIKE ... "Hold a Conversation" a trait that many women do not have
Or the ability to be cute but at the same time make me laugh
Hold my attention without even having my mind in your grasp
But I ask myself will she blame me for the scars of her past
Because through my 22 years of being on God's green earth
I have come to realize the "NEXT" man sometimes has to Survive the "EX" man's hurt
I guess that's why even in there "NEXT" sometimes women still see the "EX." You Understand
Maybe it's a part of the plan that I see you and want to be your man
But maybe just maybe we are meant to be nothing more than friends
Because I live a pretty crazy lifestyle that you might not understand
My pain & My fears have made me into the man I am today
So I will step forth, be a man and say .....I HAVE TRUST ISSUES
I will wonder where you are in those times when I miss you
I may not tell you "I Love You" but it will be evident in the way that we make love and I kiss you
I pray my complete honesty doesn't lead to a bigger issue
Because I want to be truthful but at times the truth people can not stand
And most times "THE TRUTH" is not believed to be "THE TRUTH" when it comes from the lips of a MAN
Think again if with that last line you feel otherwise
Because if you took a poll of all women I guarantee you would be surprised
Maybe it is I who contributed to the perpetuation of lies
Or many you should come to the realization that God has never made two of the EXACT some guys
I hope your past effecting the maybe future is not the case
Because if that is so then for your love no man will ever win the race
It's kinda funny how I am looked at you, wrote this poem & visualized an unclear daydream
But to your face I did not say anything
Its kinda funny how you can create a whole scenario with a person to whom you have never said a thing...To Be Continued

B. Translation by Rabiul Hasan

Maladies
By: Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal

Do not go so soon, the library is closed, the dormitories are under heavy locks,
the streets are empty, and the unruly sun patrols alone in the vast withered fields.
Stay here, do not go so soon! In this room the shadow of your soul may hide
me from anxiety, from omens, or from the wrath of fate for a few moments.
Perhaps having trekked a long way, going around a few reluctant chambers,
you came to me without notice, lifting the harsh curtain. Drops of sweat were
upon your face; and some disheveled hair hung loose on both sides of your forehead.
Having waked in the night, you alighted from a train and treaded upon the dews
through the noonday sun—I do not know when you came to see this city. But you
had better stay here for a while, do not go so soon. I have been peddling maps of this
city for quite a few decades now—or you may say—for about a century.
O beautiful lady, do not be afraid, if with a violent pull I tear apart your frock
and rend your breasts with my pointed nails—look, look at the elegant map
of the bloody city with its complicated maladies.

*Translated from the Bengali by Rabiul Hasan.
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C. LaQuita Middleton

Freedom Piece

Freedom
Liberty
Emancipate
This proclamation
And set my people free

Free their minds
So, ignorance won't consume their souls

Free their spirits
So, their zest for freedom won't grow old

Ol' Willie did a number on our people
Lynching not only black bodies
But also our black temples

Putting dimples
In our thoughts and beliefs
And called himself friendly

Pitted us against each other like enemies
For centuries

And now we despise each other
Like negros ain't kin to me
And you

Sucking up to the white man like his friendship is true
That "if you white/you're right"
Is what we hold true
Breastfeed to our children and
Set it as the foundation of the things we knew
And know

When it was just
A short time ago
He placed us in the back of the bus
The streetcar, the train
We rode on that freedom bus as
He beat us with billy clubs to the brain

Ask john lewis, jim peck, jim zwerg
Forget what you read
It's about what you heard
And hearing
They won't teach you this in the educational system!

Told us we weren't good enough to drink his water
Though it came from the same drain
Gassed us like exterminators
On that Selma to Montgomery trail

Bombed our beloved churches even on Christmas
Had us dodging dogs and water and not even missing

We
My people,
Need to stop asking permission
And start making decisions
On our own future
And that of our children
Because the longer we wait
The longer we suffer
And frankly,

We don't have the time.

And we are tired.
Like Fannie Lou Hamer said, Chile,
"I'm tired of being sick and tired."

Tired of the perception of my race
Determining my place
In society

Tired of my people relinquishing their power
Because they think they have none

And I don't know who you came from
But I came from the Almighty

The lone omnipotent

And if I'm his kid
Then no one can take away or give me
My freedom.

Silly of Me

Silly of me/To think that I/Could ever have you for my guy.../
How I love you/How I want you...

It was silly of me to think that I
Could ever save a whole race of folk
With my mind
The stroke of my pen
The typeset of my pc

Must have been a joke from me
To think that I
Could ever emancipate my people
From mental slavery

Must have been foolish of me to
Think that I
Bore the same hope
As the slave
Possessed the same courage
To Shuttlesworth God gave

Must—have—been—out—of—my—e-ver—bles-sed—mind
To think that I
Could ever lead my people out of bondage
Through an angry white sea
Parting way to give us free –
Dumb of me
To think that maybe—
I'd be that person to actually dedicate my life
Liberating a people who didn't know they were bound
Resurrecting the unknowing dead from the ground
Loosening the shackles from their brains
And freeing their minds.

Oh, yes, it must be silly of me
Just like it must have been for Dr. King,
Gandhi, Martin Luther,
Toussaint L'ouverture
Before they saved many of their people
Bound by oppression
Depression,
Suppression,
And I'm just guessing
That many of their peers considered them
Ludicrous, fruitless, even stupid
For doing things that their own
Fear wouldn't let them do

Silly of me to think that I
Am just as needed as Nat Turner,
Mr. Prosser, Mr. Vesey
Yes, many have called me crazy
For contesting female subjugation
Like Susan B. and Elizabeth Cady

They be understanding the need for female equality
Against sexist iniquity.

Born black and female
I'm at the bottom of the totem pole
Though my days are not old
I've been told I have an old soul

And right now
My soul's been crying out for my people
I'd ride or die for my people

And the time is now

For us to take control over our lives,
Our situations, our future generations

And if it takes me being labeled as "silly"
Then silly be me
The power be within me
The power be within the people

All hail the power of the people!

they shouldn't have let me taste freedom

they shouldn't have let me taste freedom.

they should've left me in the back of the colored section
up in the balcony
in the back seats
still begging to be free.

they should've left me thriving off colored water
no, they shouldn't have bothered
to let me near their children in school
letting my blackness intrude
on their children's lily white mentalities
creating fallacies
on the things they thought they knew...

no, they shouldn't have let me taste freedom
because it's just like chicken
and i want to indulge in it in every single way

died, fried, laid to the side
baked, caked, castrated

i want freedom like watermelon

succulent, red, grown in hot places
on the front porch all over my black face.

no, i don't think they should've let me taste freedom
because the spirits of my revolutionary fathers blaze through my eyes
like panthers—black—
and i'd like to see them take freedom from NAT

no, he wouldn't have that!

what about my fireblazing mothers
who endured murder, familial separation,
forced miscegenation
humiliation
on a daily basis

i would like to see the day
harriet tubman became re-enslaved

we wouldn't even know white people existed
in this age.

and as i speak from the african side of me
the seminole and cherokee
kicks and screams
begging to be free

no, ma'am, we shouldn't have let those white faces off those boats

we should've taken arrows and bows to their throats
until they choked

coached them right back onto those boats
oh, pinta!
oh, maria!
we should've sent them back screaming for Jesus!

no, we shouldn't have believed them.

our new friends???
man, please!

they came
discovered our land already found
turned around
and tried to tie us down
as slaves
but we didn't play

we matched their murder
with massacre
the sight of their blood
didn't deter our desire
to maintain what was rightfully ours

and, yeah, many of our people died
and we cried
as we traveled the trail of tears
while conquering our fears
we died
inside

when they took our whole land
and narrowed it down to just one state

yeah, we hated it, but
we equaled the slate
with this thing called cas-I-nos
and now they bottoms up like whinos

bring all their money, their lives
giving it to the ones
they tried to cause full demise to
and for that, we love you,

so, drink,
be merry,
bring us all your fruit
because your fruit
makes our trees grow
fruitfully.

so, yes, i'll take my freedom with kool-aid, all red
take it as you may,
but i'd be dead sleeping in my grave
before i be somebody's slave!

because now that i've tasted freedom
i'll fight to the death of the world
to protect the freedoms of my little girls.

nah, they shouldn't have let me taste freedom!

D. Leonard Slade, Jr.

On the Protests in the Midwest

Protect, O Lord, your faithful workers, whose lives
Rest unmercifully on politicians' cold hearts;
Even those whose Unions fought with blood
When all our descendants ate their dry bread;
Remember, if it be your will, the hungry and homeless,
Who have not health care
Unprotected by the greedy and rich
That care not for your humble servants.
The leadership in the White House
Depends on you in Heaven. His prayers
Can be answered only by you: our God of thunder
Love and righteousness, our King of the Universe.
Tyrants may grow in your land
But your laborers with help from you
Will destroy their injustice with generosity
And give all milk and honey needed now.

Lament

Mother, mother, where are you now?
They took you away from me,
Left me crying. Now I cannot guess
What songs you must be singing.
I will always wonder.
You plowed behind a mule in peanut fields,
Cooked dinner for nine children
When the stars burned the night.
You prayed under the bloody moon when owls listened.
In the fields every day
Before the roosters crowed,
You crawled on your knees picking cotton
As the sun scorched your skin.
Mother, mother, where are you now?
They took you away from me.
Left me howling like a wolf.
I hear voices in the sky.
Now I know the songs you are singing.
I know where you are.

Of Death

There is a sunset, daily,
That, in the morning,
Has an orange rise
And peek through trees.
Darkness gradually disappears
When a hearse passes neighbors'
Houses taking a casket
To a country churchyard cemetery.
The hole is deep,
The casket lowered, then
Buried in darkness, covered with black dirt,
Indifferent to the sunrise,
But rooted in eternity.

The Word Sweetheart

The word "sweetheart" is amorous

Lustful and luscious, full of
Juicy kisses, savoring slowness
Of movement, squeezing like
An orange

Holding hands,
Massaging streamy
Sugar skin

Eyes closed
Body hungry for oneness, then fast breathing

An explosion of love.

Down to Earth

They monitor citizens' money
To ensure all is well.
They manage institutions
And live in huge houses
And, yes, drive Mercedes Benz cars.
They preach the Gospel in crystal cathedrals
And live high on the hog.
They swindle money on Wall Street,
They worship material things
And savor physical pleasures.
They become down to earth
And enter their second home:
Prison.

Brutal

Two feet of snow fell
All over New York State.
Temperatures dropped to -10.
Trucks removed snow from streets
And spread salt everywhere.
Schools closed for two days.
Children enjoyed sleigh rides
Down steep hills
Bundled in heavy clothing
Laughing and throwing snowballs.
Old Man Winter welcomed
Their celebration.

Hard Boss

(Inspired by Langston Hughes)

I went to my boss,
Said I have no money.
Went to my boss,
Said I have no money.
My boss said, Colleague,
Can't you just be my sweet honey?

I cried in her office,
She refused to hear me.
Cried in her office,
She refused to hear me.
A man's tears she said
Will never change pretty me.

I wish I had looks to
Persuade like the movie star.
Wish I had looks to
Persuade like the movie star.
I'd kiss her at the drive-in theatre
In the back seat of my car.

I Prayed

I prayed a lot. Will the right woman marry me?
Will I be a sweet husband?
Will I be a good father?
Will my mother-in-law love me?

Will I get an undergraduate and graduate degrees?
Will I earn a full professorship?
Will I receive university tenure?
Will I publish creative and scholarly books?

Will my daughter finish college?
And get a lucrative job?
Will my wife be happy?
And forgive me of my transgressions?

Will I become a better Christian?
Will I always help somebody?
And love my neighbor as myself?
And stand for that which is right?

Will I cry at my mother's funeral?
Will my siblings love one another
After my parents go to Heaven?
And continue to worship God?

Will I enjoy good health rather than great wealth?
Will I always walk in the rain?
And admire the bloody moon?
And have a heart of deep gratitude?

I left my prayers at the feet of Baby Jesus
And took my body outside
And greeted the morning sun
And wiped away my tears.

The Ambulance

In the traffic
and rain
I saw the ambulance
in red
on a slippery
street
moving
cautiously
slowing
to inconsiderate drivers
horn blowing
sirens screaming
and tires burning
through the dangerous city.

Tonight

Tonight is an evening of
dogs sleeping and cats purring.
The parents of one-year-old sleeping triplets
are so happy.

How Powerful

How powerful
and courageous
you appeared always

From the time
I played with rocks
until your last whisper.

Many attempted
to destroy you cursing
the light for your destruction

in the world community.
Yet you outlived them all,
divinely happy

Nonverbal Communication

Cold looks
Frowning faces
Dry greetings
Moody dispositions
Limped handshakes
Ignoring someone
Rolling eyes
Head dropped
Snoring during speeches
Communicate hidden messages.

Everything

He had everything he thought
Lucrative jobs with generous benefits
Pretty wives with expensive clothes
Twenty-room brick houses with servants
Rolls Royces with shining wheels
Big bank accounts with billion dollars plus
And the need to seduce voluptuous women
Or rape them for more power.
Satan celebrated.

How to Reinvent America's Public Education System

Alice Marie Stanback

Abstract

This article presents a framework for reinventing America's public education system based on an analysis of recent research findings, a discussion of why a new public education system is needed, and the author's personal insights into the functioning of America's public education system. Over the past 20 years there have been many attempts to reform public education; yet today, America is ranked number 15 among educated nations. Based on the analysis of various research findings, the reform efforts have not been effective in restoring the United States' preeminent ranking among these nations. At a Cambridge Forum, Massachusetts' State Representative Jay Kaufman presented a lecture examining the mission, structure, funding, and governance of a transformed school system. He suggests that a transformed public school system would look quite different from the one Americans know today. The United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan remarked that the performance of American students relative to their peers in other countries should be a wake-up call for the nation. President Obama stated that America is at a pivotal moment in history once more; one which requires building new partnerships, adapting to new circumstances, and remaking itself to meet the demands of a new era. Today the competition for the best jobs and industries favors countries that have entrepreneurial citizens who are free-thinking, forward-looking, creative, and innovative. He asks, and if we fail, who would take our place, and what kind of world would we pass on? Lastly, a synopsis of the discussion is presented.

Introduction

> Since philosophy is the art which teaches us how to live, and since children need to learn it as much as we do at other ages, why do we not instruct them in it? ... But in truth I know nothing about the philosophy of education except this: that the greatest and the most important difficulty known to human learning seems to lie in that area which treats how to bring up children and how to educate them... (On Truth and Reality, 1997-2011).

In the 16th Century, Michael de Montaigne, a French Philosopher, expressed the above sentiments regarding educating children. In light of the abundance of literature recently written about this field, and the abundance of laws recently passed in an effort to reform public education in America, de Montaigne's sentiments are still applicable today. Over the past decade there have been many attempts to transform public education in America; yet today, America is ranked number 15 among educated nations. Based on the declining international ranking, and recent research findings, the author concludes that America's educational system should be reinvented rather than perpetually reformed. Today educators tinker, fixing problems at the edges, and adopt best practices that are already in the field. They rarely shed light and invent something that is not yet on the table or in the books (NPR, 2003). The purpose of this article is to discuss why America's Public Education System needs to be reinvented and to set forth a new framework for reinventing it. The discussion begins with answering the question, why does America need a new public educational system?

Why Reinvent America's Public Education System

The author's analyst of recent research findings indicates that

America's standardized test scores are lagging behind those of many other educated nations. It is ranked 15 among these nations. The following is a discussion of the findings and a discussion of a transformed American public education system by State Representative Jay Kaufman.

Recent Research Findings

Why does America need a new public education System? At the release of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD)Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 results, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan remarked that "...A sobering report on the performance of American students relative to their peers in other countries should be a wake-up call for the nation" (ED.govBlog., 2010).

> The latest scores of the world's 15-year-olds on an international test of reading, math and science show the United States is merely an average performer, whose growth during this time of rising demand for highly educated workers has been stagnant. 'The mediocre performance of America's students is a problem we cannot afford to accept and yet cannot afford to ignore'. (ED.govBlog., 2010).

The report measured how well students from more than 70 economies were prepared to meet the challenges they may encounter in the future. The following is Secretary Arne Duncan's summary of its findings:

- In reading literacy, 15-year-old American students were average performers. The U.S. effectively showed no improvement in reading since 2000. Overall, the OECD's rankings have U.S. students in 14th place in reading literacy among OECD nations.
- In mathematics, U.S. 15-year-olds are below-average performers among OECD nations—ranked 25th. After a dip in our 2006 math scores, U.S. students returned to the same level of performance in 2009 as six years earlier, in 2003. U.S. students outperformed their peers in math in only five OECD countries.
- The most encouraging finding from PISA is that our average science score is up. In 2006, American 15-year-olds had below-average skills in scientific literacy, compared to their OECD peers. Today, U.S. students have improved enough to become average performers in science among OECD nations, earning 17th place in the OECD rankings (ED.govBlog., 2010).

The Secretary further stated that

> The hard truth is that other high-performing nations have passed us by during the last two decades...In a highly competitive knowledge economy, maintaining the educational status quo means America's students are effectively losing ground (ED.govBlog., 2010).

Next is a summary of the Nation's Report Card for Reading 2009 issued by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. He stated, once again the results show that the achievement of American students' isn't growing fast enough.

> The achievement gap didn't narrow by a statistically significant amount in either grade. Like the NAEP 2009 math scores released last fall, the reading scores demonstrate that students aren't making the progress necessary to compete in the global economy. (United States Department of Government, 2010).

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that

> Only about a quarter of the 2009 high school graduates taking the ACT admissions test have the skills to succeed in college, according to a report on the exam that shows little improvement over results from the 2008 graduating class. The Iowa City, Iowa-based ACT said 23% of this year's high school graduates had scores that indicated they were ready for college in all four ACT subject areas, or had at least a 75% chance of earning a grade of C or better in entry-level courses. Last year, a similar ACT analysis found that 22% of the class of 2008 was college-ready (The Wall Street Journal, 2009).

The findings also revealed that the percentage of 2009 ACT-tested high school graduates meeting College Readiness Benchmarks were in English 67%, Reading 53%, Mathematics 42%, Science 28%, all four 23%. The level of preparedness was worst in science, where only 28% of students were ready for college-level biology. In Math only 42% were deemed prepared for college algebra (The Wall Street Journal, 2009).

The president of the Alliance for Excellent Education, Bob Wise, said the United States is not making the progress it needs to make in education. As a result, President Barack Obama is offering states, public schools, and colleges additional federal funds to launch new initiatives. (The Wall Street Journal, 2009). Secretary Duncan expressed that

> We shouldn't be satisfied with these results. By this and many other measures, our students aren't on a path to graduate high school ready to succeed in college and the workplace. President Obama's agenda for school reform is focused on improving student achievement. People across the country need to work together to make these reforms happen. That includes elected officials, community leaders, educators, parents, and students themselves. We all need to build a better future for our children and our country (United States Department of Government, 2010).

Jay Kaufman's Discussion of a Transformed American Public Education System

At the final program on *School and Society* at Cambridge University (Cambridge Forum), Massachusetts' State Representative Jay Kaufman, Director of *The Project on a New Public Education* at Brandeis University, presented a lecture examining the mission, structure, funding, and governance of a transformed (new) school system. The discussions came about as a result of American teachers, taxpayers, policy makers, and parents looking for answers. Although school reform has been discussed and attempted many times over the last 20 years, they are still not certain that public schools are really preparing students for life as citizens, workers, and responsible adults. Therefore they set forth the proposal that society needs to renegotiate the social contract with public schools. Kaufman's basic premise was that much of the contemporary debate regarding reforming public education is about fine tuning and fixing a system that is largely out of date, and largely designed to address an age, an era, whose time is passed. He suggests that a transformed public school system would look quite different from the one Americans know today. He began with a discussion about the architecture of schools today (NPR, 2003).

The architecture of America's public education system dates back to the days of Horace Mann, who proposed the first public education system the world had ever seen. It was designed to meet the needs of an agricultural system, not the society in which Americans live today. It was designed for a time passed, not a time to come. Clearly the mission of public education has changed since Mann's day. Kaufman suggests that changes in the mission should parallel fundamental changes in other aspects of the system. Such changes are not evident in the structure of public education today.

According to Kaufman, today's educational system is organized along very neat disciplinary lines, and designed for students to learn from 7am until 2 pm. Teachers operate for the most part in isolation and have very little opportunity for collegiality (NPR, 2003). Assessment and testing focuses on what students have learned, not how they've learned or that they can learn. School buildings look the same all over America. Furthermore, the method in which public education is financed is also outdated.

Schools are financed by property taxes, which causes inequity in public education. When America's first educational system was instituted, schools serviced only the children of white landowners. This is not congruent with contemporary society, nor would it be with a future one. Additionally, the governance of public education is antiquated.

School systems and buildings are organized and governed much like a traditional *top down model.* In the 21st Century, successful businesses and organizations do not operate in this fashion. If they do, they will not be successful for very long. Contemporary models of management styles are more preferable today than the top down model. Moreover, Kaufman sheds some light on what he imagined a new public education system should look like. The following are his insights on what one might take into account when reinventing the features, the dynamics, and the architecture of a new public education system.

According to Kaufman, society must embrace institutionally, as well as intellectually, that there is an explosion of knowledge in the world today, and what society learns today will pale in comparison to what it will have to learn tomorrow. At the rate that information is being introduced to society, people need not focus on specific details or facts, but be prepared to continue learning for an entire lifetime. Workers in the marketplace today will most likely change careers seven times in their lifetime. Presently, America's public education system is developed around students from ages 3 to 18, and at 19 learning ends. The system is built upon a model that does not encompass perpetual learning or perpetual growth. Additionally, teaching, learning, and measuring success is focused on an individual not a collective body.

In public schools, individuals do not act independently, they work collectively in teams, yet they are measured individually. Moreover, people learn, collect information, and teach very differently. One size does not fit all, and there are variations on a theme. Consequently, he introduced the concept of *learning centers.*

Kaufman's design for a reinvented public education system would include learning commons, places in a community where everyone could come to learn and to teach. Such institutions would address the needs of the entire community, regardless of age. Regarding governance, he would do away with the present State Board of Education. It would be replaced with an "Accreditation Authority".

An Accreditation Authority would ask the following questions of any entity seeking accreditation: How will you serve the public interest? How would you guarantee that you are/would not discriminate? Can you guarantee that you are not affiliated with any denomination? How can you guarantee that you are a public institution serving a public end? How can you prove that you are worthy of receiving public funds? What is your pedagogical approach to education? How are you going to manage yourselves? How are you going to finance yourself? What is your budget going to look like? What areas will you focus on in terms of budgetary priorities? How are you going to hold everyone in the system accountable? How are you going to measure failure and success and what are you going to do about it? What is the curriculum going to look like? How are you going to ensure that the people who come through your system are empowered for lifelong learning? How are you going to make sure that your students get the basics that we all agree they need, e.g., civic responsibility? By example, how will you teach learning commons?

Additionally, each entity would need a set of five year goals. At the end

of a five year period, it would be evaluated. If it had not met the stated goals, it would lose its accreditation. The process of accreditation would be one of constantly renewing ones license, as opposed to one that exists without anyone taking stock in what it's doing. An Accreditation Authority would allow for the perpetual learning of a school system and the diversity of learning. It would empower the community and develop an informed citizenry. It would be the source of responsible information for parents, families, and taxpayers. Lastly, Kaufman discussed equity, the "balanced wheel of society".

Kaufman stressed concern that today there is inequity in public education, both economically and racially. The economically disadvantaged have fewer choices, and having fewer choices creates inequity in education, e.g., children with wealthy parents travel and study abroad. This inequity must be addressed and compensated for in public education.

Kaufman considers the most immediate challenges to be (1) finding all the various constituencies that need to be *at the table* and (2) finding those who are willing to engage in *the conversation.* He himself noticed that citizens in his district are not concerned about his job. He is aware that inequity still exists between the races and between the rich and the poor in America. He pointed out that schools are more segregated today than they were a decade ago. Furthermore, he stated that during the last great wave of reform effort in Massachusetts, *The 1993 Education Reform Act,* was instituted because *The Mass Business Alliance for Educators* concluded that most of their workers were untrained and un-trainable. Adding to the argument, the author suggests that the subsequent insights also be considered in the discussion.

The Author's Insights into America's Public Education System

The following are the author's insights on what one might take into account when reinventing America's public education system. The discussion begins with the United States' pivotal point in history.

The United States at a Pivotal Point in History

In his recent address to the British Parliament at Westminster Hall, President Obama expounded upon the threat that faces Western Civilization today. He proposed that

> As new threats spread across borders and oceans, we must dismantle terrorist networks and stop the spread of nuclear weapons. Our two nations know what it is to confront evil in the world.Today, we confront a different enemy. Our nations are not and will never be at war with Islam. Our fight is focused on defeating al Qaeda and its extremist allies. In that effort, we will not relent. And as we fight an enemy that respects no law of war, we will continue to hold ourselves to a higher standard—by living up to the values, the rule of law and due process that we so ardently defend. That is the beacon that guided us through our fight against fascism and our twilight struggle against communism. History tells us that democracy is not easy. We also know that populism can take dangerous turns—from the extremism of those who would use democracy to deny minority rights, to the nationalism that left so many scars on this continent in the 20th century. Let there be no doubt: The United States and United Kingdom stand squarely on the side of those who long to be free (The White House, 2011).

Many postulate that the East and the West are heading towards a clash of civilizations.

Samuel Huntington, the late Harvard political scientist, prophesied a "clash of civilizations" nearly two decades ago. It was rejected then, but today it is being looked at more seriously than previously (Huff Post World, 2011). Although this clash is more visibly

evident in the bombing of the Twin Towers, its more elusive impetus within American society will be a clash between Sharia Law and Democracy. Webster Dictionary defines Islamism as the faith, doctrine, or cause of Islam; a popular reform movement advocating the reordering of government and society in accordance with laws prescribed by Islam (Merriam Webster Online, 2011).

> Even today, after Huntington's seminal work has been discarded once, revived after 9/11 and then discarded again, the clash-of-civilizations paradigm is creeping back into the headlines—if only to be rejected somewhat less vigorously this time around. But in the context of the Arab Spring, Huntington's theoretical framework may be illuminating in a way that his insistence on 'civilization identity' never allowed him to consider (Huff Post World, 2011).

The influence of Islamism is already entrenched into American society. United States Ambassador William B. Milam said in a speech to Pakistani officials, "The greatest challenges we will face in the years ahead will be of a social nature" (Islam For Today, October 9, 1998).

The Associated Press (2011) reported that a controversial Arabic-themed public school exists in Brooklyn, NY—the Khalil Gibran International Academy. Its founders were strongly criticized for opening a dual-language middle school that would teach a diverse student body about Arabic language and culture. But opponents charged it would promote Islamic extremism (Associated Press, 2011). There was no mention of teaching American patriotism in this school. Teaching Arabic language and culture without teaching students to be patriotic towards America could be viewed as a medium for propagating Islam and Sharia Law in America.

As a result of a lack of civic education being taught in America's public schools today, retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor developed the website, iCivics, in an effort to help alleviate this deficit. "iCivics is a web-based education project designed to teach students civics and inspire them to be active participants in our democracy" (Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, 2011). Justice O'Connor is concerned that students are not getting the information and tools they need for civic participation and that civics teachers need better materials and support.

> Civics education is declining in our nation's schools. In nearly half the states, students can graduate from high school without being required to learn anything about civics or American history. As a result, Americans today understand too little about our government. Only about one-third of Americans can even name the three branches of government, much less describe what they do. Young Americans cannot be expected to become effective citizens and political leaders unless they understand how our government works (Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, 2009, pg. 2).

America's present public education system is not designed to meet the challenges of today, nor the challenges it may encounter in the future. The author concurs with Justice O'Connor, in that, civic courses should be taught in every public school in America. The author suggests that there is also a lack of American patriotism taught in public schools. While addressing the British Parliament, President Obama stated that after a difficult decade that began with war and ended in recession, our nations have arrived at a pivotal moment once more.

> Together, we have met great challenges. But as we enter this new chapter in our shared history, profound challenges stretch before us....These challenges come at a time when the international order has already been reshaped for a new century. Countries like

> China, India, and Brazil are growing by leaps and bounds.... And yet, as this rapid change has taken place, it's become fashionable in some quarters to question whether the rise of these nations will accompany the decline of American and European influence around the world. Perhaps, the argument goes, these nations represent the future, and the time for our leadership has passed (The White House, 2011).

Although the opposite is true, internationally and internally, certain factions are attempting to eradicate democracy and Western Civilization, e.g., al Qaeda seeks a religious war with the West. According to President Obama, al Qaeda smothers the rights of individuals, and thereby subjects them to perpetual poverty and violence. There are grave consequences that accompany a religious war. This is one reason why it should be mandatory for civics and patriotism to be taught in public schools in the United States, particularly those of Islamic origin and persuasion.

Moreover, China is striving to become the number one nation in the world. America and Britain cannot afford to stand still, and the nature of their leadership will need to change with the times. This will require building new partnerships, adapting to new circumstances, and remaking themselves to meet the demands of a new era (The White House, 2011).

> ...today, the competition for the best jobs and industries favors countries that are free-thinking and forward-looking; countries with the most creative and innovative and entrepreneurial citizens (The White House, 2011).

If America and Britain are to maintain their advantage in a world that's more competitive than ever, they will have to redouble their investments in science and engineering, and renew their national commitments to educating their workforces (The White House, 2011). The author questions the feasibility of this without redesigning public education to meet the challenges of this new era. The President said that America and Britain must lead economically, but is this feasible without them leading educationally? Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said:

> I really view education as the civil rights fight of our generation, that we have a moral obligation to do something dramatically better for children and to do it now. Our children have one chance at a quality education, and if we don't provide it, I think we perpetuate poverty and we perpetuate social failure. So this is an extraordinary opportunity, but this is a fight to me that is about a lot more than education, it's really a fight for social justice. It's the right thing to do for our children; it's the right thing to do for our country. If we want to continue to grow as a country, we need an educated workforce (The U.S. Government Channel, 2009).

The following are insights the author gleaned as a result of personal experiences within America's public education system.

For a different perspective of America's public education system, the author refers the reader to the *Education Nation* series, a 2010-2011 NBC production, and *Waiting for "Superman"*, a 2010 film produced by Davis Guggenheim. These two productions shed light on the good, the bad, and the ugly of public education in America today. The subsequent are some of the author's personal insights into public education in America. The reader is to assume that the author has experienced these occurrences, seen them, and/or has firsthand knowledge of them. This is not an exhaustive account of the author's experiences within public education, and a presupposition to the discussion is that not all public schools have a discipline problem, but nationwide, discipline is paramount in a large number of American schools.

Discipline in America's Public Education System

> Functionally, cognition is a fused, cyclical, interrelationship between the cognitive components which are the senses, intellect, emotion, will, behavior, and stored knowledge. Cognition is influenced by history and culture. Children bring their lives to school (Stanback, A.M., 1992).

Discipline is one of the root causes of America's failing public education system. In public schools, some students' actions indicate that they are in attendance solely to destroy the teaching-leaning process and its environment. Other students openly cry out in frustration, and consider dropping out of school because they cannot learn in such an environment. Some students stop trying to learn and take on the behavior of the deviant students. Advanced and exceptionally brilliant students are not taught on their level in a regular classroom. They are forced to bear the constant disruptions of other students. In some instances they give up and settle for mediocrity. Learning appears to be somewhat futile for them in such an environment. Furthermore, programs like CLUE, Creative Learning in a Unique Environment, are not designed to meet the daily educational needs of these students.

Ann Robinson, president of the National Association for Gifted Children, and Dawn Settle, president of the Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education, say that one often overlooked, yet critically important, issue is the long-standing neglect of our nation's high-ability students, particularly those living in underserved and disadvantaged areas (The Morning Call, 2011).

A contemporary reading session in public school may look like this: There are four or five small, self-contained classes with a pace tailored to special-needs students (Washington Post, 2011). A teacher is instructed by an administrator to give instructions to the advanced and *on target* groups first, and afterwards to let them work independently. Next the teacher is to focus on the special-needs group or groups. They are to be taught first and on a daily basis. The instructor does not necessarily have to work with the advanced group on a daily basis. When the severely challenged group is left unsupervised, because the teacher needs to work with an advanced or *on target* group, it becomes unruly and off task. Students do things such as have personal conversations, tear up supplies and curriculum, play, walk in the classroom without permission, resulting in the teacher having to focus on that group again. As a result, each group does not get equal time with the teacher; thus, the more advanced students become frustrated and are left to their own devices. Many teachers do not have a special education teacher or a teacher's aide working with them in the classroom: This is the *ideal*. Most students do not complete their assignments within the allotted timeframe, nor do they complete it for homework —as assigned. The author has found that the advanced and on target students have more questions than the special- needs students, and that they also need fulltime assistance from the instructor. Teachers are also instructed to utilize "groups" for teaching Math as well. With the utilization of groups, students inadvertently learn bad educational habits and practices.

> A great teacher can fail—conversely, a poor teacher can succeed—for reasons unrelated to teaching. Many factors affecting student learning are beyond a teacher's or school's control. Consider just a few factors, solely about students: lack of motivation, distorted educational expectations, impoverished educational background, psychological problems, destructive educational attitudes, varying speeds at which students learn, varying aptitude and interest in a subject, and rebelliousness against authority. You can bring a student to learning but you can't make him learn (CharlotteObserver.com, 2011).

There are criminal minded students who attend public school, as early as 1st grade. There are sexual predators in the 1st grade. Some students are thieves. Many others sit in class trying to keep their backpack in view at all times. There are *crack babies* in regular classrooms. There are abused students in public school, physically and mentally. There are children with ADHD in regular classrooms. There are students with learning disabilities from mild to severe to emotionally disturbed in regular classrooms. There are gang members in school. Many times, gangs of student roam the hallways knocking on teachers' doors during class time. Inappropriate sexual acts occur on campuses during school hours. There are murderers in public school. Some students are killed as a result of school related incidents. The following is a recent crime report released by Memphis City Schools.

> The report shows a nearly 25 percent drop in serious infractions that lead to simple assault charges in the districts 14 most violent middle and high schools.The level of serious crimes in those schools also decreased. Serious crimes include staff and student assaults, gang issues, fighting, drugs and weapons possession. Another change evident in the report is the number of kids taken to juvenile court during the school day. That number dipped almost 35 percent with around 1,200 students transported last year compared to about 800 students this year. (My Fox Memphis, 2011).

Many people in America do not value or respect education, nor do they value or respect those who work in the field of education.

A General Lack of Respect for Public Education and Those Who Work in the Profession

It is reported that Finland has one of the most successful school systems in the world. Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen stated that teachers are respected in Finland, and that high talent is attracted into the profession (Cyber College Internet Campus, 2007). Teachers are required to have a master's degree, and Finland has one of the highest percentage of Ph.D.s in the world. Teachers are regularly sent on courses during their long holidays to upgrade their knowledge and skills (Cyber College Internet Campus, 2007). According to the author, these practices or similar ones should be adopted in America. Moreover, American society needs a paradigm shift towards public education and public school teachers. In general they are not respected, valued, or highly esteemed as they should be. Children are imitators; if society does not respect and esteem teachers, nor will students.

Many teachers employed in public schools have health problems as a result of working in their profession. Many teachers' physical and mental health is impaired as a result of stress brought on by students and administrators. They are cursed at; spat upon; knocked down; hit; objects are thrown at them; yelled at; falsely accused; sabotaged by students and staff members; blackballed by administrators; *fenced in* like wild animals; harassed; instructed to falsify students' grades, and are punished when they do not; and receive very little support and positive feedback from administrators. Some are daily afraid for their lives. They have an enormous amount of paperwork in addition to regular teaching related duties and responsibilities. They work many hours after school, even if they have a family. They are the *scapegoats* of public education. Some administrators' philosophy of education does not entail holding students responsible for their behavior or their learning, teachers are held accountable for them. A Principal who recently resigned from public education had this to say:

> If I could lift that school up and put it in a functional school system, it would be perfect. the dysfunction he encountered. led him to quit this month, fed up and burned out. He said he is quitting a system that evaluates teach-

> ers but doesn't support their growth, that knuckles under to unreasonable demands from parents, and that focuses excessively on recruiting neighborhood families to a school where most students come from outside the attendance zone (The Washington Post, 2011).

Stanback (1992) argues that human behavior is predicated upon one's beliefs; thus belief is *key* in explaining human behavior (pg. 20). According to the author, teachers are compelled to teach fallacious learning theories and use substandard teaching methodologies when they are cognizant that they do not help raise students' standardized test scores. Many of these pedagogical theories and teaching strategies and methodologies are not espoused by teachers.

There are a plethora of erroneous beliefs infusing public education today, and millions of dollars are spent (thrown away) implementing them. An example is Efficacy Training. Its underlying philosophical assumption is that there is no such thing as a special education student. It purports that recent brain research has proven that learning disabilities are temporary. For a disability to be eliminated, one only has to keep teaching the student. As he or she learns, although slowly, the brain will correct the disability, i.e., heal itself. Another erroneous theory is Social Promotion. It is based upon the theory that if children *feel good* about themselves, they will succeed. When it is applied in public education, students are promoted for not learning, thereby given a false sense of accomplishment. In actuality, children feel good about themselves when they earn a grade. The earlier they learn to apply their cognitive components (Stanback, A.M.,1992) to problem solving, the more accomplished they become. Thus, teachers are required to implement multiple fallacious theories in the classroom daily, in addition to adhering to a very rigorous *Instructional Map* schedule; while subsequently, as many as one-third of students entering higher education need to take some type of remedial or developmental course (Chicago Sun-Times, 2011).

In a recent article Richard Mohammed stated that in high school he thought he was a pretty good student, but when he entered college he was asked to take remedial courses. His test scores revealed that his reading and writing skills were poor. He felt that his high school had not prepared him for college. It was a very challenging experience for him, and he concluded that he didn't have the proper background to meet the challenge (Philly.com, 2011). Although principals play a key role in the success of public education, many of them are not qualified to hold the position of *Chief Educators.*

Administration in America's Public Education System

Principals are not *Chief Educators* although they function in this capacity. Many are not as educated as some of their staff members. Some have never taught school, and others have taught only the lower grade levels; yet, they make major educational decisions in a school. According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011 Edition.

> Principals, assistant principals, central office administrators, academic deans, and preschool directors usually have held teaching positions before moving into administration. Some teachers move directly into principal positions; others first become assistant principals or gain experience in other administrative jobs at either the school or district level in positions such as department head, curriculum specialist, or subject matter advisor. In most public schools, principals, assistant principals, and school district administrators need a master's degree in education administration or educational leadership. Some principals and central office administrators have a doctorate or specialized degree in education administration. Educational

> requirements for administrators of preschools and child care centers vary with the setting of the program and the State of employment. Administrators who oversee preschool programs in public schools often are required to have at least a bachelor's degree (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011 Edition, 2009).

The author asserts that all administrators should hold a master's degree or a doctorate degree in his or her area of expertise or a related field. Also, in general, most public schools change Superintendents every four or five years; the timeframe may vary.

Each incoming Superintendent brings his or her new philosophy, new programs, new organizational structures, and new bureaucrats. To reorganize a school system every few years is a colossal expense and a colossal waste of public funds; particularly when the incoming or outgoing superintendents are not instrumental in rising national students' test scores.

Taxpayers' Return on their Investment

A recent *Rasmussen Reports* measured the satisfaction of taxpayers with public education and found that:

> Voters overwhelmingly believe that taxpayers are not getting a good return on what they spend on public education, and just one-in-three voters think spending more will make a difference: Only 11% of voters think the taxpayers are getting a good return on that investment. Seventy-two percent (72%) disagree and say taxpayers are not getting their money's worth. Sixteen percent (16%) are undecided (Rasmussen Reports, 2011).

When America's international ranking among educated nations is 15, and students are entering college unprepared, taxpayers are not getting a good return on their investment. Furthermore, when recent graduates do not attend college, enter the workforce, or join the Armed Forces, taxpayers are not getting a good return on their investment.

A study conducted by the College Board Advocacy and Policy Center (June, 2011) found that of minority males in the United States between the ages 15 to 24 in 2008, only 0.9% of African Americans, 0.6% of Asians, 1.1% of Hispanics, and 1.9% of Native Americans with a high school diploma enlisted in the military. It found that of minority males ages 15 to 24 with a high school diploma and employed in 2008, 20.1% were African American, 5.1% were Asian, 13.6% were Hispanic, and 48.0% were Native American. The percent of minority males with a high school diploma between the ages of 15 to 24 that were unemployed in 2008 is as follows, 34.4% were African Americans, 29.8% were Asians, 46.5% were Hispanics, and 39.2% were Native Americans. Also, of minority males ages 15 to 24 with a high school diploma that were incarcerated in 2008, 9.9% were African American, 3.4% were Asian, 5.2% were Hispanic, and 2.7% were Native American. Data indicate that the transition between high school and higher education or the workforce is not synchronized, it lacks synthesis.

In many ways, American schools mirror Welfare. Children whose parents are in a certain economic strata get free breakfast and free lunch. When needed, students have free transportation to and from school. Textbooks are free. Title 1 Schools receive funds for certain school related activities. Many students come to school unprepared and ask for pencils and paper every day. Counseling and many other services are free. Many parents receive funds when their child has a disability. These are just a few of the services that public education affords parents and students; these services are financed with public funds. Notwithstanding, there is still a high rate of dropout and many students graduate unprepared or incapable of entering the workforce. Many students in public schools manifest behavior associated with "entitlement." The former are some of the personal experiences and insights gleaned by the author while working in public

schools that led her to develp a new framework for public education in America.

A New Framework for Reinventing America's Public Education System

The new framework is not intended to be exhaustive, but utilized and built upon. It is based upon the existing mission statement of the United States Department of Education, which is to (1) Strengthen the Federal commitment to assuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual; (2) Supplement and complement the efforts of states, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the states, the private sector, public and private nonprofit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents, and students to improve the quality of education; (3) Encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in Federal education programs; (4) Promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through Federally supported research, evaluation, and sharing of information; (5) Improve the coordination of Federal education programs; (6) Improve the management of Federal education activities; and (7) Increase the accountability of Federal education programs to the President, the Congress, and the public (United States Department of Education, May 4, 1980). Not all of the goals of the Department's mission statement are utilized—only goals, one, two, and three. All the subsequent relationships between public education and secular organizations are to be understood as partnerships and not private ownership. Also, within the new framework, many of the objectives of the United States Department of Education's goals overlap, such as community involvement; partnerships between public education and grass root organizations; partnerships between public education and businesses, profit and non-profit; and partnerships between public education and community based organizations. According to the College Board Advocacy and Policy Center,

> The United States must be poised to regain our once-preeminent international position in educational attainment: We must then move forward with creating more community–school partnerships (College Board Advocacy and Policy Center, 2011).

The United States Department of Education's first goal to be discussed is to strengthen the Federal commitment to assuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual.

The First Goal of the United States Department of Education's Mission Statement

President Obama stated that if Britain and the United States are to build new partnerships, adapt to new circumstances, and remake themselves to meet the demands of a new era, it must begin with their economic leadership. He referenced Adam Smith's central insight that there is no greater generator of wealth and innovation than a system of free enterprise that unleashes the full potential of individual men and women (The White House, 2011). Based on the author's framework, corporations, industries, and small businesses would train their employees in their corporate owned colleges. The recruitment process would begin when students are in middle school. Selected students would be required to forego attending traditional colleges and universities in lieu of company run ones. After completing college, they would also be required to continue their employment with the company for a predetermined number of years. These institutions would be required to develop rigorous recruiting programs and make the information available to the public at-large. This would be a requirement for participating in the program. Today, there is enough data available to track a student from Pre-K to 12th grade. Companies would only be allowed to recruit students based on predetermined criteria such as academic grades, character, and the ability to utilize acquired knowledge. Accountability would be built into the program. This would be one way of creating equity and generating wealth

within America. These institutions would have access to America's best and brightest students. Associated Press recently published that,

> Cammarata is one of two dozen winners of a scholarship just awarded by San Francisco tech tycoon Peter Thiel that comes with a unique catch: The recipients are being paid not to go to college. Instead, these teenagers and 20-year-olds are getting $100,000 each to chase their entrepreneurial dreams for the next two years.... Merfield, the valedictorian of his Princeton, N.J., high school class, is turning down a chance to go to Princeton University to take the fellowship. Thiel himself hand-picked the winners based on the potential of their proposed projects to change the world (May, 2011).

The new framework would require advanced, average, low achieving, underachieving, special-needs, and resource students to attend separate schools. Students would be allowed to change schools when they meet the predetermined criteria for entrance into a different one. All teachers would be required to hold a Master's Degree or above in his or her field. Each school would be specifically designed and equipped to meet the needs of its students. Each would be a state of the art school. There would be full-time counselors, therapist, psychologist etc. on staff when applicable. School counselors, school psychologist, nurses, and such are already in public schools, but they rotate from school to school and are not available to students on a full-time basis. Some students are not serviced within the school year due to backlog. Schools would not be allowed to patronize or discriminate against any race, creed, color, ethnic group, or religious group. This would be a requirement of accreditation, and strict accountability laws would be applied.

All 11th and 12th grade curriculums in advanced and average schools would be on a par with first and second year college courses. A Department of School Discipline would be established to deal with discipline problems in each district and in each school. The author strongly suggests that Kaufman's idea of Learning Commons and developing a new State Board of Education based on an accreditation model be explored in-depth (NPR, 2003).

Teachers would select teaching strategies, teaching methodologies, students' curriculum, and develop departmental lesson plans. After five years of instruction, they would be required to take a one year paid sabbatical to study, design, and implement new programs within the school system and/or district. The sabbatical would not be in lieu of the summer months break. Upon returning from sabbatical, teachers would be required to submit a major paper related to teaching and learning. A teacher's library would be built to house these papers etc., and they would be made available to the public-at-large. Ph.D.s would head all public school departments and hold all administrative positions. Additionally, teachers holding a Ph.D. would be required to take their sabbatical in a foreign country, to study its school system. The United States Department of Education's second goal to be discussed is to supplement and complement the efforts of States, the local school systems and other instrumentalities of the States, the private sector, public and private nonprofit educational research institutions, community-based organizations, parents, and students to improve the quality of education.

The Second Goal of the United States Department of Education's Mission Statement

Democracy is not easy, and extremist and nationalist alike would use it to reach their own personal goals (The White House, 2011). The New York Times reported on just such an activity in Texas. The

> meteoric rise and financial clout of the Cosmos Foundation, a charter school operator founded a decade

> ago by a group of professors and businessmen from Turkey. The group's Harmony Schools unit has become 'the largest charter school operator in Texas, with 33 schools receiving more than $100 million a year in taxpayer funds.' Some of the schools' operators and founders, and many of their suppliers, are followers of Fethullah Gulen, a charismatic Turkish preacher of a moderate brand of Islam whose devotees have built a worldwide religious, social and nationalistic movement in his name. Gulen followers have been involved in starting similar schools around the country—there are about 120 in all, mostly in urban centers in 25 states, one of the largest collections of charter schools in America. The growth of these 'Turkish schools,' as they are often called, has come with a measure of backlash. (New York Times, 2011).

One of the controversies surrounding these type of schools is that of a religious organization receiving public funds.

Who is watching? There is "separation of church and state" in America. How it is that charter schools are functioning as a *madrassa* in the United States? It is well known that China and many European and African countries have *a nation within a nation.* The overarching umbrellas of America's public education system are patriotism and democracy. Initially, public schools were established primarily to create a society of educated voters, so that America's democracy would survive throughout the ages, guided by the United States Constitution, a living document. If America is to remain *one nation under God*, it must not allow foreign laws to be fused with its laws. The United States Constitution is fundamentally the only law that should govern America. If this fusion is allowed, indeed America would go the way of China, Europe, and Africa. Sharia Europe published that,

> Initially, Sharia law was applied discretely within the small Muslim communities of Europe. But after two generations of high birth rate and immigration, those communities have grown to where the Sharia law now challenges the Judeo-Christian foundations of their host European nations (Sharia Eurpoe, 2008).

President Obama posed this question to the British Parliament, "And if we fail...., who would take our place, and what kind of world would we pass on?" (The White House, 2011). What are really at stake for America at this pivotal point in history are American culture, the American worldview, and Democracy. Do the masses of Americans really want to be subjected to Sharia law, or live like people in Pakistan, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Iraq, Iran and the likes? According to the author, every school in America should be required to teach American patriotism, regardless of its religious persuasion. In regards to citizenship, patriotism is a priority.

In the new model, the federal government would produce a TV program to be used as a teaching tool in American schools. It would be utilized primarily to foster patriotism within students by exposing them to the world-at-large, an American worldview, and current events. It would broadcast a weekly message from the White House to the students. It would be a mandatory curriculum, regardless of whether a school receives public funds or not. If a school refuses to broadcast and teach the course, it would be denied its charter or lose its accreditation. All students will not become economically successful or independently wealthy, but all students should be taught to be patriotic.

Will all students go to college? No. Will all students graduate from high school? No. There would truly be alternative ways of educating deviant and nonconforming students in the new system. The United States government in partnership with public schools would found schools requiring these types of students to attend. One would

be based on the military model. Another would be based on the International Schools model. The latter would be located in some of the poorest countries in the world, and students would be required to solve specific problems within these societies. As Representative Kaufman (2003) said, this is a privilege that only the rich can afford (NPR, 2003). Travel is an alternative to traditional education.

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) presently has a Military Academy. The purpose of the Academy is to instill goal-directed, success-oriented attitudes and behavior in the cadets.

> The CPS Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) Academies are unique four-year learning centers for strongly motivated students who wish to develop leadership and team-building skills. Students study in a small school environment of focused learning, guided by a team of mentor teachers and military teaching partners, and receive military training, as well as an Education To Careers curriculum. Each academy focuses on a specific branch of the military; some are schools-within-a-school in a general high school and others are school-wide academies (Chicago Public Schools, 2011).

The voyage of the Amistad is a program designed to teach students through experience via travel. The four-semester college course is designed to recall an 1839 revolt by Africans captured for the slave trade. It will stop for ports of call in Canada, England, Portugal, Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States. The students will study the Underground Railroad in Nova Scotia, the Return to Africa movement, and British connections to the transatlantic slave trade in three courses taught by a historian from Washington, D.C. They will also learn practical navigation skills, and study how ships sail and the oceanography of the Atlantic as a means of feeling what the original slaves must have felt while navigating the ship after their revolt. They will also contribute to the ship's web log, and will stand watches. The Amistad's voyage will demonstrate to students that the economies of powers such as France and England and the wealth of the world were rooted in the textile, sugar, and coffee trades that the trade supported... (Advance, 2007).

Additionally, there are numerous types of study abroad programs and student exchange programs in American colleges and universities. Not all students who attend public schools will fare well; some will dropout and never return, and some will be incarcerated.

How should public schools and the incarcerating institutions deal with these students? Based on the author's framework, these students would be required to attend a school/work program. They would be required to attend school a portion of the day and to work a portion of the day to pay for their education and their room and board. These students would be taught the standard public schools curriculum, as well as civic responsibility while incarcerated.

> Schools cannot address the needs of youths involved in the juvenile justice system without considering their educational needs". Several studies have shown crime and education are inextricably tied together. (ScienceDirect, 2008).

According to an article published in The Journal, the United States spends an average of $9,644 a year per preK-12 student compared with $22,600 per prison inmate. It states that by increasing the high school completion rate by just 1 percent for all men ages 20 to 60 would save the country up to $1.4 billion per year in reduced costs from crime. Furthermore, sixty-five percent of convicts are dropouts, and lack of education is one of the strongest predictors of criminal activity. "A dropout has an eight times higher likelihood of being in jail or prison during his/her lifetime than a high school graduate" (The Journal, 2011).

The State of Arkansas has developed a *cloud-based learning program*

that can provide continuity of instruction to help juvenile offenders stay on track for graduation. The State argues that incarcerated youth are on a fast track to becoming incarcerated adults, i.e., *incarcerated adulthood*. This occurs in part because they are being exposed to a prison-culture mindset while incarcerates, and because detention separates them from their school culture, and perhaps more importantly their school work. "When these students return to their schools, they are even more off track for graduation than when they left" (The Journal, 2011). The article states that

> It doesn't have to be this way. With cloud-based learning programs, instruction can reach these students in their detention diasporas, keep them engaged in learning, and improve their chances for graduation. The state of Arkansas has shown how this can happen (The Journal, 2011).

Free Venture Program is a program in which juvenile inmates work, pay off their monetary debt to society, pay taxes, pay room and board, and make deposits into a personal savings account:

> Twenty percent of their net wages (after taxes) are going towards restitution for victims of violent crimes and after the 20 percent is taken for restitution, another 20 percent is taken to pay for room and board on site. Additionally, money is placed in a mandatory savings account in the worker's name, which is meant to help with starting a new life upon release. (Correction Reporter, 2011).

The program is a success and many of the inmates give the organizers accolades for improving their life. The United States Department of Education's third goal to be discussed is to encourage the increased involvement of the public, parents, and students in Federal education programs.

The Third Goal of the United States Department of Education's Mission Statement

> Why do taxpayers support public education? Why do taxpayers support welfare? According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, America's public school system is instituted to enroll, engage, and educate youth to be productive members of society (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011). America also funds welfare to ensure that children from low income homes are educated and will become law-abiding citizens capable of giving back to society. To date, this goal has not been realized.
>
> Local communities, states, and the American economy suffer from the dropout crisis as well—from lost wages, taxes, and productivity to higher costs for health care, welfare, and crime. Census projections show that the minority populations with the lowest graduation rates are poised to become half of the U.S. population by 2050. According to an Alliance issue brief, if minority students continue to receive inferior educations and leave high school without diplomas and adequate preparation for the twenty-first-century economy, the nation's graduation rate and economic strength will both decrease further (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011).

A state auditor audits public school funds, who audits aid to dependent children (ADC)? Based on the author's framework, welfare recipients would be accountable to taxpayers for the academic success of their children. This would be done through a partnership between the United States Department of Education, local welfare agencies, and local school districts. The new model of public education would require parents receiving welfare to attend a yearlong parenting class, and if

they do not, their funds would be discontinued. If their children do not maintain a C average in school, their funds would be reduced, and they would be required to take remedial courses. If their children have chronic absenteeism and behavioral problems in school, their funds would be reduced. Parenting skills and home environment are determining factor of a child's success in public education. Parents must be held accountable for the success of their children's education and for the public funds they receive from taxpayers. "Families are children's most important educators" (New York Times, 2011).

According to Lee & Ransom (2011), nearly half of young men of color age 15 to 24 who graduate from high school will end up unemployed, incarcerated or dead; of the deaths, 0.3% will be African Americans, 0.1% will be Asian, 0.2% will be Hispanic, and 0.3% will be Native American. This study also found that one of the overriding factors for the participants' inability to persist in educational institutions is a lack of family support and/or their inability to reconcile home and school life (Lee, M. J. Jr. & Ransom, T., 2011).

This is not a new idea. The North Carolina DSS Family Support and Child Welfare Service Statewide Training Partnership published this in 2004:

> Every day, judges and social workers in North Carolina and across the United States refer parents to parenting classes. They do so in the hopes of making families more harmonious and children safer. If the family is receiving child welfare services, often attendance at these classes is compulsory.... Clearly, parenting classes are very important to our child welfare system (Training matters, 2004).

An analysis of Catherine Rampell's (2011) research data found that there is a very strong positive correlation between income and test scores in the disciplines of critical reading, math, and writing (New York Times, 2011).

> On every test section, moving up an income category was associated with an average score boost of over 12 points. Moving from the second-highest income group and the highest income group seemed to show the biggest score boost. However, keep in mind the top income category is uncapped, so it includes a much broader spectrum of families by wealth (New York Times, 2011).

The difference in what this author proposes and similar programs throughout the United States is that parents would be held accountable for the public funds they receive from social services agencies for the aid of their dependent children and for the educational success of their own children. This discussion concludes with a synopsis of the author's argument of the reinvention of America's public education system.

Conclusion

Today educators tinker, fixing problems at the edges, and adopt best practices that are already in the field. They rarely shed light and invent something that is not yet on the table or in the books. This will not suffice for America today. Although many reforms have been instituted over the past 20 years, the data indicates that they have not been successful in restoring America's preeminence among educated nations. If America's preeminence in education is to be restored, and its role as a world leader is to be maintained, its public education system must improve dramatically, and a healthy respect for education and those who work in the profession must be restored.

Presently, America is at a pivotal point in history. Many argue that rising nations represent the future, and that the time for America's leadership has passed. There are new and dangerous threats facing the United States today, such as, Islamist extremist, subversive influences within American society, a failing public education system, a dwindling economy, the manifestation of factions in society that would use democracy as a tool to take away the

rights and freedoms of Americans, a lack of patriotism and civic education in public schools, crime, poverty, inequity, economic and race polarization, and a shrinking middle class, while the economies of China, India, and Brazil are growing at an expediential rate. Israel has built a new "Silicon Valley," and some of the most advanced universities in the world are located in Asia and the Middle East (AFP, 2011; U.S. News, 2010). President Obama says that America must first lead economically; but is this feasible with a failing public education system? Without an educated workforce, America runs the risk of losing its supremacy in the International community and its Democracy. If America is to succeed, it must invent a public education system capable of confronting and overcoming its present and future challenges. Americans live in a global economy that is largely of their own making (The White House, 2011). Have we taught others that we ourselves should become castaways? In this article, the author introduces a new framework for reinventing America's public education system, and an analysis of the data indicates its feasibility. Why should we fail?

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The Selectively Truncated Middleman Minority: Trafficking in Black Female Sexuality

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Abstract

By almost all socioeconomic measures, African American females trail similarly situated groups in the United States. However, no substantial public movement in support of her has emerged. Instead, the public has been exposed to a continuing social construction of the black female as a sexual commodity, undeserving and unworthy of the protection and sympathy generally accorded other women. The question arises, then, as to how images of the black female are presented to the public. This essay argues that the concept of a middleman minority, as theorized by Hubert M. Blalock and John Sibley Butler, can be adapted to explain the damaging marketing of a sexualized black female corpus. The near simultaneous emergence of misogynistic rap music and the increased criminalization of black women serve to illustrate this correlation.

Introduction

African American females lag other groups in a number of socioeconomic indicators—home ownership and wealth, income and occupational prestige, their relative lack of protection from physical or psychological violence are but a few. Still, even as public policy shifts do little to alter these rankings, and may actually exacerbate them, and even as the American public remains largely unsympathetic, the black female is sexually commodified in a way that would gain her even less sympathy. This state of affairs is not without consequences: Public opinion is important to how policymakers distribute costs and benefits over the polity. Schneider and Ingram (1993) contended that social constructions (of target populations) influence policy choices and methods of implementation—inducement for the favorably constructed versus coercion for those whose image is negatively perceived. They wrote:

> Thus, the electoral implication of a policy proposal depends partly on the power of the target population itself (construed as votes, wealth, and propensity of the group to mobilize for action) but also on the extent to which others will approve or disapprove of the policy's being directed toward a particular target (p. 335).

How is the sexual commodity of black femaleness marketed and this image conveyed to the public? Raising this question is important as we seek to identify points of intervention by which she might be rescued from her historically low status. This essay focuses on two concurrent political and cultural developments that can illustrate how the public is encouraged to perceive the black female as undeserving of advocacy or as beneficiaries of policy: The emergence of misogynistic rap music and the increasing criminalization of black women beginning in the late 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s and 1990s. As an explanation, we adapt theories of middleman minorities advanced by sociologists Hubert M. Blalock (1967) and John Sibley Butler (1991)[1] to conceptualize the rap musician as a middleman so restricted in economic options that he or she participates in the marketing of a sexualized black female corpus.

The Middleman Minority as Theory

Blalock placed middleman minorities in peasant feudal societies, where they serve as buffers between a ruling, wealthy elite and the great mass of others who provide the labor and are a population otherwise exploitable for

the benefit of those elite. Middleman minorities occupy roles, such as tax collector, that may be unpleasant for the elite but that are necessary for this exploitation. As such, middleman minorities typically do not rise to the top political, social and economic positions occupied by the elite, but are allowed to move above the peasant masses into an intermediate status. Gross (2006), in addressing the risk of limiting the African American experience to the stories of a few heroic or tragic individuals (e.g., a Harriet Tubman or a Booker T. Washington), notes that such a focus allows portraying the great masses of ordinary black Americans as failures and to blame for their own misfortune. However, she writes, "exploring the context of those on the margins teaches a great deal about those individuals and systems that customarily occupy the center" (p. 2). Gross' "center" and higher is a sample space that encompasses the "middle" men of Blalock and Butler, as well as the "upper" men who employ them, the upper men being the elite who manipulate and maintain the macro systems that generate the outcomes that disproportionately disadvantage by race and gender.

In expanding on the work of Blalock and other theorists, Butler insightfully excluded sojourning middlemen minorities: Others had included the sojourning specification, which, of course, does not apply to African Americans, thus excluding them as functional middlemen. Butler then argues that African American economic options are even more restricted than those of other minority groups. He states that the African American entrepreneur was forced into an economic detour by legal means such as Jim Crow, in addition to being restricted to living and pursuing this economic survival in residentially segregated areas. However, note that although residential segregation discouraged African Americans from moving about in predominantly white areas, white patrons were free to move in and out of African American residential and business enclaves—including in pursuit of vice. As will be discussed later in this essay, African American segregated commercial and residential space—such as New York City's Harlem or New Orleans' Storyville—were, in fact, popular entertainment attractions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Because vice activity often exists, albeit unacknowledged, alongside legitimate entertainment, it is important to note that Butler's discussion focuses on aboveground economic activity. African Americans were limited in their ability to participate in the aboveground economy, including legitimate entertainment (also to be discussed more fully later in this essay), but were instead allowed, or forced, to survive by other means—among them criminalized vice activities.

Indeed, African Americans have historically argued against the geographical conflation of vice districts, which typically encompass the sex trade, and the residential and commercial space into which they were forcefully segregated (see Long, 2004, and Blair, 1999, for examples in New Orleans and Chicago). Zoning laws and the lack of mainstream economic opportunity (the latter being what Butler terms "truncation") combined to facilitate this joining of vice and race.

This essay on the implications of constructing black women as a sexual commodity is organized into three basic parts: The historic construction of Black female sexuality, her historic criminalization and treatment in criminal justice, and how the rap musician fits the paradigm of the middleman minority.

Constructing the Black Female

> Baptist (2001) is among researchers indicting slavery as serving a sexual purpose: Finally, the traders insist in accidental testimony that sexual fetishes and commodity fetishism intertwined with such intimacy that coerced sex was the secret meaning of the commerce in human beings, while commodification swelled its actors with the power of rape. (p. 1621)

Like the widely-discussed eyewitness accounts of Mary Boykin Chesnut

during and before the Civil War (1997), this description illustrates race and sexuality in early America. As with labeling black people morally and intellectually inferior and therefore undeserving of membership in Christian civil society, the early American elite also had to justify their treatment of black females by stereotyping them as hyper-sexed and undeserving of protection from rape (Gross, 2006, writes of how black female Philadelphians complained of being unable to attend theatres or similar public places without being accosted and presumed to be sexually available).

As the legacy of slavery helps us to understand the behavior of both African Americans and other Americans today, a brief review of public perception of black female sexuality over the centuries can help us understand how contemporary society can be comfortable with the sexual objectification of black women. As this essay is focused on criminalization, the review begins with how the American criminal justice system has historically treated with black women.

The Black Female as 'Victim'

Although rape early on was a favored strategy for victimization, the preponderance of scholarly investigation has been of a type Baptist described as "society's half-denied and half-remembered assumptions about commerce and rape" (p. 1620). His assertions are supported by accounts from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (Jacobs, 1861). The slave girl recalls the first advances made by her tormentor when she was in her teens:

> "He peopled my young mind with unclean images, such as only a vile monster could think of ... He told me I was his property ... But where could I turn for protection? No matter whether the slave girl be as black as ebony or as fair as her mistress. In either case, there is no shadow of law to protect her from insult, from violence, or even from death ... The mistress, who ought to protect the helpless victim, has no other feelings towards her but those of jealousy and rage" (p. 44).

Depriving black women of their humanity and subsequent claim to legal protection is rooted in the slave master's classification of black sexuality as overt and deviant (in addition to Baptist, see Block, 2006; Lerner, 1972; King, 1975; and Crenshaw, 1989, for more on early construction of sexuality). Gundersen (1986) and Genovese (1974) describe other forms of gendered physical and psychological violence that targeted black female slaves. In an early intimation of how these images gained acceptance in the broader American polity, gendered and racial marginalization was not limited to the South. In her exploration of black women and criminal justice in colonial Philadelphia, among the most racially tolerant of that era, Gross points out that any white person was legally empowered to hold any black person found loitering. Although the Pennsylvania colonists were aware that the public sphere was a dangerous place for women, they did not exempt black women from this forced interaction with whites, including men. Similarly to the lack of consideration for pregnant plantation field hands described by Gundersen, in Philadelphia such "lack of safeguards reinforced the notion that black female bodies had no value in a moral or Christian womanhood sense"(p. 21). Kennedy (2010) discusses contemporary effects of this attitude on rape of black females (see also Hine, 1989, for commentary on societal ambivalence toward protecting black females from sexual violence; a Department of Justice report, 2007, also underplays reports of rape of black females). Caputi (1989, referencing Morgan, 1989) recounts how a 1960s Black male civil rights leader was unable or unwilling to classify the murders of females as "lynching," which would assign a political motive, instead dismissing them as "sex murders."

The Black Female as 'Criminal'

The calculus appears to shift when the issue is the black female as perpe-

trator. In fact, the United States Supreme Court engaged in juristic legerdemain in explaining decisions in the 1857 Dred Scott case, in which an African American was deemed less than human for purpose of manumission, and in the 1859 *United States v. Amy* case, in which a slave *was* deemed human for the purpose of criminal prosecution. Johnson (1995) concluded that "with some variation from state to state, slaves were accorded human status under the penal code only when it was absolutely necessary for the punishment of a crime" (see also Flanigan, 1974). Further, in her research of state prison inmates from 1800-1935, Rafter (1985) found that judicial custom and law combined to incarcerate disproportionately more black than white females and that, in fact, the number of black female prisoners actually was larger than the number of black men prisoners. Rafter also found that black female prisoners were used in the infamous convict labor system in the South.

With an understanding of how a society historically has become comfortable with an image of African American females as both criminally and sexually prone, we can now explore how that image is maintained.

SelectivelyTruncating the Middleman

Blalock (1967) described societies with wealth imbalance (for recent commentary on growing inequality in the United States see Soss & Jacobs, 2008; Wolff, 2010; Saith, 2011) as peasant-feudal, consisting of a small ruling elite and a large subordinate peasant class; in a society stratified by race, non-white minorities typically are peasants. Middleman minorities, in occupying an economic niche between that of the elite and the peasant masses, are the proportionately few minorities who move up owing to a competitive advantage or a high adaptive capacity—the latter meaning they accommodate, yield to or absorb the value system of the dominant elite.

Blalock (1967) further argued that minority group members are better able to perform this intermediate function than are either members of the elite or the peasant group—and that this is particularly true of functions that potentially cause conflict between the top and the bottom group—collection of taxes, granting petty loans, purveying of certain goods or services are examples. In a society with high levels of professed religious belief and where sexual behavior is at the center of so much "scandal," as in the United States, the purveying of sexuality would be a source of conflict.

By most SES measures, the black female is disproportionately in the peasant class. Her essentialization as a sexual commodity invites a role for a middleman (middleman is generic, of course, inclusive of the bordello madam and, in fact, for purposes of this argument, anyone who advances personal interests via black female sexuality). However, Butler and Blalock focus on how options are *limited* for the middleman, with Butler especially arguing that the African American entrepreneur is more restricted as a middleman than his counterparts in other racial and ethnic groups. Ivan Light (1977) and English (2008) are among researchers who move beyond limiting, suggesting that minorities are *encouraged* to pursue economic survival in vice. So restricted, the truncated middleman minority is rewarded for maintaining a commodified black female sexuality—or, to restate Blalock's description, he or she accommodates, yields to or adopts the values of the dominant elite, values that degrade or objectify at the intersection of sex and race.

African Americans traditionally have been welcomed as entertainers. This was true of the emergence of rap music in the 1980s. The rap musicians were mostly African American, a precondition for a middleman minority. Further, as with the urban pimps who portrayed themselves as champions protecting black female prostitutes from rival exploitation by white-controlled brothels in the 1930s and 1940s (Light, 1977), rap musicians and their admirers cast themselves as champions of the African American community, defending against white racism.

Quite the contrary, in fact—the middleman minority is crucial to the existence of the dominant elite, who, in order to maintain their own image as

the enlightened intellectual and ethical leaders necessary for a stable society, cannot afford to "dirty" their hands with the work performed by the middlemen. The dominant elite through control of media and other socializing agencies promote the idea that the institutions and structures they have created and maintained have nothing to do with policy outcomes that clearly disadvantage along lines of race, class and gender. If a group such as black women is harmed, then that harm is inflicted by their fellow racial, gender, or class minority. Such mythology supports white supremacy: Researchers such as Buck (2001), Breen (1973), and Davis (1923) have shown how the concept of race was introduced in order to persuade, or coerce, white working class colonials to support the white elite in the subordination of black colonials. Thus, if other black people join in this process of subordinating, any resulting harm is the work of the racial minorities who have only themselves to blame. To re-cast Blalock's description, the middleman minority is better able to perform intermediate functions—in this case marketing a sexualized Black female corpus—than are either elites or the peasant group. Further, in a society frequently characterized as racist and sexist, black female sexuality is a commodity that would potentially cause conflict between the top and the bottom group.

Rap Music: Commodity Marketing

Consider the following from blogger Earl Ofari Hutchinson (2006):

> black women have almost single-handedly expanded the women's prison-industrial complex. From 1930 to 1950 five women's prisons were built nationally. During the 1980s and 1990s dozens more prisons were built, and a growing number of them are maximum-security women's prisons.

Hutchinson begins his article by describing a young black mother of two entering a prison facility (also, Sudbury, 2002, in commentary on US-led globalization, writes of both a mother and her pregnant daughter being imprisoned in England, with the mother receiving a longer sentence as an accessory to crime because, the court reasoned, she ought to have known about her daughter's drug use), inviting the question of how a society that promotes so-called family values (USCCR, 2005; Moynihan Report, 1965; Harris-Lacewell, 2010) might tolerate imprisoning a mother, especially since large numbers of the young woman and her cohorts are not accused of violent crimes. The answer might be that an accepting public thinks of the young woman not as a mother, but as a bitch or a 'ho, and a crack-using one at that. That image has been perpetuated by the selectively truncated middleman minority in the entertainment industry.

Lena's (2006) description of the evolution of the rap musician supports the concept of the rapper as a classic middleman minority, described by Blalock as accommodating, yielding to or absorbing the values of the dominant culture in order to survive or prosper economically:

> The protagonists ("pimp and baadman") of hardcore rap have one foot in the door of extreme bourgeois consumption and success and the other in the ghetto (p. 486)... The hustler is still an outsider, but one with a comfortable relationship to commercial culture and material success (p. 189)...The shift toward hardcore rap may reflect a re-alignment of rap identify, one that reconciles 'old school' authenticity with 'new school' profits (p. 490); see also Folami, 2007).

Thus, the increased criminalization of Black women coincided not only with the beginning of draconian sentencing for crack cocaine use, but also with the ascendancy of the misogynistic lyrics of rap music. Moreover, during the time of this focus on black female bodies and during the greatest growth of the prison-industrial complex, most rap music was sponsored, not by music

industry mavericks, but by major record labels (Lena, 2006).

The emergence of this new form of lyricization followed the triumph of rock-and-roll, which by the 1970s had transcended its stigma as "race" music, and its various cross-over offshoots. Rock had, however, coincided with the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Although feminists had envisioned the relaxation of sexual mores as liberating to women, even as rock music was becoming mainstream, it was being criticized as promoting a teen-age pregnancy and out-of-wedlock birth epidemic, which in turn was targeted by the Moynihan Report. The stage was set for transforming both the sexual revolution and its balladeers into commercial initiatives such as pornographic video games and misogynistic music lyrics. What was intended as a movement of sexual and gender uplift had become an occasion for mocking, a strategy used to target women (Frye, 1983).

The violent and misogynistic style of rap usually is referred to as a subgenre of hip-hop music, an urban phenomenon of the 1970s that was accompanied by fads such as break dancing. Hip hop was overshadowed by the more virulent "gangsta" rap that emerged in the 1980s, which also happens to be the time that the major record labels began adopting gangsta rap (see Table 1). Apologists for gangsta rap aver that major record companies'

Table 1. "Hardcore" Rap Singles by Label Type, 1975-1995.

	Year																	
	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83	'84	'85	'86	'87	'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	Total
Independent Labels	0	1	0	3	1	2	0	6	6	10	10	5	10	8	27	23	14	126
Major Labels	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	20	38	28	40	45	59	57	74	366
Total	0	1	0	3	2	5	0	7	6	30	48	33	50	53	86	80	88	492

Source: Lena (2006), p. 488

embrace of the new music was profit-driven. Like the "sex sells" argument, this rationalization evades the ethical question of collateral damage to the image of females.

The trend toward concentrated media ownership in the wake of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 aided the gansta rap message. Blogger Eric K. Arnold (2008) decried how media consolidation stifled more independent radio programming, even while the corporate owners promoted themselves as meeting the needs of the local community. The media giants determined playlists and content, which had the effect of exposing young urbanites to a single source of socialization toward the black female. These listeners were, in effect, being force-fed rap music. Similarly to questioning the assumption that "sex sells" (Parker and Furnham, 2007; Bushman, 2005), research suggests that the message in sexually-oriented advertisement and in violent video games is more readily embraced by males than by females and, by inference, more useful to patriarchal societies (see Solomon, 1988, on how everyday language and activity routine are indicators of hidden systems of cultural belief).

Indeed, as rap has moved into the mainstream music industry, its appeal to young white males has grown. As Petty, Harris, Broaddus and Boyd (2003) assert of advertising messages, this exposure may define white youth's perception of black females.

> Advertising not only sells products, it also produces and transforms ideologies. When people of color are invisible, presented as stereotypes, or are targeted heavily for harmful products, society devalues the contributions and even the lives of those minority group members. (see also Wester, Crown, Quatman & Heesacker, 1997; and O'Toole, 1997).

Yousman (2003), remarking on the growing number of white youth listening to rap music, further underscores the potential for damage by these heirs to the American patriarchy, who will dominate the political, economic and cultural agenda of the future. In an article provocatively titled "Blackophilia and Blackophobia: White Youth, the Consumption of Rap Music, and White Supremacy," he argues that *both* the revulsion and attraction are manifestations of white supremacy:

> ... White youth consumption of cultural artifacts created by African Americans, the continuing resistance of many white youth to policies designed to fight racial inequities such as affirmative action and enforced school desegregation, and the involvement of relatively small but significant numbers of white youth in far-right hate groups are best understood in relation to one another rather than as discrete, isolated phenomena" (p. 371).

According to Yousman, young white males justify their resistance to programs that authentically aid black people by what they are convinced is their admiration of black people (for example, by purchasing athletic shoes by basketball stars). These acts demand little of white youth, whereas not allowing employment discrimination means they may be required to genuinely compete against black men and women and white women. The activity of consuming black cultural commodities means they can ignore or dismiss the realities of the black experience in America.

Ultimately, fellow African Americans helped set the stage in the 1980s for an African American female image consistent with the "Colored Amazons" discussed by Gross (2006). Not only was the black female unworthy of protection from those who would victimize her, she was instead cast as the threat and thrown into prison at alarming rates (Davis, 1998; Sudbury, 2002).

Criminalization: Commodity Consuming

Let's return to the prison scene told of by Earl Ofari Hutchinson, in which the young mother of two was being jailed. The perception of black women as unworthy and undeserving was promoted by their construction as bitches and 'ho's and irresponsible crack-cocaine using mothers causing harm to their unborn children. The result was a dramatic rise in the rates of imprisonment of people of color in recent decades, a time of increase in the US prison population in general. The popular rhetoric, however, has been about imprisonment of the *black male,* a discursive focus that obscured the plight of the black female. The level of disproportionality relative to white and Hispanic women was far greater than for black men vis-à-vis white and Hispanic men.

As Table 2 (Bonczar, 2003) shows, the increased incarceration of black females accelerated from the mid-1980s forward, about the same time that the mainstream music industry began promoting the misogynistic gangsta rap. Over the approximately 25-year period covered by Bonczar's study, black females had replaced white females as the majority of women in prison.

Table 2. Number of adults ever incarcerated in a state of federal prison, by gender, race, and Hispanic origin, 1974-2001.

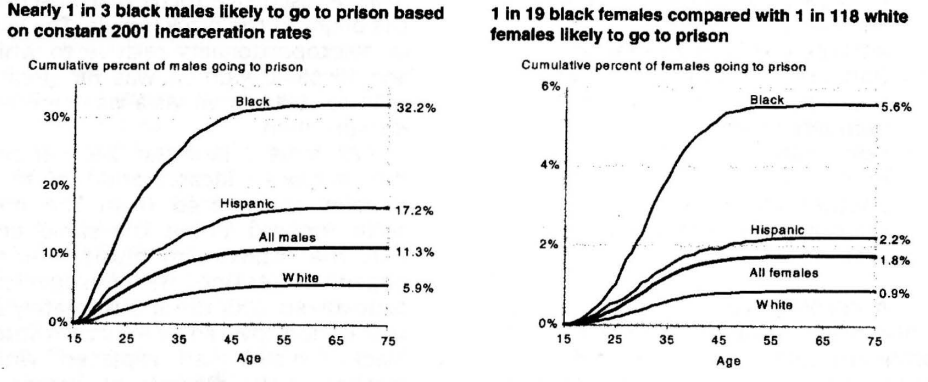
	Number of adults ever incarcerated in a State or Federal prison					
	1974	1979	1986	1991	1997	2001
Gender						
Male	1,677,000	1,934,000	2,449,000	3,142,000	4,205,000	5,037,000
Female	142,000	165,000	217,000	295,000	447,000	581,000
Race/Hispanic origin						
White*	922,000	1,052,000	1,286,000	1,533,000	1,909,000	2,203,000
Male	837,000	958,000	1,173,000	1,395,000	1,724,000	1,978,000
Female	86,000	94,000	113,000	139,000	185,000	225,000
Black*	646,000	766,000	963,000	1,290,000	1,784,000	2,166,000
Male	595,000	704,000	881,000	1,181,000	1,615,000	1,936,000
Female	51,000	62,000	82,000	109,000	170,000	231,000
Hispanic	102,000	125,000	234,000	422,000	721,000	997,000
Male	94,000	116,000	217,000	392,000	664,000	911,000
Female	8,000	10,000	17,000	30,000	57,000	86,000

Note: Estimates were based on separate generation life tables that incorporate first incarceration and mortality rates for each age group. Estimates were rounded to the nearest 1,000.
*Excludes persons of Hispanic origin.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, August 2003

Figure 5 illustrates the greater disparity within gender groups; although more black males were likely to go to prison than other males, black females faced a proportionately greater probability among other females.

Figure 5. Comparative likelihood of imprisonment by race and gender.



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, August 2003

Discussion and Conclusion

King (1975) opens a conceptual door to explaining commodifying the black female and the role of the selectively truncated African American middleman. In tracing the middleman to the architects of the system under which he is compelled to survive, she writes (italics added for emphasis):

> Thus, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which black male behavior that appears sexist is a mere mock of the American image of a 'ruler' or the expression of a commitment to a belief in female 'inferiority' or weakness. *Given the reality of his experience with black women and the egalitarian sex role tradition, his belief in female inferiority is hardly likely.*" (p. 24)

The work of Blair (1999), Long (2004) and English (2008) reveals the coexistence of the legitimate entertainment, or leisure, economy and the vice economy. The nightlife of Havana, Cuba, for example, featured mainstream entertainers such as Nat King Cole, Sarah Vaughn and other performing icons even while organized crime interests were transforming the island into a "bordello,"[3] (English, 2008) and fueling the Cuban revolution. Light (1977) provides further evidence of the selective truncation of the African American middleman. He writes that when cultural shifts led to a decline in the demand for prostitution, the largest illegal industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Light, cf. Bell, 1960), in the mid-twentieth century, the Chinese prostitution purveyor turned to legitimate restaurant and tourist pursuits, while his African American counterpart was re-deployed into the nightclub industry—white patronage of New York's Harlem, like Havana, has been widely documented (English also refers to a white male predilection for black prostitutes, while Blair, 1999, refers to these customers' contempt for the black prostitute). Light noted that African Americans largely failed in the nightclub industry, essentially truncated, while Chinese entrepreneurs succeeded in their re-deployment (nightclubs in black communities such as Harlem were mostly white-owned). Long also suggests that the political and economic elite in New Orleans benefited from the existence of the fabled Storyville vice district, which may explain their ignoring the complaints of black ministers, educators and others who objected to zoning changes that further commingled Storyville with black residential and non-vice commercial space. Such commentary suggests that both the above- and the under-ground economies were functions of similar interests, both benefiting from the conflation of sex and race.

Light, in reviewing theories of the origins of ethnic group participation in syndicated crime in the United States, notes that of the two theories of (1) American social conditions giving rise to ethnic participation in this crime or (2) import theory of the ethnics actually bringing with them their criminal tendencies, the one favored by xenophobes and chauvinists is the import theory, "so racist, nativist and patriotic groups climbed aboard" (p. 465). Thus, any responsibility, on the part of the general white American public or from decision-making elite, for black participation in vice and related pursuits could be minimized, similar to Baptist's description of American "society's half-denied and half-remembered assumptions about commerce and rape." Light, referring to the twentieth century decline in prostitution, notes that the "liberalization of sexual mores adversely affected prostitution because promiscuous sexual contacts reduced consumer demand" (p. 468). This liberalized attitude toward sexuality further reified and objectified the black females portrayed in rap videos.

A problem with the manner in which investigators such as Light and Blair treat prostitution is that they do not venture far beyond ascribing biological utility to the demand for it. The search for explanations requires more than identifying some vague American society or patriarchy as encouraging ethnic participation in vice. Light, who is among the most notable investigators of how racial and ethnic minorities are propelled into the vice industry, identifies the propelling agents as a nebulous "American society" (p.472). We need to be specific about

institutions and interests and about choices at the highest levels of politics and economics and about the encouragement of cultural developments. The purpose of this paper is to suggest a starting point for establishing an analytical framework for understanding the persistent outcomes associated with the intersection of race and gender. While establishing a causal relationship between transforming events such as rap music and the criminalized Black female is beyond the immediate scope of this essay, the near simultaneous occurrence of these two phenomena should give pause. The misogynism of early rap music worked against mobilizing public sympathy as thousands of Black females swelled the ranks of the incarcerated.

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End Notes

1. Dr. Butler's classic work is now available in a revised, 2005, edition.

2. Evidence exists that the number of black women migrants equaled and sometimes outstripped that of black men (Collins, 1997). Hine further speaks to the argument in this paper, asserting that black women who came North during the Great Migration and turned to prostitution were effectively rape victims because they had no means of economic survival: "As long as they occupied an enforced subordinate position within American society this "sellin' your own body," as Brooks put it, was, I submit, Rape." (p. 919)

3. Although some note has been given of enmity between organized crime traditionally defined as the Mafia and Puerto Rican and African American street gangs, there also is evidence of cooperation between black and Mafia operatives. Anecdotes such as the following, about Mafia operative Joey Gallo aired on National Public Radio's Fresh Air program on July 21, 2009, invite more detailed compilation, but are not the only such anecdotal evidence:

> *Mr. FOLSOM: Well, Joey is suspected of being the hitman because it's an African-American that guns down Colombo. And the papers immediately seize on the fact that Joey was in prison making alliances, you know, with heroin dealers like Nicky Barnes, he was reaching out to black nationalist groups. And as a result, you know, the Colombo family holds a kangaroo court and they indict Joey for this murder because of the fact that a black man was the one who gunned down Colombo.*

Book Reviews

Davidson, Jeanette R. ed. *African American Studies.*
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.
Reviewer: James B. Stewart

Thomas Kuhn, a philosopher of science, observes that one of the measures of maturation of an intellectual discipline is the ability of practitioners to generate exemplars—that is, examples of how the enterprise explores relevant phenomena. Expanding on this idea, one indicator of the maturation of Black/Africana Studies is the publication of introductory texts that present core concepts and interpretations. The production of edited volumes that can supplement these introductory texts constitutes a sign of further maturation.

African American Studies, edited by Jeanette R. Davidson, is a useful addition to the set of important edited volumes now available to supplement core instruction in the discipline. Davidson's work is intended "for use with undergraduate students in African American Studies programs and American Studies and Ethnic Studies programs, as well as beginning graduate students in these fields of study" (p. 2). Following the editor's introduction, the main text of the book is divided into five parts: history and theoretical perspectives in Africana American Studies; community service and social activism in the academy; international perspective; selected areas of scholarship; and commentary.

The choice of scholars to frame the historical and theoretical issues is excellent. Molefi Asante and Perry Hall have written extensively on these topics. Besides providing a panoramic exploration of the various schools of thought, Perry's contribution is in direct conversation with Asante's detailed exposition of the contours of Afrocentricity and Africology. Hall emphasizes the dynamism of the field, describing how new approaches to inquiry have evolved in response to changing social dynamics. Asante, in contrast, seeks to clarify and instantiate fundamental principles that have guided his on-going efforts to explicate Afrocentricity as "a philosophical paradigm that emphasizes the centrality and agency of the African person within an historical and cultural context" and spell out Africology as the "African centered study of African phenomena" (pp. 35, 40).

The second part of *African American Studies* addresses what this reviewer sees as one of the major challenges facing the discipline. The first generation of African American Studies scholars, department chairs and other program heads agreed that the enterprise should be actively engaged in outreach activities designed to yield direct improvements in the quality of life for people of African descent. Unfortunately, this consensus has evaporated; most scholars and academic units have retreated to the Ivory Tower. In their instructive essay, Charles Jones and Nafeesa Muhammad discuss the current state of affairs. While the number of Ph.D. programs has expanded tremendously over the years, they report, only one program includes a community outreach component among its degree requirements. Furthermore, only three Ph.D. programs acknowledge the dual mission of the discipline as reflected in the motto of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS): academic excellence and social responsibility. The gradual erosion of the social-responsibility mandate has occurred despite the efforts of NCBS to seed community outreach programs via funds solicited through the Combined Federal Campaign, an effort also described by Jones and Muhammad. The fact that interviews with actor and activist Danny Glover and the late historian and public intellectual Manning Marable constitute the remaining contributions to part two of *African American Studies* underscores this regrettable situation.

The rapid expansion of the subfield of African/Black Diaspora Studies has occasioned a reexamination of the positioning of traditional African American Studies. At the extreme, some commentators view programs with a singular or even primary focus on people of African descent in the United States descended from Africans ripped from the continent during the Atlantic slave trade as anachronistic. There also is on-going tension between African American Studies and African Studies regarding approaches to the study of historical and contemporary Africa. Part three of the text under review offers distinctive perspectives on these issues. Tibor Nagy asserts, "Africa is to African

American Studies much as oxygen is to the study of life on earth, the second would not exist without the first" (p. 129). African American Studies scholars do not dispute this fundamental principle. Nagy, however, insists that a focus on history is insufficient and that a dual mission must be pursued. He champions the potential role of the field "not only for making known Africa's reality beyond its grossly distorted image, but also for helping Africa assume its proper role in today's global system."

In the Diaspora Studies arena, British cultural studies scholars have mounted some of the most visible Diasporan challenges to perspectives that foreground the experiences of Blacks in the United States. Mark Christian, a well-known British Black/Africana Studies specialist, offers a useful context for explaining why this challenge has emerged in the United States rather than in Britain. "Unlike the US," observes Christian, "the UK has yet to have Black Studies institutionalized within the British educational system" (p. 151). Christian likewise notes the irony associated with the fact that Paul Gilroy, the major figure in the Cultural Studies movement, debated Black Studies in Britain "from the distant shores of the US, but upon his return to the UK, has not come back to develop Black Studies [but] will be focusing primarily within mainstream sociological discourse" (p. 159).

The promotion of interdisciplinary, or trans-disciplinary, approaches to the study of the history, lives, and experiences of people of African descent is one of African American Studies' major contributions to intellectual inquiry. This goal challenges scholars to find ways of synthesizing perspectives from traditional disciplines while transfiguring such borrowed constructs into distinctive modes of inquiry. The topics selected for part four of *African American Studies* illustrate the complexity of this task. Highlighting subject matter, methodology, and pedagogy, Leslie Alexander and Curtis Austin make the case for making greater use of oral histories in historical research by drawing on examples from recent studies of the orthodox Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Given the centrality of history to African American Studies, robust debates about historiography are essential for the field's development. The same can be said for philosophy; however, despite the impressive record of the work of African-American philosophers documented in the essay by George Yancy, few philosophers have been directly involved with African American Studies *per se*.

The creative and performing arts are central features of African-American culture. Melanie Bratcher's essay advances a distinct approach to research and instruction based on an African aesthetic. She focuses "on motion with an emphasis on the nexus of song and dance" (p. 225). Bratcher argues that "moving students into a meaningful understanding of African culture, history, and mythology begins literally and figuratively, by exposing them to ancient, sacred, and complex conceptions of ... African 'art' forms and experiences."

Maria Davidson and Scott Davidson provide a useful contextual examination of one of the most important subfields in African American Studies, Africana Women's Studies. The scholars present a comparative analysis of three approaches to the study of the lives of black women: Africana Womanism, Womanism, and Black Feminism. In contrast to those who contend that the three approaches are incompatible, Davidson and Davidson argue that the approaches can be complementary discourses when seen as "theories developed out of the practical and lived experiences of Black women [that] seek to give a new significance and direction to those experiences" (p. 255).

As noted previously, developing innovative ways of extracting and reinterpreting knowledge produced within traditional academic disciplines is one of the major challenges facing African American Studies specialists. Victor Anderson's treatment of African-American religion effectively illustrates the problematics associated with achieving this outcome. Anderson critically reviews the limited, or selective, treatment of this subject matter in African American Studies texts and religious-studies works. Anderson addresses problems with nomenclature used to describe the topic as well as contested approaches to theorizing African-American religion. He proposes employing the construct African-American religion and cultural criticism as means to bridge divides.

Jeanette Davidson's and Tim Davidson's concluding commentary offers an optimistic view of the future of Africana Studies, a vision shared by this reviewer. While acknowledging that the field continues to face structural inequities and institutional racism, they maintain that the future is bright as "African American Studies is presently

pushing forward to include many new areas related to Africa and the Diaspora, the social sciences, contemporary culture, gender, sexual orientation, institutional and societal problems, theories and practice, policy and service delivery, and the study of African languages, to name only a few" (p. 295). A "strengths-based analysis of African American Studies," continue Davidson and Davidson, "suggests that the twenty-first century will be a promising time for sustainable growth of the discipline" (p. 301). All African American Studies specialists and supporters can hope that Davidson and Davidson's assessment is correct.

Wade, Compton. *After Canaan: Essays on Race, Writing, and Religion.* *Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010.*
Reviewer: Derryn Moton

After Canaan: Essays on Race, Writing, and Religion by Canadian poet Wayde Compton is a complicated book about a complicated topic. Black Canadians and African-Canadian history and culture are arguably the least understood of the African Diaspora. *After Canaan* demonstrates the folly of assuming African-Canadian history and culture are hybrids of their African-American equals. Compton turns accepted notions of black racial identity on its head when filtered through a Canadian historical and cultural context.

Of all the enslaved Africans transported to the Americas during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, less than five percent ended up in the North American British colonies. These colonies in July 1776 declared their independence and commenced the process of becoming the United States of America. Like the revolution that would rend the new nation nearly a century later (the American Civil War), black people were at the center of both conflicts. In a draft version of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson likened the British colonists to enslaved Africans by arguing that slavery was foisted upon the colonies by Britain's King George III. Jefferson's assertion was edited out of the final draft.

During the Revolutionary War, blacks fought for colonists and the British government. Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of the Old Dominion, offered freedom to black slaves in Virginia who fought for the British Army. Historians Darlene Clark Hine, William Hine, and Stanley Harrold write in *The African-American Odyssey* that Dunmore's November 1775 proclamation "struck a tremendous psychological blow and of Dunmore's six hundred troops at the Battle of Great Bridge, half were African Americans whose uniforms bore the motto 'Liberty to Slaves'" (p. 93). When the war ended in 1783, many of Britain's black combatants retreated to Canada with other British soldiers and Loyalists. The black exodus from the United States continued in coming decades on account of American laws that protected slavery. According to historians Charles Johnson and Patricia Smith, authors of *Africans in America*, approximately "twenty thousand black Americans fled from the northern states, migrating to Canada" during the 1850s alone (p. 397).

Wayde Compton probes the forgoing odyssey. He notes that the first black immigrants to British Columbia came during the California Gold Rush of the late 1840s and the early 1850s—just as American lawmakers were strengthening fugitive slave laws in the country. While blacks have been in Canada since this time, Compton provocative states that "small [Canadian] population of African descent has barely penetrated the national or international consciousness" of black Americana. His book aptly proves that the locus of an African-American cosmos cannot focus solely on the meanderings and musings of blacks in the United States. For Americans living in the "lower forty-nine," *After Canaan* is an exciting affirmation of learning and thinking about "oblique kinds of blackness."

The book begins in perhaps a likely place and dilemma for people of African descent everywhere: racial identity. James Baldwin once quipped, "No one was white before he/she came to America." The same, of course, is true for blacks—formerly Negroes, Colored, Afro-Americans, and now African Americans. A favorite definition of "Negroes" for this reviewer identifies these people based on their physical characteristics without respect to language or culture. Therefore, it does not matter whether one is fluent in Spanish, English, French, or Dutch; if one looks like a Negro, then one is defined as a Negro. Racial codification in the United States proves that being a Negro is not a personal choice. Race is immutable.

In line with the reviewer's ideas, Compton recounts that previously "one drop [of] Negro blood" was enough to designate someone as black. During the Jim Crow era of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, any Negro who did not have white physical characteristics could pass or pose, to paraphrase Compton, and blend in mainstream white society as a white person or as a white racial ethnic or ethnic "other." Compton tells the story of Rhonda Larrabee, a Canadian with a fractured racial identity.

In the documentary *A Tribe of One*, a filmmaker interrogates the racial assimilation and acculturation of Larrabee and members of her family. Larrabee's mother, Marie

Joseph, was a full-blooded member of the Qayqayt First Nation. In a history reminiscent of the United States, she had to attend a residential school on the reserve. Joseph married an Asian Canadian and eschewed her native identity attempting to escape anti-Indian sentiments prevalent in British Columbia. She did not confess her Indian heritage to her daughter Rhonda until the latter was in her twenties. Armed with this newfound knowledge and desire to discover and embrace her Indian roots, Rhonda succeeded in getting the Canadian government to recognize the Qayqayt First Nation (something that had not been done since 1913 because the band was "too small" on account of the pogrom smallpox). As it turned out, nascent Indian Rhonda Larrabee became leader of the Qayqayt "far from living out," as Compton notes, Marie Joseph's "legacy of passing." A familiar trope, the tragedy of the "tragic mulatto" was to conceal true racial identity. Marie Joseph's story is a familiar one to racially mixed African-Americans living in the United States.

The most compelling part of *After Canaan* for this reviewer happens with Compton's discussion of Hogan's Alley, a residential community in British Columbia's East End/Strathcona to which blacks, First Nations, Italians, Asians, and other non-white racial ethnics were segregated at the turn of the twentieth century. Culturally viable, Hogan's Alley featured a number of black businesses, civic organizations, and churches. The area even had its own Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters since Canadian railroads, like their North American counterparts, preferred employing black men as porters. Compton does not explain this preference, but Agnes Calliste does.

In "The Struggle for Employment Equity by Blacks on American Canadian Railroads," an article featured in the January 1995 issue of the *Journal of Black Studies*, Calliste explained that "whites monopolized the higher paid positions and 'locked in' Blacks into menial, low-paying, and low status jobs" (p. 297). Similar to their American counterpart, black Canadian porters sought labor redress though collective bargaining, which became a protracted process. In 1942, black Canadian porters began a forty-year protest of dual job classifications and unequal pay scales. Such discrimination was no more apparent than in futile efforts to have black men promoted as conductors. Canadian railroad authorities alleged black porters, including porters in charge, were ill-suited for the job conductor. The Canadian Pacific Railway, however, capitulated and hired five black porters as conductors. By virtue of their elevated status, they became members of the hitherto all-white Order of Railway Conductors (OCR). Though the white membership of the order refused to recognize their membership, the Chicago *Daily Defender* in August 1956 named George Garraway as the first Negro sleeping car conductor on a major Canadian railroad (p. 312).

In 1970, Hogan's Alley became a victim of urban renewal. That year, a super-highway project eviscerated much of the community. The recollection of that event prompted Compton to note wryly that, in this instance, "urban renewal meant Negro removal." More often, racist laws in Canada focused on Asians since they were the larger minority group. Unlike their counterparts in the United States, black Canadians usually escaped the brunt of Canadian racism.

For Wayde Compton, Hogan's Alley is important because it represents a collective memory of Canadian blacks and other minorities who once lived there. If community disappears, does the memory of that community also disappear? Compton asks rhetorically: "How to remember Hogan's Alley, The *how* of it does not refer to the content our memories, but rather to the process of remembering." As Nana Peazant told her son Eli in Julie Dash's 1991 film *Daughters of the Dust*, "It is up to the living to keep the memory of the dead alive."

After Canaan is an important yawn into share cultural histories of blacks in Canada and blacks in the United States. Indeed, what it means to be African and American also means African and Canadian. It behooves blacks in both countries to learn, share, and celebrate their African and American kinship. This book is essential reading for undergraduate and graduate student alike as well as lay and professional historians.

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