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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Chicago Studies



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2016-17

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Preface



This volume marks the tenth anniversary of the College's Chicago Studies Program, which was founded to encourage students to learn about the city through direct engagement and to foster through these encounters a deeper sense of local citizenship. Chicago Studies took up the University of Chicago's historical connection to the city as an inspiration for curricular development and research projects and its use of the city as an urban classroom and laboratory. The *Chicago Studies Annual* was the centerpiece of this project. It promised to share the very best, Chicago-focused BA theses each year with the vital exchange of research and knowledge about the city and people of Chicago. The present collection of essays is likewise the tenth anniversary of the *Annual*, a significant record of the ways that our students are bringing the city into their development as scholars.

In 2018, *Chicago Studies* rests within a very different College, and it goes without saying that the College rests within a very different neighborhood and city, with challenges and prospects that are both familiar and novel. In broad strokes, the growth of the College from roughly five thousand in 2008 to more than six thousand five hundred on campus this autumn has brought significant changes in student demography and interests, career ambitions, extracurricular activities, and other areas of

academic and student life. The student body is significantly more diverse, more coastal and international in its composition, and more interconnected with the other schools and units of the university. A list of these developments, from new majors to internships and research opportunities to the Arts Pass, could extend several pages. Certainly, one welcome effect has been the new flows of intellectual traffic between the classroom and the city that did not exist in 2008.

The last decade has forged other ties to the city that would have been hard to predict, including the debates and planning surrounding the Barack Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park. Here the focus of civic planning and engagement came to the university neighborhood itself, bringing with it the potential for programs and development which, seen positively or negatively, are likely to draw students closer to the economic and political pulse of the city for many years to come. The reputation and identity of the College have also become increasingly reliant on our civic context, even as we draw less of our students from the state of Illinois. A recent report found that the university's diversity of opportunities for personal, career, and social development is extremely important to external perceptions of the College. For those with no connection to campus, in other words, the proximity of resources for considering one's future and commitments is a defining and valuable quality. Once on campus, our students are also taking greater advantage of para-curricular bridges outside of Hyde Park. In the 2017–18 school year, just over one quarter of undergraduates participated in some university-sponsored engagement with the city, while a significant number from this group turned to the city for multiple activities, such as internships, volunteer work, and experiential learning.

Shifts of these kinds have opened up spaces and needs for programming that the Chicago Studies Program is designed to address. It does not aspire to be an urban studies program, nor does it sponsor any other academic major. As a para-curricular service for the College as a whole, Chicago Studies can facilitate new coursework and research in every area of undergraduate study and support initiatives that take root elsewhere in the university.

Just last year, Chicago Studies launched several noteworthy programs to complement the existing suite of courses and events. The Chicago Studies Certificate, with advising in the University Community Service Center, now allows students to earn a certificate and transcript designation for completion of a multiyear program that integrates coursework with three hundred to four hundred hours of meaningful and direct engagement with the city. In the area of research, Chicago Studies cosponsored with the Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation and the Program on the Global Environment the Chicago Studies Undergraduate Research Prize, which drew thirty-four BA thesis submissions from across the College in its inaugural year. The six finalists presented their work to an interdisciplinary audience of peers and faculty at a research symposium in the spring quarter; Madeline Anderson, AB'18 (Public Policy Studies), received the inaugural prize and her essay will be published in the 2018 *Annual*, together with the other finalists. As a further stimulus to research, we have opened a data portal to archive all Chicago-focused, student research, which points the way to further datasets, questions, and record collections about the city. New programs and partnerships are planned for the current academic year, and we invite you to browse an updated listing of offerings at chicagostudies.uchicago.edu.

The present volume builds upon a wide field of student engagements, pairing BA thesis preparation with experience in local journalism, volunteer work in schools, museums, political campaigns, environmental restoration, internships, and more.

Bess P. Cohen, AB'16 (Public Policy Studies), investigates the impact of budget cuts to library services at Chicago Public Schools and asks how the school system can compensate for these losses by effective coordination with Chicago Public Libraries. Her 2015 case study from the Bronzeville neighborhood, where the sudden dismissal of the DuSable High School librarian, a well-publicized student protest, and a working relationship with the local branch library brought the complexities of this relationship into sharp relief. In a time when school libraries compete with a growing list of priorities in a shrinking budgetary framework,

Cohen's study makes a case for the irreducible benefits of professionally staffed libraries on school campuses.

Mari Cohen, AB'17 (History), enters the tumultuous era of urban renewal in Chicago through the figure of Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein of Hyde Park's Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv (K.A.M.) congregation. Weinstein's record, Cohen shows, offers more than the voice of a notable in local and national religious issues. With his strong record of civil rights advocacy, Weinstein reveals how politically liberal Jews in Hyde Park navigated a morally complex issue that made competing demands on their religious and ethical values. Cohen uses research in several media, including archival sources, to reconstruct an approach to social justice that prioritized interpersonal sacrifice and attitudinal change and arguably underestimated the power of structural racism. Though not without misgivings, Weinstein and his congregants were able to harmonize their support for urban renewal with social justice and religious ideals; all three were really part of the same cloth.

The built environment of Hyde Park is also the theme of Juliet Sprung Eldred's thesis on the University of Chicago's approach to the planning and development of the mid-South Side from the 1890s up the present day. Using methods from geographical sciences, Eldred, AB'17 (Geography), extends a rich story line across the whole of the university's history by focusing on discrete episodes in its expansion, beginning with the initial design of the quadrangles as an area enclosed and protected from the surrounding world. Where other urban universities expanded outward from a center, Eldred argues, the University of Chicago has sought to define its borders and then cultivate the space within. In this sense, the quadrangles offer a kind of developmental script for the university's historical approach to the built environment, shedding light on discussions of urban renewal, policing boundaries, and real estate acquisitions.

Valerie Gutmann, AB'17 (Sociology), looks into the efficacy of public housing policy and the stubborn problems of housing discrimination in Chicago in her study of the outcomes of *Gautreaux et al. v. Chicago*

Housing Authority (1967, 1969). This ruling prohibited racial discrimination in the placement of federally funded public housing sites, leaving municipalities to find ways to "scatter" public housing residents throughout the city. The solution of choice was, and has been, housing vouchers, but Gutmann argues that this program has failed to improve the state of housing security. Gutmann skillfully mines interviews with housing voucher participants and Chicago Housing Authority staff to clarify the social and bureaucratic obstacles faced by program participants to securing housing in the city.

Our focus turns to Chicago's Southeast Side and the complex alliances of environmental work in an essay by Nora Hardy, AB'17 (Environmental Studies), on relations between environmental groups operating in the region. The legacies of industrial pollution, economic disinvestment, and environmentally caused health problems have drawn the advocacy of actors at many levels, from large NGOs to grassroots groups and local residents, and it should be no surprise that these groups have struggled since the 1970s to form a shared agenda for the region. Hardy explores today's social world of environmental reform on the Southeast Side and the possibilities for a productive alignment of interests that will allow these groups to work in mutually beneficial ways. While the current outlook is brighter than in earlier decades, the consensus will require ongoing efforts and compromise from all parties involved.

Jeanne Lieberman, AB'16 (Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies), tells the story of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club, the group of activists who mobilized to preserve, restore, and then symbolically reinvent the South Shore Cultural Center in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Where the country club had formerly represented elitism and exclusion on the South Side, the efforts to reclaim the site as an arts-focused community anchor in a black middle-class neighborhood show very different visions of the city competing for position in public view. The coalition, Lieberman argues, summoned images of the South Side's vibrant history of expressive arts to build support for the restoration project. In the process, it generated an identity for South Shore

quite at odds with the dominant discourse about postindustrial, urban, black communities, which had much in common with the twenty-first-century image of cities as sites of entertainment, cultural festivals, and consumption.

Chicago's public housing again provides the topic for our contribution from Angela Irene Theodoropoulos, AB'16 (Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities), but here through the lens of Bernard Rose's 1992 horror film *Candyman*. Set in the Cabrini-Green projects on the Near North Side, *Candyman* reflects a troubled historical moment, when escalating violent crime, deindustrialization, and a decrease in social services during the Reagan era converged to deepen the sense of isolation and decline within the Cabrini-Green community. Theodoropoulos creatively situates the narrative, imagery, and tropes of *Candyman* within this referential system to show how the film participates in a dialogue about the history and reality of racial boundaries and discrimination in Chicago.

This tenth anniversary is an occasion to express gratitude to all those who have contributed to the Chicago Studies Program. It is a special privilege to acknowledge James Dahl Cooper, AB'76 (Political Science) whose generosity has made this volume of the *Annual* possible.

Daniel J. Koehler, AM'02, PhD'10 (History)

Associate Dean of the College

Acknowledgments



BESS P. COHEN | Since graduating in 2016 Bess Cohen has worked at Kaleidoscope, a child welfare agency serving youth and families healing from abuse and neglect in Chicago. She is also working towards her master's degree at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration where she is specializing in school social work and clinical practice. She lives on the South Side. She would like to thank Sara Sayigh, Sabaria Dean, and Chris Crotwell for sharing their stories with her and Professor Chad Broughton for his ongoing support. A special thanks to all of the young people who, like Sabaria, use their art, bodies, and voices to fight for justice in their schools and communities, and the adults who back them up.

MARI COHEN | Since graduating with a bachelor of arts in history in 2017 I have worked as a reporter for Injustice Watch, a Chicago nonprofit news outlet that covers mostly criminal justice. I regularly use the research skills learned in my history major for investigative reporting. This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance and encouragement of Matthew Briones, my adviser, and Sarah Jones Weicksel, my BA preceptor. I am also thankful for the support of my family and friends, including a close-knit group of women writing history theses who

provided community during the daunting process. I credit the University of Chicago Community Service Center and the *South Side Weekly* for sparking my interest in learning about Chicago's history. Finally, I would like to honor the memory of Arnold R. Hirsch, who died earlier this year. Hirsch's book, *Making the Second Ghetto*, was a crucial resource for this thesis and for mountains of other scholarship on the history of Chicago housing and racial inequality.

JULIET SPRUNG ELDRED | There are so many people who helped to make this paper possible. First, I would like to thank Professor Michael Conzen for his invaluable assistance in both the research process and throughout my time as a geography student and Daniel Koehler for his assistance in revising my thesis for publication in *Chicago Studies*. I would also like to thank all the professors in the Committee on Geographical Sciences, the Department of Visual Arts, and the Department of History who worked with me on earlier incarnations of what ultimately became this paper. Finally, I would like to thank my incredible parents, who raised me with a keen appreciation for the built environment that has undoubtedly gotten me to where I am today. Since my graduation from the University of Chicago in 2017 I have been employed as an analyst at Spy Pond Partners, a transportation consulting firm in the Boston area.

VALERIE GUTMANN | I would like to thank my parents, Jennifer and Clifford Gutmann, and my grandmother, Betsy Shore, for their infinite love and encouragement. I would also like to thank my thesis advisor, Charles Barlow, for supporting this project from inception to completion. I am deeply appreciative of the Chicago Housing Authority residents and staff members, affordable housing advocates and organizers, legal aid attorneys, and academics who shared their time, stories, and perspectives with me. After graduating from the University of Chicago in June of 2017 with a bachelor of arts in sociology, I worked for a year with a reports analyst as a contractor for the Chicago Housing Authority. As

a 2018 Marshall Scholar I will begin a master's degree in the sociology of marginality and exclusion at the University of Cambridge in October of 2018, where I will study issues of housing access and affordability from an international perspective.

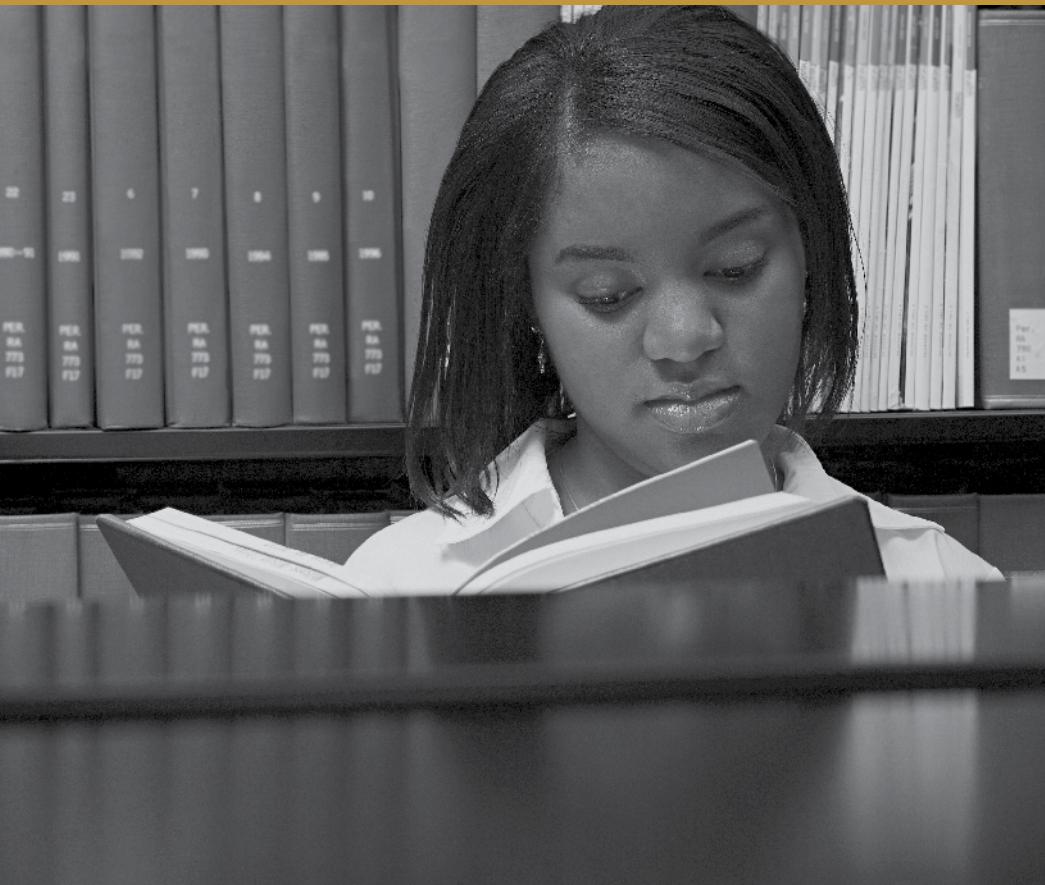
NORA HARDY | To Sabina and Alison: a sincere thank you for your feedback, expertise, and investment in the success of this project. To my family: thank you for your love and understanding, especially on those days when the prospect of finishing this paper, graduating, and facing the future seemed so daunting. In the year since I completed my thesis, I have had the opportunity to work with several nonprofits in Chicago on projects as diverse as community outreach, event planning, curriculum creation, mapping, and habitat restoration. The Calumet has remained a focal point in my professional life, and I have been involved in the evolving projects at play in the region—from coordinating community listening sessions on the Southeast Side, to teaching East Chicago sixth graders about food webs, to restoring Calumet natural areas through invasive plant-species removal. I am excited to continue to contribute my time and effort to work that betters the health of Chicago's people and environment.

JEANNE LIEBERMAN | I would like to thank the members of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club and South Shore residents who generously shared their invaluable knowledge with me and all of the other coalition members whose hard work kept the South Shore Country Club intact for future generations to enjoy. I am especially grateful to Raynard Hall for his extensive feedback and guidance. I thank Rebecca Zorach and Jacqueline Stewart for their thoughtful comments on drafts of this essay, Cindy Ji and Zelda Mayer for their company during the writing process, and Elizabeth Uddyback for the cookies and patient support that made this possible. Starting in August 2016 I spent a year and a half in Colombia supporting the work of the Proceso de Comunidades Negras, funded by a University of Chicago Pozen Family

Center for Human Rights' Dr. Aizik Wolf Post-baccalaureate Fellowship. I helped farmers in the Cauca Province fight for the rights to collective territory and political autonomy and made an educational film about local history and resistance to forced displacement. In January 2018 I returned to Chicago to work for Chicago Studies and the Pozen Center. In the summers of 2016 and 2017 I was also a teaching assistant in the Illinois Humanities' Sojourner Scholars program, which provides college-level courses to public-school students on the South Side. I continued to work with some of the Sojourner teens at the Smart Museum of Art this summer on an oral history about the Alley, where South Siders congregated to listen to jazz and appreciate murals from the 1950s to the 1970s.

ANGELA IRENE THEODOROPOULOS | After graduating Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Chicago in 2016 I performed HIV/AIDS research at Chicago's Howard Brown Health, an LGBTQ+ community health center. Currently I am attending the University of Michigan Law School as a Clyde A. DeWitt Scholar and am an associate editor for the *Michigan Law Review*. In summer 2018 I worked as a legal intern for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. My sincere thanks to my thesis advisor, Adrienne Brown, who extended herself in extraordinary ways to help advance this work. Thank you to Daniel Koehler and the editor for preparing this work for publication. Thank you to my father, Evan, for providing for my education and to my sisters, Annie and Elaine, for developing my interest in community histories and the horror genre, respectively. My greatest thanks to my mother, Helen, whose dissertation in the Regenstein Library inspired me to keep going.

#SaveOurLibrary



A Collaborative Model of Youth Library Services in Chicago

BESS P. COHEN, AB'16

For Prince, who, among his many great gifts, anonymously donated \$12,000 to save Louisville's Western Branch Library, the first public library in the United States to serve African Americans, from closing in 2001 (Cueto 2016).

Introduction

On December 11, 2015, over two hundred students at DuSable Campus, a Chicago public school in the South Side neighborhood of Bronzeville, staged a sit-in to protest the Chicago Public Schools' decision to lay off their school librarian. At 9 AM, the beginning of second period, teachers turned a blind eye as students streamed out of their classrooms. One by one the students checked out books from the school's library, sat in the halls, and read for the rest of the day (Watson 2015). They sat under handmade banners: "Out of 25 Schools with Predominantly Black Students Only 3 Have a Library!" and "Budget Cuts, Yeah Right!" (fig.1 and 2). They circulated a petition in the school:

We, the students of the DuSable Campus, petition against the closure of our library and forced leave of the librarian Sara Sayigh.

We have gathered to take a stand and use our signatures to protest the closing down of the DuSable Campus Library. In hopes of stopping the unfair closure, we sit in protest in the hopes that there will be change, and that CPS will allow the students of our campus to keep their sanctuary of learning and preparatory tool for life as a college student. As we sign our names we implore CPS to save the library and Mrs. Sayigh from leaving our school. As protesters, we ask you to spread the word of the closure and evoke principals, teachers, parents and soon Chicago Public School officials to preserve the essential element of learning and keep this historical library in our midst.

We demand that our library remain open, with Mrs. Sayigh presiding as head librarian

(Chitownteach2 @DulceNoelia7533, Dec. 15, 2018).

An online version of the petition gained 3,002 signatures (Winter 2015). The students' efforts spread through the local and national news media and over social media, most notably on Twitter, where students, teachers, activists, and Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) members shared the students' message (fig. 3). Students from other Chicago high schools contacted DuSable students to see how they could help. Though Chicago Public Schools (CPS) officials instructed the school not to allow reporters into the building, a school official at the campus allowed Lauren Fitzpatrick of the *Chicago Sun-Times* to visit, telling Sayigh that if anyone asked, Fitzpatrick was Sayigh's friend (Sara Sayigh, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016).

The protest was led by Sabaria Dean, a seventeen-year-old senior at Williams¹ (Watson 2015). Dean started using #SaveOurLibrary on



Figure 1. DuSable Sit-in

(Watson 2015)



Figure 2. Student Signs

(Photograph by Bess P. Cohen, Jan. 25, 2016)

1. DuSable Campus includes Daniel Hale Williams Preparatory School of Medicine, Bronzeville Scholastic Institute, DuSable High School, and DuSable Leadership Academy (a separate charter school that closed in 2015). The schools share a single building and a single school library.



Figure 3. Twitter Supporter of Sit-in

(KC Boyd @Boss_Librarian Dec. 11, 2015)

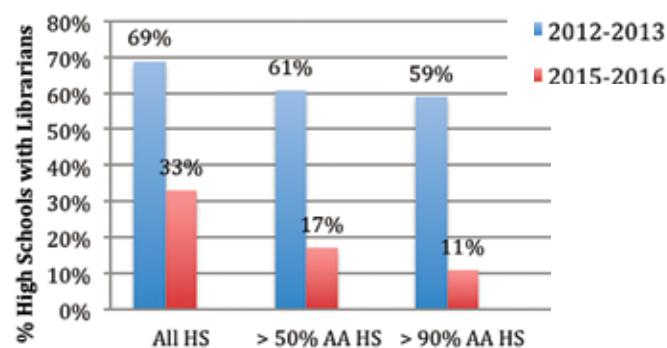


Figure 4. CPS High Schools with Librarians

(Courtesy of Pavlyn Jankov, education policy analyst,
Chicago Teachers Union, Nov. 2015)

Twitter to broadcast CPS' decision to lay off Sayigh. Dean, an outspoken member of the school's basketball team, a self-described leader, and "not the biggest bookworm," which Sayigh confirmed, had many friends for whom the closing of the library would be heartbreaking: "You just can't do that to certain kids who are emotionally attached to the library" (pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). In an unprecedented move, CPS officials came to the school and negotiated directly with Dean and other student leaders; the officials proposed bringing in parent volunteers to manage the library in Sayigh's place, an offer that Dean called more "an insult to [Mrs. Sayigh] than to us" (pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016).

Sayigh has served as the librarian to all schools in the Dusable Campus, with a total of 745 students, for thirteen years. The librarian had "zero" to do with the students' protest (Sabaria Dean and Sara Sayigh, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). "I think the English teachers probably told some of the kids and it just spread like wildfire" (Sara Sayigh, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). But as a member of the CTU's Librarians Committee, known informally as Chi School Librarians, Sayigh's own activism has focused upon the widespread closure of school libraries and loss of librarians in Chicago Public Schools.

Between 2012–13 and 2015–16 the number of school librarians in all CPS high schools has dropped 36 percent, and predominantly black high schools saw a drop of 48 percent during the same period (fig. 4), as the DuSable students highlighted in their banner. Chicago is not alone; school librarians are disappearing nationwide. In 2013, 20 percent of US public schools did not have a full- or part-time librarian, which the American Library Association called "a national crisis" (Ravitch 2014). The Los Angeles Unified School District laid off eighty-five librarians in 2011; the district held weeks of hearings in which they grilled the librarians on their competence to return to new positions as classroom teachers, despite the fact that the librarians already possessed teaching certificates (Goldberg 2011; Tobar 2011). Philadelphia has only eleven school librarians for 218 schools (Graham 2015).

Less than a week after the DuSable protest, CPS reinstated Sayigh,

thanks to “a generous anonymous gift” (Inklebarger 2015). The CPS did not say how large this “gift” was or how long funding would last, and a spokeswoman stress that “while we are glad that this [gift] will restore a valued position that supports students across these schools, we remain concerned that the current financial realities will continue to put our schools in a challenging position as they try to prevent classroom cuts. This is why we will continue to work with our state leaders to fix an unfair funding system that gives Chicago only 15 percent of state funding despite having 20 percent of the enrollment—a disparity that forces schools to make tough choices” (Inklebarger 2015).

The situation at DuSable was unusual for a number of reasons. Despite an exciting upswell of activism by Chicago’s African American youth in recent years (Vivanco 2016), students do not usually organize in the way that Dean and other students did: “A lot of students here, they’re willing to sacrifice not saying anything at all, rather than being an outcast and speaking up for what’s actually right” (Sabaria Dean, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). Further, CPS administrators do not generally negotiate with students, whose voice is absent from CPS’ decisions. Finally, the anonymous gift was unprecedented. Chicagoans often view their government agencies, and Chicago Public Schools especially, as inadequate, and the resources to support city agencies continue to decline; in April 2016 Governor Rauner proposed an additional \$74 million cut to state aid for CPS (Hinz 2016).

This paper concerns what is at stake when CPS librarians and libraries fall victim to budget cuts and how CPS can make up for those losses by working with the Chicago Public Library (CPL). I investigate whether students receive the same resources at their public library after their school libraries close and offer recommendations of how these two public institutions can best support K–12 students. Do young people need both school and public libraries? What different purposes do they serve? How can they collaborate at the local and district levels?

This paper is part of a small body of research that examines the recent trend of school library closures (LRS n.d.). It reveals that the distribution

of public resources in Chicago continues to benefit flourishing institutions while resources are extracted from those that struggle the most. It is imperative that resources for promoting literacy be a policy priority in Chicago where only 25 percent of third through eighth graders read proficiently and 53 percent of adults have limited literacy skills (CLA n.d.; Fitzpatrick 2016). Finally, this paper’s insights may prove applicable for other large urban school districts, such as Los Angeles and Philadelphia, where school librarians are becoming obsolete.

Methodology

This paper’s content, research methods, and writing style are informed by my four years reporting on Chicago Public Schools and youth-support initiatives for the *Chicago South Side Weekly* newspaper. It is as much an in-depth journalistic project as an academic research paper. Though I focus on school libraries and public libraries in Chicago, I draw upon my experiences at community hearings and CPS board meetings, as well as interviews and research I’ve conducted since 2012. Journalism has taught me that the experiences of individuals creates richer, more compelling stories than those driven only by data analysis. The whole truth about schools, communities, and local organizations like libraries can only be told fully with student and teacher voices in conjunction with quantitative data.

Bronzeville Case Study

At the center of the paper is a case study of the operations within and relationship between a public library branch and a public school in the Bronzeville neighborhood on Chicago’s South Side. Hall Branch (4801 S. Michigan Avenue) is two blocks away from DuSable (4934 S. Wabash Avenue). Christopher Crotwell, Hall’s children’s librarian, is the principal contact for Sara Sayigh, DuSable’s librarian. There are nine public schools within five blocks of the library, which serve a total of 4,121

students each month out of a total average of 5,859 visitors each month (CPS n.d., “School Profiles”; CDP 2014). The CPL designated DuSable as Hall Branch’s partner school. Crotwell’s programs target DuSable students, as well as students from nearby Irvin C. Mollison Elementary. My observations of these libraries and interviews with Crotwell, Dean, and Sayigh were conducted from October 2015 through January 2016.

The DuSable students’ protest drew me to this case study initially, but I found that the issues raised at DuSable and Hall were illustrative of broader trends in public schools and public libraries. I was interested in DuSable because it has long been a leader in school library development: it houses a celebrated collection of books on African American history (Rebuild Foundation 2016) and was the first Chicago public school connected to the Internet with a 1995 NASA seed grant (York et al. 1998). Hall and DuSable’s community has many characteristics in common with other South Side communities. Bronzeville grapples with abandoned buildings, vacant lots, a lack of commercial development, school actions,² and losses in other social services. Bronzeville also has a strong group of activists who rally around these issues. In September 2015, for example, parents and activists staged a successful thirty-four day hunger strike to protest the closure of Bronzeville’s Walter H. Dyett High School (Adams 2015).

Hall and DuSable are important parts of Bronzeville’s rich cultural legacy. Hall was the meeting place for the writers Gwendolyn Brooks, Lorraine Hansberry, Langston Hughes, and Richard Wright (CPL n.d., “About Hall Branch”). Renowned for its music program, DuSable counts among its alumni Nat King Cole, Don Cornelius, Johnny Griffin, and Dinah Washington, as well as Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, historian Timuel Black, and others (Cholke 2013; History Makers 2000). A common refrain at events I have attended in South Side communities, often led by now ninety-eight-year-old Black, is a call to cherish DuSable’s historical legacy, to celebrate African American culture, and

to remember the historical and current racism and oppression from which that culture emerged. This is a legacy that policy tends to ignore. With this in mind, my paper attempts to weave this history together with the politics and policy of today, as well as the emotional repercussions from the loss of services like schools and libraries in South Side communities.

Other Data Sources

Together with interviews with librarians Christoper Crotwell and Sara Sayigh and student Sabaria Dean, I also interviewed CPL and CPS administrators. Ethnographic methods and interviews are suited for research of children’s programming because there are many elements of libraries, such as the relationships between librarians and visitors and quality of programming, that are not easily quantifiable and for which survey data is not available. It is important that the perspective of those who implement programming inform evaluations and policy recommendations. Numbers and trends do not capture fully how these systems work. Interviews also give a sense of the enthusiasm (and the limitations) of program administrators to innovate in their fields. I also analyzed CPL annual reports and strategic plans, CPS budgets, and Consortium on Chicago School Research reports for the years when widespread school library closures occurred.

2. “School actions” includes school closures, phase outs, and consolidations.

Literature Review

*As I stepped back into a library that held many memories,
it was quiet.*

No mumbles.

No shouts.

No laughter.

Nothing.

*Coming back to a place that was once
the brightest place in the school,
only to see nothing. It didn't feel right.*

— Jennifer N.³

The Value of Literacy

Early reading is the single skill that can improve success in school and beyond. Recent economics research demonstrates large benefits in investing in early childhood learning, particularly as a means of overcoming the achievement gap between disadvantaged and advantaged youth. This body of research advocates for early intervention in emotional and skill development for poor children (Heckman 2013). Poor children on average may hear between 4 million and 30 million fewer words than children from higher-income families by the time they are three years old (Gilkerson et al. 2017; Hart and Risley 1995), giving low-income youth a disadvantage in developing literacy skills before they start formal schooling. Children's early experience with literacy is a strong predictor of success in reading, in other areas of school, in overall knowledge acquisition, and in non-dropout rates (Stanovich 1986). In addition, people who read more are able to learn more quickly (Cunningham and Stanovich 1998).

3. One of three poems by students in Mr. Collins's eighth-grade class at Brighton Park Elementary School, which were inspired by observations of the school's closed library.

Children who have greater access to books have higher reading achievement (Lindsay 2010). The number of books in a child's home predicts academic success almost as well as a child's socioeconomic status (Krashen et al. 2010; Schubert and Becker 2010). A child who lives in a home with more than five hundred books is likely to stay in school for three years longer than one who lives in a home without books (Evans et al. 2010). Interest in reading is important in developing strong readers; students who select reading materials for themselves are likely to have higher reading outcomes (Krashen 2004). Children who live in poverty have less access to books in their homes and often fewer libraries and fewer bookstores in their communities (Neuman and Celano 2001). About 86 percent of CPS students are economically disadvantaged (CPS n.d., "Stats"), suggesting that a significant portion of Chicago's youth rely on schools and public libraries for much of their exposure to books. Unfortunately, schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty are less likely to have school libraries or to have libraries with restricted hours and smaller staffs (Pribesh et al. 2011). These schools more often use the library for unrelated activities, such as health clinics or special events, often close the library at the beginning and end of the school year, and add new books to the collection at a slower rate than wealthier schools, resulting in fewer and outdated books (Pribesh et al. 2011).

Cultural Implications of Literacy

The case of African Americans after the Civil War is an example of one of the slowest rates of literacy acquisition in human history. In 1870, 81 percent of African Americans were illiterate, compared to 11 percent of white Americans. By 1890, 57 percent of African Americans were illiterate, compared to 8 percent of whites. In addition to factors like lower average family income and parental education, this gap represents "the effects of prejudice, cultural alienation, discouragement, and differential aspirations, all related to race" (Kaestle et al. 1993).

Kaestle et al. define four categories of reading: entertainment, self-

improvement, culture, and critical thinking (1993). For the purposes of this paper the final two categories and their implications for African American youth are most relevant. Literacy is the first means by which children become acculturated: “To some degree, the institutions of literacy—schools, libraries, and publishing companies—are instruments of cultural consolidation. In other regards, however, literacy is used to reinforce the distinctive traditions, cultures, and interests of subgroups” (Kaestle et al. 1993, 245). People who cannot read or lack books lose a connection with mainstream culture, their own history, and their own community. These connections are part of what is at stake when youth lose their access to library resources.

The Digital Divide and Information Literacy

Computer access has become a necessity, and though 70 percent of Americans have computer access in their homes this rate decreases in lower-income homes (Simpson 2015). The prevailing emphasis on the use of the Internet and digital resources expands the divide between those who have access to resources for accruing informational capital and those who do not. Observations of children’s library computer use suggest that more advanced readers have more opportunities to become knowledge creators rather than just knowledge consumers (Neuman and Celano 2012). Students need information literacy—the ability to find, evaluate, and use information found in digital and print resources—to become knowledge creators and to think critically. A 2016 report found that the majority of students could not evaluate information for research and learning: 75 percent of students could not locate sources for research, 60 percent could not confirm the accuracy of sources, and 44 percent could not synthesize information from different sources (Scholastic 2016). Young people need both access and guidance in how to use information resources in order to take their knowledge beyond comprehension to the kind of creativity that is necessary for higher-level learning and careers.

The School Library and Librarian

Though Benjamin Franklin recommended school libraries in 1740, they only became common in the early twentieth century (ALA 2011). The first trained school librarian was appointed in 1900 in Brooklyn, New York (ALA 2011).

All librarians add books to their library’s collection and create programs that respond to the needs of their community. The public librarian fosters a general love of reading and life-long learning, while the school librarian must also connect books to curriculum and school needs. A comprehensive study defines the school librarian’s role broadly: “Provide collaborative programs for reading instruction; select and provide resources to meet the learning needs of all students; assure seamless integration of technology, teaching, and learning; provide resources to support state and national standards; offer resources that enhance classroom collections; [and] encourage students to independently seek, access, and use information” (Scholastic 2016, 2).

When a school loses a librarian, the library loses its value, as the poems by Brighton Park students highlight, the library becomes just a room full of books, rather than a place to learn and for students to form a community. Student achievement in English Language Arts (ELA) suffers when librarian staff is reduced. One study shows that fourth-grade students’ ELA scores were higher in states where the numbers of school librarians increased over the course of four years than in states that lost librarians in that time period. The difference was most dramatic for Latino/a and African American students, English-language learners, and students living in poverty. Another study found that in schools with a full-time librarian and an assistant librarian a higher percentage of students did well on writing and ELA tests (Scholastic 2016).

Recent Trends in Library Services

Both public and school libraries are navigating and catching up with trends towards digital literacy and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering,

Arts, and Math) education. Librarians are called “media specialists” in many districts, and in Tacoma, Washington, the school district’s library department is now the informational technology department (ALSC n.d.). For librarians, digital advances means that “libraries are louder than they used to be” (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comms., Oct. 18, 2015; Sara Sayigh, pers. comms., Jan. 25, 2016; WBEZ 2015).

The president of the American Librarian Association says that libraries have undergone a “larger transformation” and have “become active learning centers for their communities by offering services like classes in English as a second language, computer skills and career counseling” (Hu 2015). Individual librarians and entire library systems must navigate the tension between focusing on their field’s main focus—promoting literacy and reading—and being a community institution that responds to contemporary needs. Unfortunately, at a time when libraries have become a more critical public need, library services to minorities and lower-income communities are affected first by federal funding cuts to libraries (Jones 2004).

The School and Public Library Relationship

Public schools and public libraries are interconnected by history and goals. In the United States the solidification of public education and an increasingly literate public enabled the emergence of public libraries (Martin 2003). The institutions developed together over the course of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Chicago, for example, the Board of Education was established in 1872, a year before the first public library opened (CPL n.d., “History”; Rury 2004). Early youth services in US libraries assume that young people entered the library with an ability to read and an interest in continued self-development (Martin 2003).

The relationship between schools and libraries became fraught in the nineteen sixties and seventies, when increased population and demand for public library services overwhelmed librarians and responsibility for

their services shifted onto school librarians, confusing both groups about their roles in educating young people (Ziarnik 2002). The rapid rise of technology since the eighties has encouraged school and public librarians to share digital resources in an unprecedented way, although this has not been the case in Chicago. The rise of homework help centers in public libraries across the country, including Chicago, suggests another level on which the two institutions have come to share responsibilities in recent years (Simpson 2015; Ziarnik 2002). The public library is now an extension of the public school: “The school [teaches] the skill of reading, the library [shows] what the skill [is] for” (Martin 2003, 55).

Chicago Policy Context

*The odd thing about this place is that
there were trophies, lost their luster,
gathering dust. What is this place?
A library, the trophies are like misfits,
they're not supposed to be where they are.*

— Eduardo G., Brighton Park Elementary School

Despite modest gains in recent years, literacy rates for Chicago’s youth are lower than throughout the state and nation. In 2015 only 25 percent of third- through eighth-grade CPS students met or exceeded reading standards on the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) and only 20 percent of African American students in CPS scored proficient. This compares to 37.7 percent of students statewide (Fitzpatrick 2016). According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 24 percent of CPS eighth graders were proficient in reading compared to 35 percent nationally. Overall 27 percent of CPS students reached proficiency, a 7 percent increase from 2013, making CPS one of only three large districts in the country that saw improvement (NAEP 2015).

In Chicago, as is the case nationally, African American and Latino/a students in fourth and eighth grades have made no significant gains in reading. Since 2003 the achievement gap between white students and students of color and between high- and low-income students has widened in Chicago, more than in any other district (Belsha 2015). About 40 percent of CPS students are African American, 45.6 percent are Latino/a, and about 81 percent of all CPS students live below the federal poverty line and qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch (CPS n.d., "Stats").

In May 2013 the Chicago Board of Education voted to close fifty elementary schools—selected from a list of over three hundred—predominantly in lower-income, African American neighborhoods on the South and West Sides. The board decided to address a \$1 billion budget deficit by closing schools deemed underutilized; officials promised that students would be transferred to higher performing schools nearby.⁴ The closures affected about forty thousand students in closed or welcoming school and 80 percent were African American (Vevea 2013). Many families chose a new school based on proximity to home, because friends or staff from the closed school relocated to the new school, or based on the new school's perceived strong academics. "For many families academic quality meant having after-school programs, certain curricula and courses, small class sizes, positive and welcoming school environments, and/or one-on-one attention from teachers in classes" (Torre et al. 2015, 3). Family definitions of academic quality "was different from the official markers of quality represented by the district's performance policy rating," which resulted in 64 percent of displaced students attending new schools with lower academic performance ratings, by CPS standards, than their designated welcoming schools (Torre et al. 2015, 3). Proximity to home, familiar adults, after-school programs, welcoming

4. Closure of underperforming and underutilized schools has been a prevalent reform strategy since 2002, when former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan headed CPS (Vevea et al. 2013).

environments, and more individualized attention can all in theory be provided by school and public libraries. I will pay particular attention to how school and public libraries can create these opportunities, both separately and by working together.

The Decline of Chicago School Libraries

Over two-thirds (69 percent) of all Chicago public high schools had librarians in 2012–13 and only one-third (33 percent) had librarians in 2015–16. The situation is worst for high schools with a 90 percent African American student population. Only 59 percent of these high schools had librarians in 2012–13 and 11 percent (three schools) had librarians in 2015–16 (fig. 4). The three predominantly African American high schools are Dusable Campus, Morgan Park High School, and Chicago Vocational Career Academy; at these schools, 95.1 percent, 85.3 percent, and 93.8 percent of students, respectively, are low income (CPS n.d., "Stats").

As with many policy that take resources away from school communities, school library closures disproportionately hurt low-income students of color. Illinois public schools are not required to have school libraries by law, but CPS has acknowledged their value: in 2013, the CPS promised families affected by school closing that their children's welcoming schools would have libraries; however thirty-one out of the fifty welcoming schools did not have libraries (WBEZ 2015). Since 1991, CPS has stopped centrally funding school libraries, "forcing schools to use discretionary funds to maintain them" (Kelleher 2015). In the mid-2000s the district provided funds to be split between a part-time gym teacher and a part-time librarian and offered matching grants of up to \$5,000 for library resources. A 2002 district survey found that only fifty schools (9 percent) had "exemplary" or "excellent" collections (Kelleher 2015).

CPS continues to disinvest in school libraries, with funding shifting away from librarians towards online resources. In 2011 CPS designated \$1,445,038 to support librarians' salaries, educational technology,

instruction in literacy and research skills, and “reading enrichment opportunities for students” (CPS 2011). In 2014 CPS designated \$2,800,804 for the Department of Education Tools and Technology & Library Media to cover education technology, instructional resources, and library media. The 2014 goals—focused on “core subject instruction” and a “Library Automation system” that circulates print and digital resources between schools, which reduced funds for librarian salaries and eliminated the need for them (CPL 2014, 70–71). The projected budget for 2016 makes no explicit mention of library resources (CPL 2016).

In 2014 CPS switched to a budget model in which each school receives a lump sum, based on how many students are enrolled, to be spent on “core staff, educational support personnel, supplies, and additional instructional programs” (CPS 2014). When a school is low on funds the principal and Local School Council may decide that cutting non-teaching staff is the best option. Because Illinois requires school librarians to have teaching certifications (Vevea 2014), if a school need additional teachers, the school librarian can be reassigned to a classroom; even before implementing the model, CPS had already shifted fifty-eight librarians into non-librarian positions in 2013 (Jankov 2015). The number of CPS librarians dropped 44 percent between 2012 and 2016: 454 (2012); 313 (2013), and 254 (2014) (Vevea 2014). According to the Chicago Teachers Union’s education policy analyst, there are currently 210 full-time librarians for 503 schools (Pavlyn Jankov, pers. comm., Nov. 2015).

Public Library Funding

In contrast to the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Public Library’s youth services are part of a stable institution with growing financial support and consistent approval from constituents. In 2014 the Chicago Public Library was named the best urban public library in the United States by an international study of library services (*Huffington Post* 2014). A CPL survey found that 72 percent of respondents thought the library

was very important in their lives, 95 percent of patrons had used CPL for books in the past year, and 93 percent said they had used library buildings (CPL 2014).

CPL’s operating budget rose from \$96,597,297 for seventy-four libraries in 2011 (Kniffel 2010) to \$126,121,248 for eighty libraries in 2014 (CPLF 2014a). Approximately 40 percent of the budget is dedicated to children and teen programming. CPL’s funding has remained relatively the same since 2013, with the portion of the budget from the city increasing \$4 million in 2015 (CPLF 2013; CPLF 2014a; CPLF 2015), compared to CPS, whose budget was cut by \$55 million between 2014 and 2015 (CPS 2014; CPS 2015). In 2014, 64 percent of CPL’s budget came from the City of Chicago; the majority of the rest was from the state and federal governments and private donations (CPLF 2014a). Since 2008, the MacArthur Foundation has awarded CPL nine grants, ranging in size from \$50,000 to \$2 million, with seven grants to support the YOUmedia digital lab (MacArthur Foundation n.d.). The Chicago Public Library Foundation’s corporate sponsors include the Allstate Corporation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Kraft Foods Foundation, BMO Harris Bank, Google, and Polk Bros. Foundation (CPLF 2014b). Bruce Rauner donated over \$25,000 to Chicago’s public library in 2014; in April 2016, after becoming governor of Illinois, he proposed cutting funding to Chicago’s public schools by \$74 million (CPLF 2014b; Hinz 2016). Philanthropic support for the Chicago Public Schools is markedly less than for the Chicago Public Library.⁵ CPS teachers and schools must often organize local fund-raisers, and the amount of donations will vary drastically depending on the school’s community. (Anecdotally, the annual book fair for an elementary school in affluent Hyde Park can raise up to \$10,000 compared to \$800 in nearby South Shore.)

5. Editor’s note: In the last years for which figures are available, the Children First Fund: The Chicago Public Schools Foundation raised approximately \$1.7 million compared to the Chicago Public Library Foundation, which raised \$7.4 million (CPS 2017; CPLF 2016).

Strong financial support for the public library and diminishing financial support for public schools are a common paradox in Chicago's distribution of resources; a stable and financially secure institution continues to receive resources while a struggling institution continues to lose resources. Given its robust public and private support, can the public library meet the needs of young people without a library in their school?

Discussion

*Walk into a room.
It's abandon with
chairs, tables, books
that collected dust.
You've been here before
but that was a long ago.
You feel excited because
it brings back memories.
You hear the vent turn on.
You remember the sound from before.
You have to go
but you don't want to leave.*

— Ciera S., Brighton Park Elementary School

Chicago schools and public libraries must change to respond to society's increased reliance on technology and to respond to the needs of children for educational and social supports, especially in low-income communities. This is an enormous undertaking, especially in the context of ongoing disinvestment in Chicago's public schools. Despite overlaps in what public schools and public libraries each provide, there are certain things that only school libraries can offer Chicago's youth, and there are others that only public libraries can provide (fig. 5). This section discusses these offerings in greater depth.

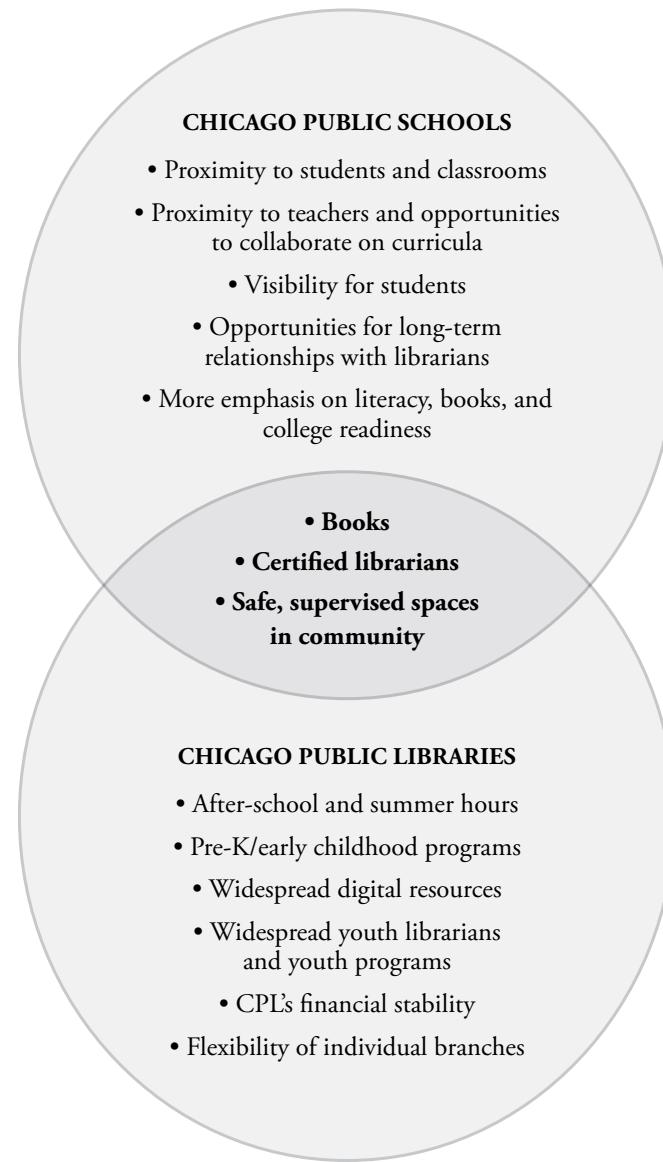


Figure 5. Duties of Librarians

(Diagram by Bess Cohen, 2016)

Accessibility: Safe Spaces and Sustained Relationships

After CPS closed fifty schools in 2013, families were concerned for student safety when traveling to and from their new schools. The difference of a fraction of a mile could force children to cross gang lines. In response to parents' outcry, CPS expanded its Safe Passage program, which establishes routes around schools patrolled by civilian guards. Despite these efforts, there were 133 shootings and thirty-eight murders near Safe Passage routes between January and August 2013, comprising 16 percent of the shootings and murders across the city in that period (Ramos and Keefe 2013). A similar concern for safety applies to public libraries. Although Chicago's library branches are relatively evenly distributed throughout the city (fig. 6), not all youth are comfortable traveling to their local branch (Sabaria Dean, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016).

The accessibility of the local library is complicated by school choice. A child's school is not necessarily in close proximity to the family's local library, which means that even when local schools and public libraries work together, they do not support all children in their neighborhoods. According to Crotwell, "Most kids that go to the library here, live around here, [but] they don't go to school around here. Nobody goes to school in their neighborhood anymore.... School choice just makes things very confusing. Everybody's all over the place" (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). At Mollison, Hall's closest elementary school, only 38 percent of the students live nearby; at Beethoven, the second closest school to Hall, only 17 percent live nearby (Hagan and Lutton 2014). Assigning a CPL librarian to a handful of nearby schools will not reach all the schools' students—paired with the lack of public school librarians means that a significant portion of South Side youth lack contact with any librarian.

When a school library is located within a school, then the librarian is part of the curriculum and the life of the school, teachers are more likely to collaborate with the librarian, and students are aware of and able to take advantage of the library's resources. Dean said that she valued

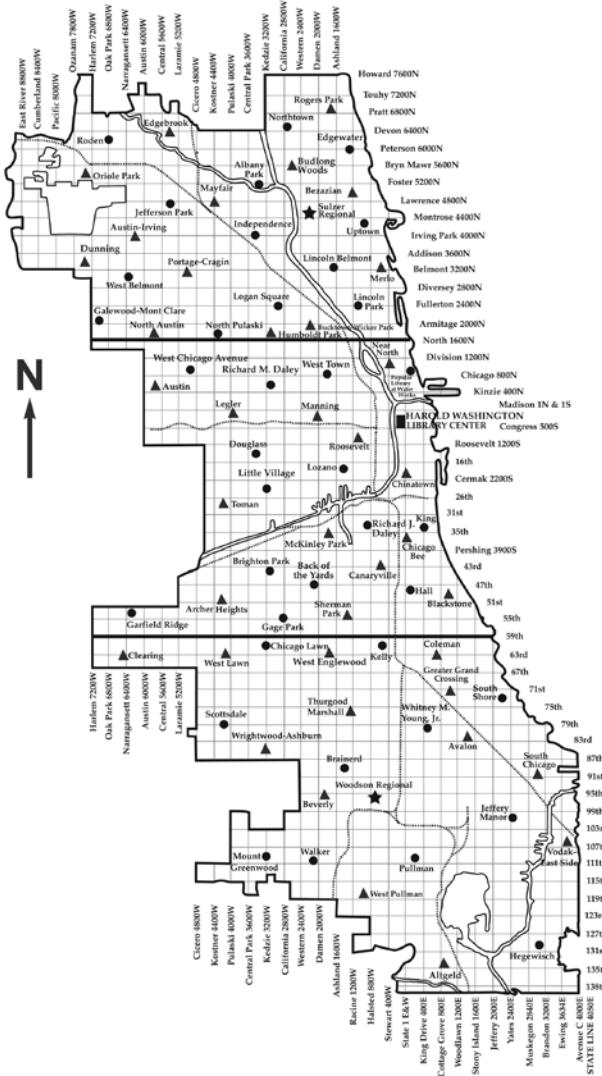


Figure 6. Chicago Public Library Locations (CPL 2014)

the school library because she had had a library in her elementary school and assumed that a library was a given in a school. She made the point that if students don't know that a library should be or might be available to them, they are unlikely to seek it out, let alone fight for it (pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016).

A sustained relationship between the librarian and students is the reason students are drawn to the library and use its resources: "It is a hard sell to get the kids to go to the public library. (*Dean nods in agreement.*) I know they come sometimes after school [to the school's library] and they start whining, 'No, I need to go. I've been here since seven.' I'll say, 'but two blocks away there's a public library. I'll call!' It's hard to get them to go, because they don't know the people. It's all about relationships" (Sara Sayigh, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). School librarians—like other adults in children's lives who mentor, teach, and motivate—provide benefits beyond a parent's or teacher's role, which often involves evaluating and correcting behavior (Southwick et al. 2007). School librarians don't grade students but are part of a student's network of teachers, administrators, and families that ideally communicate about the child's well-being (Sara Sayigh, pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016).

Family engagement is part of CPL's strategic plan (CPL 2014), and children's librarians can provide adult mentorship and connections to families that are similar to school librarians: "One of the great things about the [public] library as a learning space, is we're all carrot, no stick. You come to participate because it's fun, you absolutely don't have to, you don't have to do anything that you don't want to" (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Hall was without a children's librarian for ten months before Crotwell joined the branch. The absence of a sustained relation to a librarian is evident in a lack of parental connection: "I know [all the children], but I don't know what people in the world they're attached to. It seems like they just sprang unbidden from the earth and just wandered in here, as young as six and seven, they'll just wander up here" (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Crotwell is now "rebuilding the formal programming, because [the last librarian] had a

great group, but people find somewhere to be in [ten month's] time" (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015).

Collaboration between CPL and CPS

Each public library branch is paired with nearby elementary and high schools, and public librarians target their programming and outreach to those schools' students. Connecting to the target public schools can prove difficult: "Principals and vice principals are exhausted. You can't call teachers during the day, because they can't be on the phone.... It can be really hard to get in, unless you have a previous relationship from when CPS was having sunnier times" (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Newer librarians, like Crotwell, lack existing relationships in the community or in their targeted schools. CPL does not consider a candidate's experience or community connections in hiring or assigning librarians, so librarians must often build those networks from the ground up. Crotwell's outreach is limited to a few school visits, word of mouth, and existing CPL partnerships. For example, he used a contact at the Big Shoulders Fund (a partner for CPL's Summer Reading Challenge) to put him in touch with school administrators at local Catholic schools. Crotwell often asks Sayigh to spread the word about his programs. When these two librarians cooperate, they together reach more students and create a safety network around students—a phone call between Sayigh and Crotwell means that one more adult knows where a child is at a given time.

System wide, CPL administrators have found it difficult to make the most of partnerships with CPS. For example, according to CPL's director of children's services, a 2015 CPL-CPS initiative to sign up students for public library cards was unsuccessful and disbanded (Elizabeth McChesney, pers. comm., Nov. 1, 2015). On the other hand, a successful program is Teacher in the Library, in which local teachers help students with homework after school. Now in its seventeenth year, teachers receive extra pay, which is funded by the Chicago Public Library Foundation

(Rothstein 2017). The program's success proves that collaboration between CPS and CPL works if it does not add to the day-to-day burden of school teachers and administrators and carries incentives.

CPL's Unique Capacities

The American Library Association has been encouraging libraries across the country to increase early childhood literacy programs for over a decade (Hu 2015), and CPL's strategic plan for 2015–19 does focus on early childhood literacy, as well as STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) learning in early childhood (CPL 2014). CPL's priorities meet some needs that school libraries are not able to meet on their own. For example, CPL's early childhood programs serve a population that schools do not: "The hardest population to get ahold of is pre-K, because there isn't a structured place where you can find them" (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Only 41 percent of children attend neighborhood public schools for preschool (Ehrlich et al. 2013), which places local public libraries in a unique position to teach reading to very young children, particularly in low-income communities where free programs like evening story times may be more accessible to working parents. Crotwell holds his story times every Tuesday, one for infants and toddlers in the mornings and a family story time in the evening for older kids that includes structured play with parents (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015).

CPL is also well placed to provide STEAM learning, which may be beyond public schools' limited budgets. Jeremy Dunn, director of teen services for CPL, says there is "a clear mandate out of the current administration that both CPS and the city find ways to encourage youth to have a better understanding of opportunities that are available in science, technology, engineering, and math, because of need for that in future areas of growth for US jobs. It's aligned to the national priority being driven out of the White House and out of the science community" (pers. comm., Nov. 10, 2015).

STEAM learning, including computer literacy, pervade current educational priorities and is realized with mixed results within CPL. Youth in lower-income neighborhoods may only have access to computers at their local library, but getting youth away from the limited number of computer screens and participating in other activities is a challenge (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). At many branches, a CPL library card limits computer sessions to two hour each day, in order to ensure wide access to this finite resource. Eager to take advantage of the Internet, many youth memorize the names and library card numbers of friends and relatives to extend their computer access. "They'll have five numbers memorized; they'll have eight sixteen-digit numbers in their head" (Christopher Crotwell, pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Crotwell observed that most youth at Hall branch use the computers to play video games, rather than for learning or homework (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Together with providing computer access, CPL's STEAM education priority has led librarians like Crotwell to create "really hands-on, maker-oriented programming," such as his Monday chess club and Wednesday science club, "which is all about being engaged, physically and mentally, with the task or the subject" (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015).

Hall is one of twelve branches with a YOUMedia lab for teenagers (CPL n.d., "About YOUMedia"). Since 2009, high-school students have pursue their own projects in music recording, video filming and editing, or graphic design in YOUMedia labs, which are supplied with 3D printers, design programs, vinyl cutters, or robotics supplies (CPL n.d., "YOUMedia"). A 2013 study found that participants in YOUMedia felt mentally and physically safe in the program, that they were more involved in their interests than before, and that they had improved at least one digital media skill; many reported that participation improved their writing, schoolwork, and ability to communicate with adults; and almost 75 percent reported that YOUMedia had increased their awareness of post-high school opportunities. Participants were 77 percent African American or Latino/a, and 54 percent lived on the South Side. (Sebring et al. 2013). YOUMedia uses connected learning, which

incorporates teens' interests, peer culture, and academics in an environment that is partially unstructured, student led, and relies on relationships between students and library staff (Sebring et al. 2013). YOUMedia is culturally relevant and appeals to teenagers; they feel connected for example to Chance the Rapper who, as a South Side teenager, produced his music at Harold Washington Library's YOUMedia lab and who remains a champion of the program (Tardio 2015).

CPL story times, computers, YOUMedia, and other programs make libraries a safe, supervised, and stimulating space for children and youth to go after school, at night, on weekends, and in the summer when schools are closed. Public libraries also address the needs of parents and schools; in the summer, library branches provide additional programs for all ages and volunteer opportunities for middle- and high-school students. Youth librarians, who are freedom to tailor their programs to local interests and needs, can offer personalized support to young people.

Administrative Culture and Librarians

The circumstances surrounding the lay off and rehiring of Sara Sayigh highlights a lack of transparency, communication, and trust between CPS officials and schools (students, teachers, and school leaders). CPS' student-based budgeting system gives principals the power to allocate resources and determine hiring and firing. As reported in the media and corroborated by a DuSable Campus leader, Sayigh, and CPS officials, the district decided to lay off and to rehire Sayigh. Two former CPS officials, a CTU representative, and a long-time Chicago education reporter⁶ could not explain why the district took this decision despite student-based budgeting (pers. comm., Mar. 2016). Though unfamiliar with Sayigh's case, one former CPS administrator⁷ posited that the principal did fire

6. Interviews were conducted in confidentiality, and the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

7. Interview was conducted in confidentiality, and the name of interviewee is withheld by mutual agreement.

Sayigh and conspired to blame the decision on CPS; the administrator criticized the district's decision to reinstate Sayigh, because it sends a message to schools and students that shouting loud enough will get them what they want (pers. comm., Mar. 2016). This unwarranted suspicion demonstrates the (mutual) distrust that exists between CPS district officials and teachers, school administrators, and even students.

In contrast, all CPL youth librarians report directly to a small youth-services administrative staff. The administrators appear to be on a first-name basis with all of the youth librarians, and librarians have opportunities for promotion within the library system. For example, Crotwell's predecessor, a much celebrated veteran librarian, was promoted to be an early literacy specialist, which supports early childhood learning initiatives across the library system. CPL's small size allows for personal relationships across all levels of the organization, which fosters a sense of agency and opportunity for those working on the ground. As Crotwell emphasized, individual librarians are given autonomy and administrators are open to supporting their programming as long as it aligns with CPL's strategic goals: "With a little bit of creativity and support of administrators, we [librarians] can do pretty much whatever we want" (pers. comm., Oct. 18, 2015). Based on my research, there is an energy within CPL and an openness to progress and creativity that simply doesn't exist within CPS.

As CPL continues to grow, it receives the support and funding to improve, and as CPS continues to fail students, it loses the ability and resources to improve. This is how much of our educational system functions: districts want schools to improve but do not give them the resources. In the same way, disadvantaged youth should have access to the same resources, if not more resources, as their more privileged peers; our city must give our less successful institutions access to the resources that our more successful institutions have. Chicago's public libraries are not as politicized or rife with controversy and their staff is not as overburdened as the public schools. Public libraries do not serve everybody and only serve those who overcome barriers to access (safety, limited

programming locations). In light of school library closures, the question becomes if and how public libraries can improve access.

Policy Recommendations

I recommend investing in people rather than digital resources, developing a shared support network between schools and libraries on a local level, increasing access to literacy resources across the city, and building upon the successful YOUMedia model. None of these recommendations replace the need for school librarians. Ideally, all schools should have a school librarian and a robust relationship with its local library branch. These recommendations attempt to make the most of CPL and CPS resources as they exist now.

A People-Driven Approach

The most vital resource for providing youth library services is the very thing that schools are losing— people. Despite moves towards automation and digital resources by CPS and CPL, I advocate for more trained librarians to provide library services to children and youth.

A shift towards people will help CPS and CPL better support the work and relationships between existing school librarians. CPS and CPL administrators must also find ways to strengthen the ties between libraries and schools regardless of whether or not the schools have librarians. Setting a tone that is open to collaboration between the systems is critical. On the local level, school librarians need to understand the difficulties that public librarians face in their work, and vice versa. Both groups have a vested interest in finding some common ground. CPS and CPL may want to consider joint professional development opportunities for school teachers, school librarians, and public librarians. They might also develop incentives to share programming, such as small grants to fund trips to public libraries or ongoing collaboration between school teachers and public librarians.

CPL can improve branch librarians' effectiveness with local schools by hiring locally. It is important that CPL hire people who are familiar with the resources, relationships, and challenges that already exist in the communities they serve. Initiatives to encourage local college graduates to become certified youth librarians could be helpful. When local librarians are replaced they should share their local knowledge and neighborhood relationships with their replacement. Then, new librarians will not have to reinvent programs and relationships with children, parents, and colleagues in local schools.

Collaborative Outreach

CPL branches should work more closely with their local schools to benefit from the schools' existing social networks with parents and educators in the area. Librarians should also form partnerships with Local School Councils, which comprise engaged parents and teachers who work with the principal to make certain school-wide decisions. These kinds of local partners can also help librarians reach parents who may also have pre-K children, the hardest group to reach.

Librarians can also engage with local nonprofits and community organizations. Open Books, which makes large donations of book and runs literacy programming for all ages, and Turning the Page, which emphasizes family-engaged reading programming, are just two of many Chicago-based nonprofits whose expertise and partnership could support local librarians' work. Community leaders from churches, private preschools, and local organizations are valuable partners for local librarians. In Bronzeville, for example, the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization is active in school issues and has a robust network in the community.

Increasing Access to Library Resources

CPL should allocate funds to initiatives that support schools directly, rather than allowing that money to reach children only if they get to the

library individually. YOUMedia is a very successful and celebrated initiative, but it only benefits self-selecting youth who go to one of the twelve library branches with a YOUMedia lab. Initiatives that create a direct line between schools and public libraries are critical for reaching more of Chicago's youth.

MyLibraryNYC, a collaboration between the New York Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, the Queens Library, and the New York City Department of Education, presents a compelling model for public libraries to work more closely with the school district. Now in its fourth year, the initiative reaches over five hundred schools and over five hundred thousand students in the five boroughs (Barack 2015). My LibraryNYC provides (1) students and teachers with fine-free library cards that provide access to all public libraries and participants' school library; (2) book deliveries to teachers' schools, which removes the burden of going to the library after work; (3) centralized access to the digital resources in all three library systems; and (4) teacher training on integration of library resources into curricula (NYPL n.d.).

Citibank provided a pilot grant of \$5 million to fund MyLibraryNYC's first three years; MyLibraryNYC is now part of the operating budget of the three library systems and the Board of Education; it is also supported by a \$650 annual fee from participating schools (Barack 2015). Such a private-public partnership is necessary to reach as many schools and students as possible in a large school district. Although New York City's multiple library systems makes a collaboration like this more viable than it might be in cities with a single library system like Chicago.

MyLibraryNYC only works with schools that have school librarians or a teacher assigned to the library, which is frequently not possible in most Chicago public schools. To have the most impact, implementation of an initiative like MyLibraryNYC in Chicago would have to be accessible and perhaps targeted at schools that lack librarians. An accessible online platform might allow educators to interact directly with the public library, without the school librarian as a facilitator.

Building Upon YOUMedia

YOUMedia is an incredibly successful model for engaging teenagers, but it has a relatively small reach and does not address the critical literacy skills with which this paper is mainly concerned. CPL should consider developing initiatives that replicate YOUMedia's connected-learning environment, which appeal to Chicago's youth, into literacy skills programming. Such initiatives should also serve a broader range of age groups and at more locations throughout the city, and particularly on Chicago's South Side.

Conclusion

Despite the demonstrated benefits of school libraries with credentialed school librarians, Chicago's public schools has seen a sharp decline in the number of libraries and librarians that exist in its schools. This is a trend that, like school closures and other repercussions of budget cuts, disproportionately affects low-income and minority communities, whose students most need the literacy and critical-thinking skills that school libraries and librarians provide. As the Chicago Public Schools system continues to reduce its library resources for students, the Chicago Public Library continues to expand its offerings for youth. The public and school libraries share a similar mission but reach different populations. The two systems can and must work toward a collaborative model of youth library services in light of the decline of school libraries.

The loss of school libraries not only affects institutions, but is also of historical and cultural significance. "Knowing where you come from to get where you're going" is a refrain that resonates in African American schools and churches on the South Side, but does not often make it to city hall. For example, only after protests by a South Side community group in 2013 did CPS comply with a 1991 state law that requires a African American history curriculum in all public schools (CPS 2013; Hutson 2013). A Eurocentric canon and curriculum prevail in the school

district despite the fact that less than 10 percent of students in the district are white (CPS n.d., “Stats”). The DuSable students’ protest was as much an ode to the historical importance of their school in Chicago’s African American history as it was an attempt to provide for the future of both the school and themselves. Their protest resonated across the South Side—Chicago’s artistic and activist communities rallied behind the students—and highlights the tremendous energy in South Side communities to change how resources are distributed in Chicago. The protest also inspired two exhibits. The first, at the Stony Island Arts Bank, drew upon books that Sara Sayigh had retired from DuSable’s vast collection of African American history and the second, at the Dorchester Art + Housing Collaborative, looked at the decline of school libraries in Chicago (Rebuild Foundation 2016).

The poems by Brighton Park Elementary School students illustrate the emotional consequences of closing school libraries. Children form significant attachments to places and people. They need stability, they need safety, they need unstructured spaces where they can play and learn, and they need adults who look out for them. This is particularly true for youth in communities that grapple with widespread poverty and violence, for whom instability and isolation are the status quo. By disinvesting in these communities, city leaders harm their most fragile constituents. If this trend of disinvestment in school libraries continues, children will continue to lose the resources that they need to succeed in “an economy that is increasingly dependent on expert thinking and complex communication” (Neuman and Celano 2012). In addition to struggling to accomplish basic tasks that are necessary in daily life, they will lack the skills necessary to be the thinkers, innovators, and leaders of the next generation; because this trend harms African American and low-income communities the most, it will continue to perpetuate inequality in who does and does not have knowledge and power in our society.

At seventeen, Sabaria Dean recognizes this: “Even before we had the read-in, we’d been doing research.... Rahm’s kids have tons of librarians, and that’s just weird to me, how you wouldn’t support the South Side

of Chicago, but where your kids go everything is supplied” (pers. comm., Jan. 25, 2016). But it is not simply “weird,” it is unjust, and it is part of a larger trend in how resources are allocated in Chicago. School libraries, the people who run them, and the books and lessons within them are resources that I, and most of my readers, had when we were growing up. There is no reason why young people growing up in resource-starved areas of Chicago, and of the country, should not have access to those resources too.

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“Have Faith in Your Neighborhood”



Jews and Urban
Renewal in 1950s
Hyde Park, Chicago

MARI COHEN, AB'17

In April 1954, Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein wrote a letter to Illinois Congressman Sidney Yates, explaining his achievements as a rabbi of Chicago's Hyde Park Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv (K.A.M.) Temple for fifteen years: "Perhaps as a member of a minority, I have been especially sensitive to the fact that the American dream has its nightmares in the areas of racial relations... Yet, vast as these implications are, the betterment of race relations begins right on the lowly street where one lives. Only as it is created within neighborhoods can it become national policy and an international way of life."¹ Weinstein was referring to his work advocating for an interracial neighborhood as a member of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC); he appeared to view this work as a fundamental component of antiracism and as a testament to his own broad and sincere commitment to civil rights. Julian Levi, chairman of the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) and architect of urban renewal policies that shaped the future of the neighborhood, challenged the view of liberal Hyde Parkers like Weinstein in a 1980 interview: "You have in Hyde Park a definite segment of people who pride

1. Jacob J. Weinstein to Sidney Yates, April 12, 1954, box 3, folder 2, Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein Papers, Chicago History Museum (hereafter, JJW Papers).

themselves on their great conviction about liberal theories of one sort or another, but when the chips go down will behave like anyone else.”²

The conflict between Levi’s and Weinstein’s views demonstrate the complex politics of Chicago’s urban renewal projects at midcentury, as those in power enacted plans that reshaped but ultimately maintained the segregation and ghettoization of Chicago’s black population. An uneasy and tenuous alliance of city leaders, business interests, and liberal integrationist groups supporting urban renewal contrasted with white ethnics who resorted to violence to try to prevent black people from moving in to their neighborhoods, while Chicago’s black population was often left with little to no influence on the situation. As a result, Hyde Park, the home of the University of Chicago, remains one of the few integrated neighborhoods in Chicago and one of the few South Side neighborhoods with a continuing Jewish presence, but this has in many ways come at a cost to the South Side communities surrounding the university.

Against this background, a group of liberal Jews in Hyde Park, led by Weinstein, occupied an unusual position: it advocated fiercely for integration of the community and against white flight to the suburbs, but supported policies that would ultimately lead to further segregation and displacement for many black and poor-white residents of Hyde Park. In *Making the Second Ghetto*, Arnold Hirsch resolves this contradiction by arguing that the community’s liberal attitudes are precisely what allowed urban renewal to proceed in Hyde Park, by allowing the neighborhood to “bend rather than break” when black people began migrating into the neighborhood. Furthermore, Hirsch viewed the civil rights ideals of HPKCC members as idealistic goals that the community professed verbally while actually allowing the University of Chicago to act in the affluent white population’s interest. Yet these Hyde Park Jews did not see themselves as using integrationist rhetoric as a front for self-interested actions; Weinstein and K.A.M. Temple endorsed a broader

mission of social justice and were active in multiple causes beyond the neighborhood level.

This thesis investigates how the liberal Jews of K.A.M. navigated their role in Hyde Park’s urban renewal, examining how this role converged and conflicted with the community’s commitment to racial equality and civil rights, and how Jewish identity influenced participation in neighborhood politics. While Hyde Park had a large Jewish population at the dawn of the 1950s, this thesis focuses mostly on Weinstein and his congregation, given that Weinstein was one of the most prominent activist Reform rabbis of his time, and when it came to community involvement and activism, K.A.M. was a pioneer and role model among local Jewish congregations. K.A.M. and Weinstein provide a useful case study for how Jews with strong commitments to civil rights navigated housing issues in their own backyards. However, it should be noted that Weinstein and his devotees did not speak for all of the neighborhood’s Jews, who held a variety of positions on urban renewal. Other prominent voices included SECC Director Levi, the university’s urban renewal advocate, and Leon Despres, alderman of the 5th Ward (which includes south Hyde Park and Woodlawn), who attended K.A.M. but sometimes was to the left of Weinstein on neighborhood issues.

Ultimately, Weinstein and his congregants advocated for urban renewal because they believed it was a social good: it would allow Hyde Park to become an interracial neighborhood and the ends therefore justified the means. K.A.M.’s faith in urban renewal was motivated first of all by beliefs that emphasized the importance of interpersonal relations and underestimated the structural basis of racism. Secondly, support for urban renewal allowed Hyde Park liberal Jews to construct a white identity in which they could receive the material benefits of whiteness without associating themselves with the white racists they opposed.

2. Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940–1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 262.

Whiteness in the City: Jews and the Chicago Housing Crisis

In the years after World War II, the city of Chicago faced a severe housing shortage due to the great wave of migration of African Americans from the South and a lack of housing construction since the Great Depression, which was further compounded by the return of veterans to the city.³ The black community was hit the hardest and longest by the housing shortage: in the late 1940s, roughly 375,000 blacks lived in the Black Belt on the South Side, which ought to have accommodated only 110,000.⁴ The severe shortage led many black Chicagoans to pay more rent than white families and to live in “kitchenette” apartments, which were apartments cut up into smaller units by real-estate speculators and landlords, often with inferior facilities that led to sanitation and health problems.⁵ In the postwar period, the existing situation of segregation became untenable, especially as construction of housing in the suburbs accelerated and whites began to move there, leaving vacancies behind in the city.⁶ With suburban developments closed to blacks,⁷ the Black Belt began to expand into previously white areas, with black renters forced to pay significantly higher rent and buyers forced to buy at higher prices. As racially restrictive covenants—arrangements among property owners that forbid the sale or lease of land to African Americans—

became increasingly indefensible in the courts,⁸ Chicago’s racial boundaries were poised for destabilization.

Yet just as a variety of forces combined to challenge Chicago’s existing segregation, other forces emerged to re-entrench it. With banks and life insurance companies often unwilling to extend mortgages to black buyers, partially because the Federal Housing Administration would not insure mortgages in neighborhoods with a significant black population,⁹ real-estate speculators stepped in.¹⁰ Speculators facilitated the changing of property from white to black hands and charged black buyers significantly higher prices. They also played off white fears of changing racial demographics by pushing whites to sell as soon as a neighborhood seemed on the brink of change.¹¹ Many speculators sold property to blacks through an exploitative method known as the land contract, in which they charged a small down payment but high monthly payments and retained the deed to the property until the contract was paid off, making it easy to evict buyers who did not complete their contract. In order to meet contract payments, black buyers were often forced to overcrowd or convert their properties into smaller units illegally or to let maintenance fall by the wayside.¹² In areas where black people moved into apartment buildings, real-estate operators could make significant profits converting buildings into smaller units and renting to black people who were willing to pay higher rents than whites.¹³ Some even

3. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 17.

4. Ibid., 23.

5. Ibid., 18.

6. Ibid., 29. According to Hirsch, 77 percent of new units constructed between 1949 and 1955 were located in the suburbs.

7. Ibid., 28.

8. The United States Supreme Court ruled restrictive covenants unenforceable in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948).

9. Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America* (London: Picador, 2010), 4.

10. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 31.

11. Ibid., 34.

12. Ibid., 32–33.

13. Ibid., 33.

evicted white families so that they could rent to higher-paying black families.¹⁴ The conditions created by these exploitative practices convinced already wary white Chicagoans that when black people moved in their neighborhoods it would mean their own dispossession or the creation of slums.¹⁵

Whites in Chicago responded to black families moving into their neighborhoods in one of three ways: forming violent mobs, moving to the suburbs, or engaging in urban planning or urban renewal to attempt to control the future of the neighborhood. The South and West Sides' large Jewish communities participated in both white flight and urban renewal, and Jews also made up a significant proportion of exploitative real-estate sellers.¹⁶ The term urban renewal was well-defined by Herbert J. Gans in a critical article in 1965:

Since 1949, this program has provided local renewal agencies with federal funds and the power of eminent domain to condemn slum neighborhoods, tear down the buildings, and resell the cleared land to private developers at a reduced price. In addition to relocating the slum dwellers in "decent, safe, and sanitary" housing, the program was intended to stimulate large-scale private rebuilding, add new tax revenues to the dwindling coffers of the cities, revitalize their downtown areas, and halt the exodus of middle-class whites to the suburbs.¹⁷

However, urban renewal programs in cities across the nation allowed powerful interests significant leeway to remake neighborhoods and led to mass displacement of residents, often without offering replacement housing. According to George Lipsitz, "ninety percent of the low-income

14. Hirsch, 35.

15. Ibid.

16. See Satter, *Family Properties*, for more details of Jewish real-estate sellers.

17. Herbert J. Gans, "The Failure of Urban Renewal," *Commentary Magazine*, April 1, 1965, <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-failure-of-urban-renewal/>.

units removed for urban renewal were never replaced," as cleared land was rededicated for "commercial, industrial, and municipal projects" rather than replacement housing.¹⁸ And urban renewal was not color-blind: it ultimately destroyed 10 percent of units occupied by whites and 20 percent of those occupied by blacks. In Hyde Park, the urban renewal plans led to widespread displacement and garnered significant opposition in Chicago's black community.

Scholars have not fully analyzed the role of Chicago Jews in urban renewal. Existing scholarship on urban renewal in Chicago has often centered around conflicts between white ethnics and blacks, but without examining the role of Jews specifically.¹⁹ Scholarship on the role of Jews in changing neighborhoods has often focused on the question of whether or not Jews participated in white flight and on the role of the suburbs in assimilating Jews into white middle-class identity, rather than on the actions of those who stayed in the city.²⁰ The choice of Hyde Park's Jews to stay in the city was relatively unusual, making it a particularly compelling case to investigate.

18. George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (September 1995): 374.

19. In *Making the Second Ghetto*, Hirsch focuses more on the role of working-class Catholics than on Jews; in *Family Properties*, Satter considers the place of the Jews in postwar Chicago, Jewish participation in real-estate exploitation, and the Jewish community of Lawndale.

20. See Karen Brodkin, *How the Jews Became White Folks*, for how Jews, aided by FHA mortgages unavailable to black people, were able to leave the city for the suburbs, which was an important part of assimilation into whiteness; Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness," for suburbs as the site where various white ethnic identities fused into a homogenous white identity; Cheryl Greenberg, "Liberal NIMBY: American Jews and Civil Rights," for Jews' decisions about whether or not to stay in the city as an indication of whether they lived up to their liberal racial beliefs in their private lives; and Lila Corwin Berman, *Metropolitan Jews*, for how Detroit Jews maintained allegiances to the city even after moving to the suburbs.

In *Making the Second Ghetto*, Arnold Hirsch gives a detailed account of the forces that reshaped and maintained segregation in Chicago in the 1950s and '60s. He portrays the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC) as an organization that espoused lofty liberal goals while knowing it would not be able to accomplish them. According to Hirsch's analysis, the members of the HPKCC used their liberal attitudes as a nonviolent front for their efforts to fight the racial succession of Hyde Park, while allowing the institutional interests of the University of Chicago to ultimately override their ideological commitments. Hirsch notes that Hyde Park was a heavily Jewish community,²¹ but in general, his work retreats from a full analysis of the place of Jews in Chicago in the 1950s. He illustrates a scene in which white "ethnics"—mostly working-class Catholics—fought racial succession of their neighborhoods with violence, business and institutional leaders fought racial succession with political power, and liberal groups like the HPKCC fought racial succession with rhetoric about "an interracial community with high standards." Consequently, black people were caught in the middle with little political power. Hirsch divides the white actors into two general groups: the white ethnics of outlying neighborhoods and the more affluent actors of the Loop and Hyde Park. Jews are placed in the latter category. According to Hirsch, Hyde Park was "a relatively well-to-do, significantly Jewish area" that would have been "largely alien to the Irish in Englewood and the Slavs in South Deering."²² The white working-class ethnics are portrayed as victimizers, as perpetrators of racial violence, but also as victims, stereotyped as "unenlightened" by Hyde Parkers and, in general, subject to the whims of those in power.²³ The violence of the white ethnics, in this account, stemmed partially from their pride in their ability to buy a home and their belief that the

influx of black people into their neighborhoods would destabilize the communities they had worked to create, as well as a fear of losing their tenuous possession of white identity.²⁴ According to Hirsch, "the immigrants and their children displayed the poor judgment of becoming militantly white at the precise moment prerogatives of color were coming into question."²⁵

Yet this dichotomy between white ethnics and powerful whites in the Loop and Hyde Park is complicated, given that Jews might also be considered white ethnics, or at least otherwise separate from the white American mainstream. If working-class Catholics were coming to grips with a new white identity in the 1940s and 1950s, so too were Jews, but Hirsch devotes less time to analyzing the impact of white identity formation on Chicago's Jews. In *Making the Second Ghetto*, Jews occupy multiple category-defying spaces, to the extent that Hirsch does not seem to quite know how to analyze them. On the one hand, Jews are lumped in with well-off Protestants and considered as part of both a general group of white liberals and powerful white interests. Jews were present as members of liberal groups like the HPKCC and also the face of institutional interests like the University of Chicago: Levi, a Jew, chaired the South East Chicago Commission that acted on the university's behalf.

Yet Jews also appear from time-to-time in the narrative as targets of racialized violence and anti-Communism tinged with anti-Semitism. A race riot that took place in Englewood started when neighbors saw black people in the house of a Communist Jew, Aaron Bindman, who lived at 56th and Peoria and was hosting a labor meeting. This prompted rumors about a "Jewish-Communist plot to destroy the neighborhood" and then spurred a riot that at one point gathered ten thousand people. The racist mob did not just attack black people; unfamiliar whites were beaten and denounced as "Jews, Communists, and—apparently worst of all—

21. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 173.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., 194–96.

25. Ibid., 198.

University of Chicago meddlers.”²⁶ Finally, in addition to the Jews of Hyde Park, Hirsch briefly mentions the West Side Jews of Lawndale, Chicago’s largest Jewish community, who met the prospect of flight to the suburbs willingly, unlike the working-class white ethnics. In general, Jews rarely participated in racist violence: only 0.2 percent of those arrested for their role in race riots were Jews, by far the smallest percentage of any white ethnic group. Overall, throughout the narrative, Jewish identity takes on multiple valences: at various points, Jews appear as institutional power brokers, meddling white liberals, indifferent suburban whites, and minority victims of violence.

The struggle to categorize and analyze American Jews in the social landscape is not Hirsch’s problem alone. In the *Price of Whiteness*, Eric Goldstein argues that, since American society is organized in a black-white dichotomy, European Jews have long struggled with how to conceive of and present a group identity, especially as their acceptance in the white mainstream has accelerated.²⁷ Goldstein’s work builds on a tradition of other historians working in American Jewish history and in studies of the social construction of “whiteness” and the ways in which immigrants progressively gained access to white identity. Much of the previous literature has framed Jews’ (and other European immigrants’) negotiations with white identity primarily in the past and has suggested that their self-identification as white American Jews resolved smoothly not too long after immigration.²⁸ Goldstein, however, argues that European Jews continued to struggle to negotiate identity long after they

26. Ibid., 55.

27. Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

28. See Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, and David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*.

arrived in the United States and into the present.²⁹ Goldstein focuses on Jews’ attempts to continue to assert a minority group identity even as they became more deeply folded into the white mainstream. At midcentury, this often meant embracing racial liberalism while taking care not to jeopardize their own recent entry into whiteness.³⁰ Unlike much of the other scholarship on Jews and whiteness, which has focused mostly on how Jews benefited from “becoming white,” Goldstein’s narrative emphasizes not just whiteness’s “material and social benefits” but also its “emotional costs” for Jews as they struggled to define their minority identity and to act meaningfully in solidarity with other minority groups.³¹ Hyde Park liberal Jews’ actions during urban renewal were partially the result of aiming to maximize the benefits of whiteness while minimizing costs.

Given the controversies surrounding urban renewal in Hyde Park, my secondary and contemporaneous literature is divided in its assessment of neighborhood politics in the 1950s. Hirsch, whose book is often considered the seminal historical monograph on Chicago urban renewal, is generally critical, calling out neighborhood players’ hypocrisies and detailing how community groups, university interests, and individuals made way for the deepening of ghettoization of black Chicagoans on the South Side. Other portraits of Hyde Park renewal in recent years have cited Hirsch but offered alternate perspectives. John W. Boyer, in *The University of Chicago: A History*, summarizes the renewal process from a university perspective, acknowledging its flaws but painting it ultimately as a victory for the university’s survival. In *Culture of Opportunity*, a

29. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 4.

30. American Jews including people of various races and places of origin (Mizrahi Jews from the Middle East, Sephardic Jews from Spain, and Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern and Central Europe). This thesis concerns white Ashkenazi Jews, who comprised the Jews of Hyde Park and the prominent American Jewish organizations and activists in the 1950s.

31. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 6.

popular history of Hyde Park geared towards providing context for Barack Obama's rise as a politician, Rebecca Janowitz acknowledges narratives of Hyde Park urban renewal as shining victory or racist ploy, but refrains from adopting either of them, instead acknowledging both flaws and successes in the project. In this thesis, I engage in dialogue primarily with Hirsch, given his prominence in the literature and the scope of his study, but acknowledge perspectives from Boyer and Janowitz. In narrating the events of urban renewal, I also draw heavily on two works published at the conclusion of the 1960s that provide a chronological retelling of events with very different intentions and styles. *A Neighborhood Finds Itself* is HPKCC director Julia Abrahamson's 1959 memoir of urban renewal from the perspective of an on-the-ground community organization. *The Politics of Urban Renewal* by Peter Rossi and Robert Dentler is a 1961 sociological study examining citizen participation in Hyde Park's urban renewal, which was designed partially as a lesson for other communities attempting urban renewal projects. Muriel Beadle, wife of University of Chicago president George Beadle, provides additional firsthand perspective in *The Hyde Park-Kenwood Urban Renewal Years and Where Has All the Ivy Gone?*

American Dreams and Nightmares: The Jews of Hyde Park and Racial Liberalism

Hyde Park, the home to the University of Chicago, is a neighborhood located adjacent to the lake on Chicago's mid-South Side. Directly north of Hyde Park is the neighborhood known as Kenwood; the term "Hyde Park-Kenwood" usually refers to Hyde Park and the southern part of Kenwood. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Hyde Park-Kenwood was known for housing the wealthy in luxurious mansions and single-family homes. By the 1920s, the wealthy were replaced by upper-middle-class families and students, and apartments began to

dominate.³² By 1925, most vacant land in Hyde Park had been built upon.³³ Until the 1950s, Hyde Park was a predominantly white neighborhood; by 1950, it was about 6 percent nonwhite.³⁴

Much of the Hyde Park white population was Jewish. By the end of the Second World War, there were nine synagogues in the Hyde Park area,³⁵ which made up part of a larger South Side Jewish community that encompassed the lakeside neighborhoods of Kenwood, Hyde Park, and South Shore.³⁶ The South Side Jewish community, especially in Hyde Park-Kenwood, had the highest income of Chicago's main Jewish communities at the time. The bulk of the Jewish population was German Jews with a smaller portion of Eastern European Jews; refugees from Nazi Germany arrived later.³⁷ The Hyde Park area also absorbed Jews that moved in from the adjacent neighborhoods of Grand Boulevard and Washington Park after those communities became 90 percent black by 1930. By 1950, Hyde Park-Kenwood had about 15,000 Jews, which made Jews the neighborhood's largest ethnic group.³⁸

32. *Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Directory*, 1959–1960, box 10, folder 7, Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

33. Peter H. Rossi and Robert A. Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal: The Chicago Findings* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), 13.

34. Ibid., 26.

35. Irving Cutler, *The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 203.

36. Ibid., 197–98.

37. Ibid., 199.

38. Muriel Beadle, *The Hyde Park-Kenwood Urban Renewal Years: A History to Date* (Chicago: printed by the author, 1967), 4.

There were three large Reform temples that attracted most of the German Jews: Temple Sinai, Isaiah Israel, and K.A.M.;³⁹ the latter, established in 1847, was the oldest Reform congregation in Chicago. K.A.M.'s rabbi from 1939 to 1968, Jacob J. Weinstein, was a well-known and an active participant in social causes on the local, state, and national level. K.A.M. was seen as a local leader in incorporating social justice work into congregational activities.⁴⁰ Much of K.A.M.'s social justice work was led by the Sisterhood's Community Action Committee, which was guided by Weinstein.

Throughout the 1950s, Weinstein himself was involved with a broad variety of organizations within and beyond the Jewish community and at the local to the national level. He also corresponded with various influential politicians and leaders. His affiliations included, among many others, the American Jewish Congress, the Housing Conference of Chicago, the Religion and Labor Foundation, and the Council Against Racial and Religious Discrimination. He was appointed by the governor as one of twenty members of the State of Illinois Commission on Human Relations.⁴¹ In a letter to Congressman Yates in 1954, outlining his main achievements so that Yates could craft a speech for his fifteenth-anniversary celebration as rabbi of K.A.M., Weinstein mainly highlighted his efforts working for labor rights and in race relations. On race relations, Weinstein wrote to Yates, "I have thought that the denial of equal rights to the negro was not only basically irreligious but a real threat to democracy and the one crimson failing that places these United States at a terrible disadvantage in its world leadership."⁴² He took an

interest in local and national civil rights issues and sent a donation to Martin Luther King Jr. in 1956.⁴³

In September 1955, Weinstein penned a letter to the *Chicago Sun Times* after a Mississippi juror acquitted the murderers of Emmett Till. Weinstein acknowledged complicity in such racist violence: identifying himself firmly in the camp of American white people: "The guilt lies on us, the white people, for having been so lax in implementing the victory over the South in the Civil War. We have permitted political consideration, victory at the polls in November, and the pernicious abuse of the States' Rights doctrine to keep us establishing anything like a real civil equality for the Negro." He asked when integration would finally be achieved and when black victims would receive justice. Yet even while criticizing the lack of action from fellow white Northerners, he still located the most vicious racism in the domain of Southern Christians, calling the violent Southern whites "that venal community that prays to God and calls itself Christian and righteous."⁴⁴ The letter displayed a delicate dance in which Weinstein both acknowledged his place in American whiteness yet implied a level of distance from the violence as a Northern Jew.

Before arriving at K.A.M. in 1939, Weinstein attempted to bring his social-justice-oriented rabbinical style to two congregations, in Austin and San Francisco, but clashed with more conservative members.⁴⁵ In Austin, he was overwhelmed by the severity of racial discrimination; in San Francisco, he supported political activities like a department store

39. Cutler, *The Jews of Chicago*, 202; Tobias Brinkmann, *Sundays at Sinai: A Jewish Congregation in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

40. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Pioneer Chicago Jewish Congregation Faces Up to Social Problems in a Changing World," *Chicago Sentinel*, April 2, 1953.

41. JJW Papers, Chicago History Museum.

42. Weinstein to Yates, April 12, 1954, box 3, folder 2, JJW Papers.

43. Martin Luther King Jr. to Jacob J. Weinstein, March 22, 1956, box 3, folder 5, JJW Papers.

44. Jacob J. Weinstein to the editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 24, 1955, box 3, folder 4, JJW Papers.

45. Janice J. Feldstein, *Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein: Advocate of the People* (New York: KTAV, 1980), 44–71.

strike, even when many of his congregants were store owners.⁴⁶ Weinstein was frustrated that his congregants wanted him to speak of social justice academically but not push them to engage practically in activism. He found a better fit with the liberal Hyde Park Jews of K.A.M. According to a 1951 history of K.A.M., Weinstein discovered at his new pulpit that the women were usually the most interested in participating in social justice work, because they had more time to participate in campaigns and had the experience of being a “minority” in a male-dominated world. In 1930, Weinstein convened the first Community Affairs Committee (CAC) of women from K.A.M.’s sisterhood. By 1942, the CAC was an official part of the sisterhood and was working with other organizations, lobbying in favor of liberal legislation and registering voters.⁴⁷ By 1953, the CAC had Legislative, Human Relations, Housing, Schools, Political Action, and Publicity Committees. Guided by the rabbi in its various activities, the CAC held study meetings on topics like “What You Don’t Know about the Cicero Riots,” “Chicago Schools and Their Enemies,” and “The Japanese Peace Treaty and Its Implications.”⁴⁸ The CAC’s early goals for legislative action included curbing inflation, nondiscriminatory public housing, an anti-lynch bill, abolition of the poll tax, increased social security benefits, control of monopolies and trusts, universal disarmament on the national scene, and much more. Realizing how ambitious this program was, the CAC decided to focus mostly on municipal and state matters by 1948.⁴⁹

46. Richard Lerner, “Rabbi Touches Many Fields in Discussing His Philosophy,” *National Jewish Post*, May 7, 1954.

47. “A History of Kehilath Anshe Mayriv,” June 1951, box 23, folder 3, JJW Papers.

48. Mrs. Sidney Rosenthal, “How a Sisterhood Applies Judaism to Community Affairs,” January 1953, scrapbook 2, JJW Papers.

49. Weinstein, “Pioneer Chicago Jewish Congregation,” *Chicago Sentinel*, April 2, 1953.

While the views of the rabbi and the CAC did not represent the views of the whole congregation, many members of K.A.M. did lean liberal. On a first name basis with Illinois governor and Democratic presidential candidate, Adlai Stevenson, Weinstein wrote to Stevenson in 1954 that he was disappointed Stevenson wouldn’t be able to come to speak to the congregation, saying “there are 1,500 rabid Stevensonites at K.A.M.” and that Stevenson might have found it “relaxing” to “be among devotees.”⁵⁰ The executive chairman of the CAC wrote in 1953 that while the entire congregation didn’t approve of the CAC’s approach because “we tread too often upon their special interests or innate prejudices,” the CAC had the “respect of a large segment of the temple and Sisterhood.”⁵¹ It regularly conducted K.A.M. services and discussions and counseled other congregations on creating social action committees.⁵² Weinstein wrote in 1953: “It is not enough to preach Justice...it is not enough to preach love. The synagogue must exert itself to remove the barriers which the frozen inequalities of the past have erected between men of different faiths, nationalities, and race.”⁵³ He clearly saw social action as an integral part of the congregation’s mission.

Weinstein’s open advocacy for racial equality sometimes made him vulnerable to attacks on the basis of his Jewish identity, especially before the war. After speaking on a radio program in 1940 about civil rights, he received a letter of complaint from a listener in Mississippi, who wrote, “your race can make themselves very unpopular by your talks of race,” referring to Jews as a separate race and threatening Jewish safety in

50. Jacob J. Weinstein to Adlai E. Stevenson, March 12, 1954, box 3, folder 2, JJW Papers.

51. Rosenthal, “How a Sisterhood Applies Judaism to Community Affairs,” January 1953, scrapbook 2, JJW Papers.

52. Weinstein, “Pioneer Chicago Jewish Congregation,” *Chicago Sentinel*, April 2, 1953.

53. Ibid.

America if they continued agitating for racial equality.⁵⁴ Weinstein, however, usually referred to himself as a white person, and Judaism was his religious identity.⁵⁵

The politics of Weinstein and K.A.M. were consistent with a general trend of Jewish racial liberalism at midcentury, especially within Judaism's Reform movement, where rabbis consistently spoke out about civil rights. Throughout the 1940s, various forces—including a new focus on tolerance defined in opposition to Nazism, the inclusive politics practiced by Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the full integration of white ethnics into the military—helped give Catholic immigrants and Jews a safer place in the mainstream, to a greater degree than for African Americans and other racial minorities.⁵⁶ As Depression-era anti-Semitism began to recede and Jews became more secure, they felt free to speak out against racism without fearing as much backlash. Furthermore, according to Goldstein, the development of a new wartime liberalism that opposed racial hatred meant that Jews could feel confident about both adopting white identity and advocating against racism. They could oppose racism on the basis of “American ideals,” rather than claiming any kind of solidarity between minorities that would emphasize their outsider status.⁵⁷

Racial liberalism was also a way to come to terms with Jews’ new power and place in the mainstream: “many Jews supported the abstract notion of black integration because it made their own entrance into the ranks of white society morally tenable,” writes Goldstein.⁵⁸ National

54. L. M. McDonald to Jacob J. Weinstein, February 12, 1940, box 19, folder 7, JJW Papers.

55. Jacob J. Weinstein, “What Can Religion Do for Chicago?” October 24, 1952, box 2, folder 5, JJW Papers. In this sermon, as in many others, Weinstein talks about Judaism as part of a larger category of “religion.”

56. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 192.

57. Ibid., 195.

58. Ibid., 213.

Jewish groups like the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress began to broaden their message to oppose anti-black racism;⁵⁹ this was certainly the situation in Chicago, where Jewish organizations were regularly involved in racial issues. And in an analysis of 1950s sermons by thirteen Reform rabbis around the country, scholar Marc Lee Raphael finds that the most commonly discussed theme was civil rights.⁶⁰ Once Jews themselves were no longer defined in racial terms, they gained a place in American society as a “religion,” a label which they freely adopted but which did not always sufficiently describe their sense of community and tribal identity.⁶¹ In general, Jews pursued the approach of advocating for civil rights within existing structures and with an attitude of optimism about American democracy.⁶²

Accordingly, Weinstein usually addressed racism from the perspective of a patriotic American, concerned with the blemish that racism placed on American democracy and pointing out its incongruence with American values. His approach to activism was undergirded by an optimism in the potential of America if it could only take care of its racial discrimination.⁶³ However, he did not hesitate to emphasize his own minority status in order to underscore his commitment to rights for other minority groups. In fact, he believed that racism against Jews was intertwined with racism against blacks, and that the latter could easily lead to the

59. Ibid., 197.

60. Marc Lee Raphael, *The Synagogue in America: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 67.

61. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 206.

62. Cheryl Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 114.

63. Jacob J. Weinstein, “To Bigotry No Sanction,” February 22, 1959, box 4, folder 2, JJW Papers.

former.⁶⁴ In a 1942 letter, he wrote that he believed Jews of Hyde Park had a special obligation to oppose racism because of the history of the Jewish people as slaves in Egypt, because of their close proximity to Chicago's Black Belt neighborhoods, and because it would be hypocritical for Jews to treat blacks unfairly if Jews were at the same time advocating for fair treatment from Christians in America.⁶⁵

Weinstein's 1950s activism took place in the context of the anti-Communism of the McCarthy era, which worked to block many organizations and individuals from moving further left. Jews often found themselves under increased scrutiny as potential "Communists" and "subversives." Weinstein was a vocal critic of McCarthyism. He traveled to Springfield to testify against the "Broyles Bills," anti-Communist bills in the Illinois Senate that aimed to create a commission to investigate anti-government suspects and to require public officials and housing authority employees and tenants to swear loyalty oaths.⁶⁶ He clashed with Edward Clamage, chairman of the Anti-Subversive Committee of the American Legion, who accused him of allowing K.A.M. to hold a meeting of the Chicago Committee for Academic and Professional Freedom with Communists present.⁶⁷ In 1955, the Army hired Alan Strauss, one of Weinstein's congregants, as a physics instructor in a nuclear weapons course; Strauss found his security clearance delayed because of publications he subscribed to that he didn't know were classified as "subversive." A Counter Intelligence Corps agent interrogated him about his connection with Weinstein and Weinstein's political

64. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Prejudice Is Indivisible," October 24, 1958, box 26, folder 4, JJW Papers.

65. Jacob J. Weinstein to Ulysses S. Schwartz, February 12, 1942, box 19, folder 7, JJW Papers.

66. Helen Levin to Jacob J. Weinstein, March 18, 1953, box 3, folder 1, JJW Papers.

67. Edward Clamage to Jacob J. Weinstein, June 29, 1954, box 3, folder 3, JJW Papers.

activities.⁶⁸ To help Strauss obtain his clearance, Weinstein had to write a letter defending himself against the accusations, underscoring the fact that he and fellow labor activists in the A.F.L. and C.I.O. were all anti-Communists and that he "could not as a rabbi accept the materialistic, anti-religious philosophy of the conscious Communist." Weinstein wrote to Strauss that he was not concerned with his own reputation being "damaged by these innuendoes,"⁶⁹ but the affair showed that he was clearly versed in the consequences for him and his associates if he was suspected of any Communist activity.⁷⁰ Weinstein and his congregants' commitment to social activism, as well as their place in a world of McCarthyism and Jewish liberalism, provides context for their actions as their neighborhood's demographics began to change.

"If White People Would Just Stay Put": The Ethics of White Flight

Hyde Park and Kenwood, situated directly southeast of the city's Black Belt, became logical places for black people to move as racial boundaries began to shift in the late 1940s. Cottage Grove Avenue, the former border between Hyde Park-Kenwood and the Black Belt, fell by the turn of the 1950s.⁷¹ The prominence of apartment housing in Hyde Park meant that blacks could find rentals without navigating the real-estate market as

68. Alan Strauss to Samuel Golden, December 16, 1955, box 3, folder 4, JJW Papers.

69. Jacob J. Weinstein to Alan Strauss, December 16, 1955, box 3, folder 4, JJW Papers.

70. See Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters*, for how black and Jewish organizations "had to establish their distance from communism...to legitimize their civil rights positions" (170) during the Cold War.

71. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 136.

buyers.⁷² Just as in the rest of the city, the movement of black people into Hyde Park prompted fear in the white population, aggravated by the actions of real-estate speculators. And just as in the rest of the city, white people in Hyde Park often conflated the effects of housing discrimination and exploitation with overcrowding and blight, and the existing decay of old buildings with the inherent effects of having black residents.

By end of the 1940s, some white residents of Hyde Park were already beginning to sell their homes, and others wanted to stay but were fearful, describing the situation in dramatic and apocalyptic terms. “Hyde Park–Kenwood in 1949 was gravely threatened,” wrote Julia Abrahamson, the first executive director of the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC) in a 1959 account:

It was surrounded by blighted and near-blighted sections, and the blight was spreading. There was no comfort in history. Neighborhood after neighborhood throughout the industrial North had gone through the same process: decline, overcrowding, loss of high-income families, flight of white residents as Negroes moved in, and finally slums leveled by bulldozers and then rebuilt at a tremendous expense to the taxpayer.⁷³

The HPKCC was created as an attempt to keep Hyde Park from meeting the same fate.

Sources were divided on to what extent fears of increased “blight” were justified. Multiple authors mention that many of Hyde Park’s buildings were already aged by the dawn of the 1950s. According to Rossi and Dentler, increased neighborhood density in the early 1950s made parking difficult and burdened the city’s municipal services, leading to

72. Julia Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself* (New York: Harper, 1959), 9.

73. Ibid., 9.

a decline in cleanliness.⁷⁴ Abrahamson described concerns about more and more taverns in the neighborhood. Residents were especially alarmed by a perception of rising crime. Rossi and Dentler found it difficult to estimate an exact crime rate for the neighborhood, given problems in the city’s reporting methodology, until the South East Chicago Commission began documenting crime rates in 1953. But, they wrote, “it is fairly clear that at the height of the influx of newcomers into the community its crime rates were very high.”⁷⁵ Boyer cites multiple university officials alarmed by the state of affairs. “I... was completely thrown out of balance by this encounter with poverty, crime, and desolation,” wrote one medical school professor. “Our neighborhood in Chicago was in a state of panic... People could not safely walk the streets in the evening, except in groups,” remembered anthropologist Sol Tax of the time.⁷⁶

However, Rossi and Dentler found that changes in Hyde Park’s housing composition, such as building age and number of occupants, between 1950 and 1956 were not “much greater than a community of this sort might normally experience.”⁷⁷ In 1950, 16 percent of dwelling units in the neighborhood were classified as “dilapidated,” lower than the rate of 20 percent in the entire city,⁷⁸ and if the crime rate was high, Rossi and Dentler note, this wasn’t entirely new: the neighborhood had been vulnerable to crime in the past.⁷⁹ They also found no meaningful change in the rate of University of Chicago faculty leaving the university, though the university worried about the effect of neighborhood change on

74. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 22.

75. Ibid., 31.

76. John W. Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 346–47.

77. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 28.

78. Ibid. 25.

79. Ibid., 31.

faculty retention. Rossi and Dentler concluded that by the early 1950s, changes in neighborhood demographics and economics had not actually been “extreme upheavals,” but that residents did react to “relative community deterioration” as Hyde Park became more similar to other areas of the city and less upscale.⁸⁰ In any case, whether or not changes in material conditions in the neighborhood were statistically significant, residents certainly perceived change and feared for the future based on patterns of change in other neighborhoods.

The Jews of Hyde Park were among the white people concerned about the neighborhood’s future. K.A.M. Temple had been attuned to the potential for changing racial boundaries for some time. In fact, it was the K.A.M. sisterhood’s interest in housing conditions in the Black Belt neighborhood of Bronzeville that actually inspired the creation of the Community Affairs Committee (CAC). In fall 1939, for its first ever task, the CAC worked with the University of Chicago’s sociology department to prepare a survey of housing conditions in Bronzeville and presented them in a Hyde Park–Kenwood Council of Churches and Synagogues Institute on “Negro Problems of the Community to the West,” chaired by Temple Isaiah Israel rabbi, Morton Berman.⁸¹ The CAC’s Housing Committee concluded that the severe overcrowding of the Black Belt—its report found that 8.1 percent of black families in Chicago were overcrowded, compare to 3.5 percent of white families—should be addressed with construction of more low-cost housing, including public housing, and rehabilitation of sound buildings.⁸² It also called for open occupancy legislation, which, according to urban renewal researchers Rossi and Dentler, was a “radical move” for the time.⁸³ The CAC appeared sincere about living up to its goals for open occupancy and equal rights.

80. Ibid., 42–43.

81. Weinstein, “Pioneer Jewish Congregation,” *Chicago Sentinel*, April 2, 1953.

82. “Suggestions and Recommendations,” n.d., box 19, folder 7, JJW Papers.

83. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 41.

According to Janice Feldstein, Weinstein’s biographer, when a K.A.M. member apparently noted in response to the report that the temple property itself contained a restrictive covenant in the deed of sale, Weinstein and the CAC convinced the board of directors to remove it.⁸⁴

At the same time, however, when new black residents took advantage of opportunities to move openly and began migrating to the area around K.A.M.,⁸⁵ the temple was concerned for its own future. White families began to leave their large single-family homes, many of which were divided into kitchenette apartments for a large number of black families. Many of the fleeing white families were Jewish.⁸⁶ Parents became concerned about sending their children or going themselves to evening activities at K.A.M.⁸⁷ In response to the growing white flight, members of K.A.M.’s sisterhood met with Thomas Wright, head of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. According to Abrahamson, the K.A.M. sisterhood and Weinstein were “committed to the principle of integration” and worked with Wright on possibilities for “conserving housing for all races by setting up voluntary agreements based on occupancy standards rather than on racial restrictions.”⁸⁸ K.A.M. appeared to share many of the concerns about the consequences of racial succession, but also a desire to respond in a way that would live up to their professed ethical commitment to civil rights and interracial living.

84. Feldstein, *Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein*, 110.

85. Editor’s note: K.A.M. is located at 1100 East Hyde Park Boulevard on the border between Hyde Park and Kenwood.

86. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 22–23. Heavily Jewish areas were among those that experienced the most out-migration of whites and in-migration of blacks.

87. Feldstein, *Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein*, 111.

88. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 12.

Therefore, when, on November 8, 1949, over forty people convened in Hyde Park's First Unitarian Church for a meeting on the future of the neighborhood, organized by the Social Order Committee of the 57th Street Meeting of Friends, two members of the K.A.M. sisterhood were there. Rabbi Berman of Temple Isaiah Israel was also present, as was one of the temple's directors.⁸⁹ The rest of the room contained representatives of Hyde Park churches, the university, groups like the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and the Chicago Council Against Racial and Religious Discrimination, and other Hyde Park residents, including black residents who had recently moved into the neighborhood.⁹⁰ The meeting was the beginning of a community organizing process that would soon result in the creation of the HPKCC. At the outset of the gathering, Thomas Wright summarized the general concerns of the attendees: "Hyde Park and Kenwood are faced with four problems... how to keep from extending the pattern of segregation; how to maintain community standards; how to integrate new residents; and how to deal with the general housing need which is a city-wide problem."⁹¹ The group engaged a "long discussion" that "ranged over the pros and cons of organization, the problems of overcrowding, deterioration, interracial living, flight to the suburbs, schools, crime, maintenance of services, possible next steps."⁹² They decided to form a temporary steering committee to consider how residents could continue to organize.

One of the more powerful moments in Abrahamson's account of the meeting was when Oscar Brown, a black attorney, took Hyde Park's white residents to task for evading discussion of their own agency and responsibility. According to Abrahamson, a white woman asked "how

do we know the Negroes *want* to be integrated?" Brown responded that both whites and blacks would have to work together to create an inter-racial community and noted that white residents had to take responsibility for their role in the process:

Some of us are sensitive, perhaps too much so...to the constant references to "the Negro problem." We would like to see more recognition that the difficulties we face are a white problem as well, caused by attitudes that white people themselves have to do something about. If white people would just stay put when a Negro family moves into a block, there wouldn't be any panic, and Negroes couldn't take over all the buildings. No one forces white people to sell."⁹³

Mrs. Molner of the K.A.M. sisterhood responded by expressing her appreciation for Brown's point and announcing that while some K.A.M. members would be moving away, the congregation was committed to remaining in Hyde Park and was still in the process of constructing a new community house in the area. "Quite apart from our stake in the community, however," she said, "we share Rabbi Weinstein's conviction that the extension of segregated communities is morally and ethically indefensible."⁹⁴ Rabbi Berman of Temple Isaiah Israel brought up his own congregation's decision to stay and that they had just finished their new building.⁹⁵

Brown and Molner's rhetoric, which painted the decision to stay in the neighborhood as an ethical choice and white flight as a morally problematic alternative, was common during the urban renewal process.

89. Ibid., 14.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid., 15.

92. Ibid., 19.

93. Ibid., 17.

94. Ibid.

95. Ibid., 18.

Weinstein and other K.A.M. members continually described the decision to stay in Hyde Park as a heroic resistance against segregation.⁹⁶ After all, the choice to stay in a racially changing neighborhood was an uncommon choice for Jews, both in Hyde Park and elsewhere. Despite K.A.M.'s strong desire to stay in the neighborhood, it faced the departure of many of its members, which was a burden on the congregation. In January 1951, Weinstein wrote to Bradford W. Alcorn, the president of the Oakland-Kenwood Planning Association, who had asked him to chair a series of programs, and said, "with the added financial problems created by the change in the neighborhood, it becomes less and less possible for me to undertake outside assignments."⁹⁷ In Hyde Park as a whole, the Jewish population declined considerably: by 1960, there were only five congregations left in the neighborhood, compared to nine in 1950. Jews in North Lawndale on the West Side and nearby in South Shore left for the suburbs relatively quickly. Across the country, most urban Jews did the same. Historian Marc Lee Raphael describes K.A.M.'s decision to stay in the neighborhood and a similar decision by two Philadelphia congregations as "exceptions" to the general rule of white Jewish flight.⁹⁸

White flight to the suburbs was facilitated by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loan policies that made it easy to receive federally insured loans for white suburbs but difficult for nonwhite or racially mixed neighborhoods.⁹⁹ Lipsitz outlines the often invisible advantages that structural

96. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Urban Renewal and the Brotherhood of Man," October 23, 1958, box 2, folder 6; Jacob J. Weinstein, "Antidote to Current Mysticism," April 10, 1959, box 33, folder 2; Jacob J. Weinstein, "Autobiographical Notes of Jacob J. Weinstein—Class of 1923," April 1973, box 1, folder 1, JJW Papers.

97. Jacob J. Weinstein to Bradford Alcorn, January 15, 1951, box 2, folder 2, JJW Papers.

98. Raphael, *The Synagogue in America*, 62.

99. Satter, *Family Properties*, 41.

white supremacy has afforded to white Americans and describes how white flight led to a concentration of political power in the suburbs with devastating consequences for minority communities remaining in the city. In addition to FHA loans, the government supported migration to the suburbs by building highways that disrupted city neighborhoods and displaced residents.¹⁰⁰ Once white residents had left, inner-city neighborhoods were "susceptible to the placement of prisons, waste dumps, and other projects that further depopulated these areas."¹⁰¹

In addition to contributing to segregation, white flight helped consolidate a new white identity for European Americans. While many whites had lived in ethnic enclaves in the cities, the suburbs, according to Lipsitz, "helped turn European Americans into 'whites' who could live near each other and intermarry with little difficulty."¹⁰² In general, this suburban white identity also became available to white Jews. While Jews had faced housing discrimination throughout the early twentieth century—Jewish areas were ranked as riskier than all-white areas by home appraisers¹⁰³—by the postwar period they had access to GI Bill benefits and FHA loans.¹⁰⁴ As reported in the *Chicago Defender*, a Commission on Race and Housing report found in November 1958 that "Jews are excluded from residence areas 'on occasion'" but that "anti-semitic discrimination is NOT comparable in severity to the discrimination practiced against nonwhites."¹⁰⁵ Therefore, while instances of anti-Semitism persisted, Jews found themselves with increased access that African Americans, Latinos, and Asian

100. Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 375.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid., 374.

103. Satter, *Family Properties*, 41-42.

104. Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What that Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 25-52.

105. "Report Maps Plan to End Evils of Housing Bias," *Chicago Defender*, November 13, 1958.

Americans were not granted. Goldstein points out that Jews continued to struggle with their identity and did not assimilate smoothly into white culture, but that didn't stop them from receiving the material benefits of whiteness.

Despite the devastating consequence of white flight, painting it as the only immoral choice and extolling the virtue of white people who stayed is reductive. Certainly, Weinstein and the Jews who stayed in Hyde Park expressed a sincere commitment to living in an interracial neighborhood, and that interracial neighborhood ultimately became a reality. Yet the urban renewal policies that they supported did lead to displacement for many poor-black and poor-white people and the destruction of many local businesses. Furthermore, the Jews of Hyde Park were divided from the Jews of Lawndale by more than just a commitment, or lack thereof, to living in an interracial neighborhood. According to Satter, while racism did likely influence Lawndale residents' choices to vacate the neighborhood, many Jews were eager to escape the working-class neighborhood anyway. In addition to Lawndale's material deficiency as an overcrowded industrial enclave without parkland, it was "tarred by its very success as a way station for Jewish migrants." The migrant institutions that had helped welcome Jews to the United States were now "embarrassing reminders of an outsider status they hoped to outgrow."¹⁰⁶ The Jews of Hyde Park, on the other hand, lived in a wealthier neighborhood surrounded by parks, which benefited from the presence of the University of Chicago. Throughout the process of urban renewal the institutional power of the university, and not the goodwill of residents, would dictate Hyde Park's future. There were organizations in Lawndale, like the Jewish People's Institute (JPI), that supported integration. In 1950 the JPI formed the North Lawndale Citizens Council to "transform Lawndale into a 'pilot community' for interracial living," a similar goal to that of the HPKCC.¹⁰⁷

106. Satter, *Family Properties*, 29.

107. Ibid., 28.

but ultimately, weaker attachments to Lawndale and the lack of a powerful institution like the University of Chicago led Lawndale's path to diverge from Hyde Park's.

According to Satter, "conventional wisdom" on segregation and the deterioration of urban neighborhoods is oversimplified because it ignores the role of real-estate speculators: "in the 1950s and 1960s, mainstream thinking was divided between those who blamed blacks for their pathological behavior in destroying their own residences and those who blamed racist whites for hysterically fleeing long-established neighborhoods at the first site of a black face." Satter explains that the potential profits of contract selling were so great that exploitation of resources, rather than a lack of resources in black neighborhoods, helped spur neighborhood decline.¹⁰⁸ Her analysis minimizes the importance of individual white families' decisions on where to live and emphasizes the role of institutionalized discrimination and widespread exploitation in determining neighborhood demographics. The decision of Weinstein and his supporters to stay in Hyde Park when so many others left was unusual and did show that, as Oscar Brown pointed out at the meeting, whites were not forced to leave as soon as neighborhoods began to integrate. Overall, however, the notion of staying in Hyde Park as the ethical or progressive alternative to white flight was complicated by the actual circumstances and results of urban renewal.

"A Splendid Opportunity": Hyde Park Organizes

Weinstein and other neighborhood activists were eager to contrast the response of Hyde Park with the actions of violent mobs in other neighborhoods trying to remain all white. Weinstein regularly expressed excitement about the prospect of living in an interracial neighborhood. In a 1950 letter to Bradford Alcorn of the Oakland-Kenwood Planning

108. Ibid., 6.

Association, Weinstein proposed that the churches and synagogues of Hyde Park dedicate a weekend to the theme of "Why I Like My Neighborhood" and the neighborhood's advantages: "one of the advantages being that because of the mixed population, jew and gentile, colored and white, we have a splendid opportunity to implement the American dream."¹⁰⁹ In order to prevent white families from moving away, he urged his congregants to "have faith in your neighborhood."¹¹⁰ Given that real-estate speculators trafficked in rumors and fear when trying to get people to sell their homes, countering those fears was a crucial part of trying to prevent white flight. The HPKCC conducted meetings to try to calm fearful residents.¹¹¹ K.A.M. went ahead and broke ground on a new community house, which became a physical manifestation of their desire to remain in the neighborhood. At the community house's dedication ceremony, one congregant apparently declared, "gentleman, I would feel as though I had betrayed my religion to acknowledge that the presence of Negroes in this neighborhood would keep me from worshipping here or sending my children to the Community House,"¹¹² emphasizing K.A.M. members' belief that it was fulfilling a religious duty to stay in the neighborhood.

At the same time, however, Weinstein and the HPKCC were often nostalgic about the neighborhood as it used to be and wished to preserve it; they spoke often of their project to "save the neighborhood." In an August 1948 temple bulletin, Weinstein wrote to congregants: "if we will keep the occupancy standards implied in our zoning laws and other

109. Jacob J. Weinstein to Bradford Alcorn, September 22, 1950, box 2, folder 2, JJW Papers.

110. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Have Faith in Your Neighborhood," August, 17, 1948, scrapbook 13, JJW Papers.

111. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 127.

112. Albert Vorspan and Eugene J. Lipman, *Justice and Judaism: The Work of Social Action* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1956), 39.

maintenance standards which may be adopted by democratic consent of the home-owners and residents, we can keep this neighborhood clean, delightful, and desirable." On the one hand, Weinstein and other neighborhood activists spoke hopefully about the prospect of living in an interracial neighborhood in the future; on the other, they spoke nostalgically about keeping the neighborhood's middle-class comforts. In a 1958 sermon looking back on neighborhood changes, Weinstein said, "what had once been clean was dirty, what had once been beautiful became ugly."¹¹³ His standard for what made a neighborhood "delightful" and "desirable" was less about race than about class and respectability. Accordingly, even though he was against making distinctions based on race, Weinstein referred to some new Hyde Park residents in condescending or negative terms based on class; he compared K.A.M.'s new neighbors unfavorably to the people who had lived there before, noting that "the newcomers were not Temple-minded."¹¹⁴ The main goal, as Weinstein professed, was to welcome the new black residents and at the same time continue emphasizing upper-middle-class standards of living.

The Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference followed these goals by organizing block clubs, undertaking educational campaigns to dispel rumors about racial succession, and aggressively prosecuting zoning violations.¹¹⁵ But Hirsch makes the argument that the HPKCC was "doomed to failure."¹¹⁶ First, its comparatively liberal stand on racial issues put it at odds with many of the area's property owners, businessmen, and the university.¹¹⁷ Second, while the conference was successful

113. Jacob J. Weinstein, "The Fear of Our Neighbors," September 24, 1958, box 33, folder 2, JJW Papers.

114. Ibid.

115. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 140.

116. Ibid., 137.

117. Ibid., 140.

in attacking illegal construction and illegal conversions of property into smaller units, they could not fight legal conversions. Third, according to Hirsch, “judges were also reluctant to enforce the code on overcrowding as there was no provision for the relocation of those evicted under the law. They knew, given the housing shortage, that strict enforcement would only create hardship and shift the problem from one locality to another.”¹¹⁸ The HPKCC understood that securing adequate housing and preventing slums was a citywide problem. They called for a “comprehensive planning program” for the entire city and open housing legislation on the city and state level.¹¹⁹ But Hirsch calls this statement “politically naïve,” because the HPKCC had no political power to make such decisions.

Therefore, despite the HPKCC’s hope of creating an integrated community, black residents continued to move in and white residents continued to move out, leading to fears that, rather than integrating into the city, the segregated black ghetto was just expanding.¹²⁰ Meanwhile, K.A.M. continued to lose membership, and Weinstein became increasingly occupied with what was going on in the neighborhood. A 1953 *Chicago Tribune* article described a house on 49th Street and Ellis Avenue, near K.A.M.’s community house, that was being challenged as a zoning violation in the courts after it was converted into fifteen apartments in the summer of 1950. According to the article, some families had left because of the presence of the crowded apartments, and some parents whose kids attended Hebrew school at the community house “expressed fear of letting their children pass the northwest corner of 50th and Ellis after dark.” K.A.M. moved Hebrew school to Temple Isaiah Israel for the winter, moving back to K.A.M. for the spring term

118. Ibid., 141.

119. Ibid., 141–42.

120. Ibid., 143.

when days got longer.¹²¹ In 1958, Weinstein mentioned in a letter that K.A.M. was in the midst of a “drive to cover the deficit needs of the temple, a problem that becomes more and more severe in this neighborhood.”¹²² Some families who left K.A.M. remained part of the membership; others did not.

Despite asking others to “have faith” in the neighborhood, Weinstein came close to losing that faith himself. According to a 1997 history of K.A.M. Isaiah Israel,¹²³ K.A.M. started holding “extension” events in Chicago’s North Shore suburbs in 1953, including religious school classes, adult education courses, and services, conducted alternately by Weinstein and his assistant rabbi. By fall 1956, K.A.M. North Shore members decided to form their own congregation instead of continue as an extension of K.A.M.¹²⁴ They asked Weinstein to be their rabbi, and he seriously considered the offer. According to notes from a February 1957 address to the temple board, Weinstein explained his reasoning for considering the move, including a congregation not committed to regular attendance. One item on the list of factors influencing his decision was “the change in the neighborhood.” He said it is “like a ghost city every time I walk around here,” which “makes all activities—especially youth activities—difficult.”¹²⁵ Yet he exhorted the board not to “attribute

121. Gladys Priddy, “Case History of Zoning Violation Told,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 8, 1953.

122. Jacob J. Weinstein to Samuel N. Rattner, December 9, 1958, box 3, folder 4, JJW Papers.

123. The two merged into one congregation in 1971.

124. Jerry Meites, “Chapter 12: They Lived What They Believed,” In *The Story of K.A.M. Isaiah Israel: Honoring Chicago’s Oldest Congregation during Its Sesquicentennial (1847–1997)* (Chicago: privately printed by K.A.M., 1997).

125. Jacob J. Weinstein, Board meeting notes, February 26, 1957, box 22, Folder 5, JJW Papers.

cheap motives" to his considerations such as "social climbing; svelte surroundings; escape from Negroes; more money."¹²⁶

Congregants flooded Weinstein with letters pleading him to stay on the South Side. Some of them urged him to consider the implications for integration activism in Hyde Park if he left. Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch, the director of the Chicago Federation and Great Lakes Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, acknowledged that the last four years had been "difficult" for Weinstein but lauded him for choosing to stay in the neighborhood so far and urged him to continue: "You are not an ordinary rabbi. You are Jacob Weinstein. A move to the North Shore now and under the present circumstances could not help but reflect deprecatorily on your entire ministry...and if Rabbi Weinstein does not maintain his principles, then what rabbi can?"¹²⁷ Such pressure ultimately proved persuasive. In March 1957, Weinstein responded to congregants who had written to him, announcing his decision to stay: "I have never doubted that the neighborhood will again become one of the most enviable communities in which to live."¹²⁸ The episode showed that Weinstein's advocacy against white flight and in favor of living in Hyde Park had become a significant part of his and K.A.M.'s reputation; he was now expected to serve as a leader in advocating for an interracial neighborhood in Hyde Park.

Around the same time, in 1956, realizing that the city was not close to achieving open occupancy, HPKCC proposed a Tenant Referral Office, which would "carefully screen all persons seeking housing in Hyde Park-Kenwood and...make a conscious and deliberate effort toward all Negro blocks by encouraging whites to rent apartments that

became vacant in these areas."¹²⁹ The HPKCC, therefore, had arrived at a contradiction: while they didn't want the neighborhood to turn from all-white to all-black and continue the pattern of segregation, controlled mechanisms like a Tenant Referral Office violated their own endorsement of open occupancy and nondiscrimination.

Ultimately, the HPKCC's efforts proved to be of little consequence compared to the influence of the neighborhood's largest institution, the University of Chicago. The university had been involved in efforts to keep Hyde Park an all-white neighborhood since the 1930s; it subsidized local property owners' associations in defending the legality of restrictive covenants. According to Hirsch, the University spent \$83,597.46 for such purposes between 1933 and 1947.¹³⁰ The university's creation of the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) in 1952 was a continuation of its existing involvement in the neighborhood and desire to control its immediate environment. While the SECC was created in response to a call by the Council of Hyde Park Churches and Synagogues (of which K.A.M. was a prominent member) for the university to do something about the rising crime rate, according to Hirsch, SECC's goal was always to defend the interests of the university, rather than respond to the needs or requests of the community. Janowitz notes that the SECC did, however, work on crime prevention strategies and making information about crime known to the public.¹³¹ University of Chicago Chancellor Lawrence A. Kimpton chaired the Committee of Five, which recommended the creation of the SECC, and the university helped fund its first year.¹³²

Unlike the HPKCC, the SECC was able to marshal significant connections and public influence to implement a broad plan of neighborhood

126. Ibid.

127. Richard G. Hirsch to Jacob J. Weinstein. February 12, 1957, box 4, folder 1, JJW Papers.

128. Jacob J. Weinstein to congregants, March 6, 1957, box 4, folder 5, JJW Papers.

129. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 143.

130. Ibid., 145.

131. Rebecca Janowitz, *Culture of Opportunity: Obama's Chicago, the People, Politics, and Ideas of Hyde Park* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2010), 118.

132. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 144.

“conservation” and never professed an idealistic commitment to making Hyde Park an interracial neighborhood. Behind the scenes, Chancellor Kimpton was clear that he wanted the neighborhood to be wealthy and white, and SECC Director Levi said that in urban renewal, the university’s priorities should take preference over any other goals.¹³³ Boyer argues that Hirsch’s assessment of Kimpton as racist is “unduly harsh and distorting of Kimpton’s personal values and strategic intentions” and that Kimpton wanted an integrated neighborhood and acted pragmatically to ensure that white members of the university community would remain living there.¹³⁴ Abrahamson wrote that the Committee of Five chose to create a new organization, rather than give grant money to the HPKCC, partially because the HPKCC was engaged in welcoming black families to Hyde Park–Kenwood; thus, a university grant “could never have been approved at that stage in community history.”¹³⁵

While the liberal members of the HPKCC initially were optimistic about the creation of the SECC, it quickly found that the approaches of the two organizations would not always go hand-in-hand. For example, the SECC was not interested in helping the HPKCC with the Conference Committee to Maintain an Interracial Community.¹³⁶ The HPKCC was often forced to garner community support for the SECC’s renewal plans; when the SECC didn’t require community support, it simply went ahead on its own. The HPKCC favored making decisions in a community-based process, while the SECC wanted to forge ahead quickly.¹³⁷ However, Hirsch argues that the actions of the university, through the SECC, ultimately worked to the advantage of the HPKCC. If HPKCC members were worried that their tactics sometimes conflicted with their

133. Ibid., 153–55.

134. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 351–53.

135. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 190–91.

136. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 156.

137. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 221–24.

liberal beliefs, the SECC removed that decision from their hands. According to Hirsch, for the HPKCC, “the good fight could be fought without the fear that it might be won.”¹³⁸ Beadle portrays the relationship between the two organizations as ultimately symbiotic: “In retrospect, most of the people who lived through the 1950’s in Hyde Park and Kenwood agree that the urban renewal project could not have succeeded without the double-barrelled approach that the accident of time and place provided: the human relations approach of the Conference, and the law-and-order approach of the Commission.”¹³⁹

Weinstein, for his part, was associated with both the HPKCC and the SECC and appeared generally pleased, at least initially, with the actions of both groups. In 1953, he cheered the news that the Field Foundation of Illinois had granted the University of Chicago \$100,000 for a study of the neighborhood. While he continued to assert that the goal of Hyde Park’s redevelopment was to “prove that interracial living is possible,” he also wrote that “the extremely able and dedicated Executive Director of the South East Chicago Commission is confident that we can attract desirable residents and desirable businesses into the Hyde Park–Kenwood areas,” once again implying that only some residents would be “desirable.”¹⁴⁰ By 1954, Weinstein was serving on the SECC board.¹⁴¹ Despite his professed commitment to interracial living, Weinstein was not always seen as a friend to black Chicagoans. A 1954 profile noted that Weinstein had been accused of being “anti-Negro,” because he opposed the conversion of apartment buildings into smaller units by

138. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 138.

139. Muriel Beadle, *Where Has All the Ivy Gone? A Memoir of University Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 43.

140. Jacob J. Weinstein, “Good News for Our Neighborhood,” *Chicago Southeast Economist*, December 13, 1953.

141. Julian H. Levi to Board of Directors, November 30, 1954, box 3, folder 3, JJW Papers.

“Negro exploiters” and because he opposed a “mass movement” of black people into Hyde Park, because, he said, that would jeopardize Hyde Park’s status as an interracial neighborhood.¹⁴²

“A Well-Conceived Scheme”: Hyde Park Urban Renewal and Its Critics

Hyde Park urban renewal began when the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council—the body that had spearheaded Chicago’s previous urban renewal project, the Lake Meadows development in Bronzeville—published its 1953 *Conservation* report.¹⁴³ The report, funded and influenced by the university, recommended securing legal power for the city to exercise eminent domain for the purpose of slum prevention by using the Urban Community Conservation Act of 1953. The university also successfully lobbied for an amendment to the Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act of 1941 to allow small groups of citizens to form private corporations and organize a redevelopment plan for an area and to exercise eminent domain with the consent of 60 percent of the property owners in the area.¹⁴⁴ With these legal tools, the university could proceed with its urban renewal projects, which were divided into three main components, each of which resulted in controversy and conflict within Hyde Park–Kenwood.

The first project was called Hyde Park A and B Urban Renewal. In 1953, the Chicago Land Clearance Commission approved public funds for the demolition of deteriorated buildings in two sections of Hyde Park between 54th and 57th Streets and between Kimbark and Lake Park Avenues. Hyde Park A was 42.7 acres, and Hyde Park B was 46 acres.¹⁴⁵

142. Lerner, “Rabbi Touches Many Fields,” *National Jewish Post*, May 7, 1954.

143. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 149.

144. *Ibid.*, 150–51.

145. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 200.

In 1957, the city approved New York real-estate firm Webb and Knapp to redevelop the sites, using over half for residential use, a third for shopping and parking, and the rest for “public and institutional purposes,” according to Julia Abrahamson.¹⁴⁶ The plan would require 892 families and 498 individuals to relocate¹⁴⁷ and would construct 825 new dwelling units in high-rises and row houses.¹⁴⁸ In November 1954, Weinstein wrote to University of Chicago Chancellor Kimpton thanking him for his “splendid work” in promoting Hyde Park A and B. He noted that the remaining members of the congregation had been “heartened” by the SECC’s work and that “their confidence would be immeasurably increased by the approval of Renewal Projects A and B.”¹⁴⁹ Weinstein also wrote a letter of endorsement for the project to the City Council.¹⁵⁰ Yet, Hyde Park A and B caused significant problems and tension in the community. Abrahamson called small business owners the “chief victim” of Hyde Park A and B; many small businesses had to close or move because demolition and construction interfering with business, as the neighborhood moved towards a model of larger shopping centers.¹⁵¹ According to Rossi and Dentler, a group of active liberal HPKCC members who owned property in the planned demolition zone testified against Hyde Park A and B at 1954 public hearings, arguing that the plan would demolish too much housing and that they would not be able

146. *Ibid.*, 201–2.

147. *Ibid.*, 230.

148. *Ibid.*, 201.

149. Jacob J. Weinstein to Lawrence A. Kimpton, November 18, 1954, box 3, folder 3, JJW Papers.

150. Julian H. Levi to Jacob J. Weinstein, December 2, 1954, box 3, folder 3, JJW Papers.

151. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 231–32.

to afford to live in the redeveloped neighborhood.¹⁵² While unsuccessful in protesting Hyde Park A and B, this group would eventually form a more organized opposition force against the final urban renewal plan.

Meanwhile, in 1956, the university put the Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act amendment to use and formed the South West Hyde Park Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation, with the goal of acquiring and demolishing 14.5 acres of land adjacent to the campus in southwest Hyde Park and building married student housing in its place.¹⁵³ The population that would be displaced by the demolition was about 80 percent black,¹⁵⁴ and opposition quickly formed among residents of the acquisition site. Residents formed the South West Hyde Park Neighborhood Association, chaired by St. Clair Drake, a black University of Chicago sociologist who had just purchased a home near the acquisition site after he was repeatedly turned down when trying to buy or rent in other areas of Hyde Park.¹⁵⁵ At public hearings with the corporation, the association's attorney, Michael Hagiwara, argued that many of the buildings designated by the university as dilapidated needed only minor improvements¹⁵⁶ and that the university was attempting to "set up a buffer against the presence of Negro residents in large numbers."¹⁵⁷ Drake favored spot clearance and code enforcement, rather than clearance of the acquisition site.¹⁵⁸ Despite the opposition, the corporation approved the South West Hyde Park Redevelopment Commission in November 1956. The association attempted to fight the

corporation in the courts, until it was finally defeated in 1958 when the U.S. Supreme Court would not accept jurisdiction of the case, but it did manage to delay clearance and construction for almost two years.¹⁵⁹ The controversy strained relations between the HPKCC and residents in or near the acquisition site, since the HPKCC had supported the corporation's plan. The conflict also exposed the tension in residents' competing visions for the neighborhood. According to Rossi and Dentler, upper-middle-class people and university interests viewed areas like the southwest side of Hyde Park as overcrowded and blighted, but the residents viewed their area as respectable living arrangements in comparison to the overcrowded Black Belt from which they had moved.¹⁶⁰

In February 1958, the Chicago Community Conservation Board released a final urban renewal plan for an 855.8-acre portion of Hyde Park-Kenwood, which encompassed most of the neighborhood. The plan included demolishing 638 of the 3,077 structures, or 6,147 of the 29,467 dwelling units, and building 2,100 new dwelling units, over half of them in high-rises.¹⁶¹ The plan called for additional parks and playgrounds and new shopping centers, as well as the removal of stores that, according to Abrahamson, were "characterized by marginal operation and non-convenience uses."¹⁶² Overall, the plan would require the relocation of 4,371 families, 42 percent of whom were white and 58 percent of whom were nonwhite.¹⁶³ The plan included a prohibition on racial or religious discrimination in the sale or lease of the land.¹⁶⁴

152. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 222.

153. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 206.

154. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 159.

155. Ibid., 165.

156. Ibid., 173.

157. Ibid., 177.

158. Ibid., 169.

159. Ibid., 180.

160. Ibid., 177.

161. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 210.

162. Ibid., 211.

163. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 351.

164. Abrahamson, *A Neighborhood Finds Itself*, 212.

In March 1958, the *Chicago Defender*, the city's premiere black newspaper, invited HPKCC executive director James Cunningham (who succeeded Abrahamson in 1956)¹⁶⁵ to write an article defending and explaining the implications of the plan for Hyde Park's black community. Cunningham stressed that "if plans are carried out the city's first integrated neighborhood can result; if the plans fail Hyde Park-Kenwood will likely become just another overcrowded segregated part of Chicago."¹⁶⁶ Many black Chicagoans harbored significant concerns, though. In June 1958, *Defender* columnist Louis Martin estimated that opinions on the plan were often divided along racial lines, generalizing that most white people in Hyde Park would be in favor of the plan and most black people against it.¹⁶⁷ Also in June, the NAACP Hyde Park unit announced that the urban renewal plan, in its current state, would "serve only the interests of the minority of citizens in Hyde Park Kenwood and the city as a whole." The NAACP called for changes to the plan that would prevent families from being relocated to segregated or overcrowded neighborhoods, build public housing on scattered sites throughout the neighborhood, arrange for middle-income housing in the neighborhood, and set aside land to sell to cooperatives for interracial housing.¹⁶⁸ In the same month, a report published by the Chicago Urban

165. Ibid., 226.

166. James V. Cunningham, "Will Negroes Get Fair Deal in Hyde Park?" *Chicago Defender*, March 8, 1958.

167. Louis Martin, "Dope and Data," *Chicago Defender*, June 14, 1958. According to Martin, blacks were suspicious of the University of Chicago's motivations: "the charge of hypocrisy grows, it seems, out of the role of the university in 'protecting' the lily-white areas east of the university from Negro residents while at the same time declaring that they wish to make a model 'integrated' community."

168. "N.A.A.C.P. Seeks Changes in Hyde Park Renewal Plans," *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1958.

League concluded that "urban renewal, as conducted now, in Chicago, is working great and undue hardships on the Negro population."¹⁶⁹

When the plan failed to incorporate changes recommended by the NAACP, the *Defender* published several editorials criticizing the plan and its supporters. In September, the *Defender* accused the urban renewal plan of being a "well-conceived scheme to clear Negroes out of the Hyde Park area so that the University of Chicago and a privileged class of rich patrons might have an exclusive community of their own." *The Defender* supported slum clearance and renewal, the editorial said, but not if relocation for displaced residents was not adequately addressed. The *Defender* was joined by the Hyde Park-Kenwood Tenants and Home Owners Association, which formed in March 1958 from the group that had opposed Hyde Park A and B and which was also concerned that the urban renewal plan was aiming to clear the community of lower- and middle-income white and black families.¹⁷⁰

The most successful attack on the plan, however, came not from the black press, the Urban League, the NAACP, or the Tenants and Home Owners Association, but from the Catholic Church. With the backing of Cardinal Samuel Stritch, Monsignor John Egan, director of the Cardinal's Committee on Conservation and Urban Renewal,¹⁷¹ expressed concern with how the plan would affect lower-income people, whether the needs of displaced people would be significantly addressed, and the plan's focus on Hyde Park rather than large-scale metropolitan planning. Beginning in April 1958, the *New World*, the Chicago archdiocese's newspaper, began publicizing a series of articles criticizing the plan,

169. "Urban Renewal and the Negro in Chicago," June 18, 1958, box 78, folder 15, Hyde Park Historical Society Collection, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

170. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 223–24.

171. Ibid., 227.

which received wide attention and stirred controversy.¹⁷² According to Rossi and Dentler, the committee's opinions had a powerful effect because of the position of Catholics in Chicago: Roman Catholics were the city's largest denomination and many city officials were Catholic. The criticisms resulted in a five-month delay of the City Council's approval of the plan.¹⁷³

In June, Monsignor Egan issued a statement on behalf of the Cardinal's Committee calling for specific provisions to the plan, including that land clearances should happen progressively over several years and that the plan should include two hundred scattered units of public housing. According to Rossi and Dentler, the motivation for the church's attack was multilayered, based both in a general interest in community welfare and in self-interest. Monsignor Egan, part of a liberal group of Chicago Catholic clergy experienced in left-wing labor organizing, was "sensitive to the plight of Chicago's Negroes and other underprivileged groups." The church also had significant material and organizational interests in parishes in white Chicago neighborhoods and knew that displacement of black and low-income people from Hyde Park–Kenwood might result in them moving into those neighborhoods.¹⁷⁴

Urban renewal supporters in Hyde Park often interpreted Egan's attach as complete opposition to the entire plan, despite Egan's support for the plan generally, but with changes.¹⁷⁵ Levi, director of the SECC, met with Protestant and Jewish clergy, including Weinstein, to discuss how to oppose the Cardinal's Committee's intervention.¹⁷⁶ In May, Weinstein published a letter to the editor in the *Hyde Park Herald* sharply criticizing the *New World's* stance and defending the urban renewal

172. Ibid., 227–28.

173. Ibid., 225.

174. Ibid., 232.

175. Ibid.

176. Ibid., 228.

plan. He accused the *New World* of trying to sabotage the urban renewal plan by waiting to announce its criticisms until the plan was about to be submitted to the City Council. Furthermore, he accused the *New World* of fomenting dissent among displaced and black residents against the neighborhood: "It is sheer arrogance for *The New World* to imply that the Negro has to be protected from the wiles of the upper class segregationists in our neighborhood. No neighborhood in the city has received the Negro in a more friendly way. No neighborhood in the city gives fairer promise of an integrated, interracial life for white and black."¹⁷⁷ Weinstein used the potential for creating an interracial neighborhood as a defense against charges that the plan was targeting black residents.

Many letters to the *Hyde Park Herald* in response to Weinstein defended the *New World's* criticisms and repeated concerns about a lack of provisions for low- and middle-income housing in the plan and the choice to spend so many city resources redeveloping Hyde Park alone.¹⁷⁸ The most pointed responses attacked Weinstein's letter from a Catholic perspective. James F. Stanton, a Hyde Park resident, accused Weinstein of having less concern for the poor because he was Jewish and not Catholic: "I think the Rabbi's difficulty is he does not see the same thing the Catholic sees when he looks at a slum. The Rabbi sees a dilapidated building. The Catholic sees a shelter for people where the rent is usually low," Stanton wrote.¹⁷⁹ Another writer, Lar Daly, went even further: "Negroes know well which of the two have their best interests at heart, the Catholic church or Jews. The Kenwood–Hyde Park redevelopment project has really only one true objective. It is to clear undesirable elements (mainly Negroes) out of the University of Chicago and the east of Lake Park ave area, where the big apartment buildings are occupied

177. Jacob J. Weinstein, letter to the editor, *Hyde Park Herald*, May 28, 1958.

178. Letters to the editor, *Hyde Park Herald*, June 4, 1958.

179. James F. Stanton, letter to the editor, *Hyde Park Herald*, June 18, 1958.

by about 90 percent wealthy Jews.”¹⁸⁰ To reframe the debate as a question of Jewish morality versus Catholic morality is an oversimplification. Monsignor Egan’s intervention didn’t make the Catholic Church the ultimate defender of black people in Chicago, who had often faced violent white mobs when trying to move into Catholic neighborhoods in the 1940s and ’50s.¹⁸¹ Perhaps for this reason, black interest groups did not publicly join forces with the Catholic Church’s position.¹⁸² The exchange showed the prominence of ethnic and religious tensions in 1950s Chicago and how the urban renewal plan could be viewed by onlookers as a benefit to Hyde Park’s wealthy Jews at the expense of others. Weinstein’s willingness to defend the plan in a strongly worded letter, furthermore, demonstrated his general commitment to defending the plan, on the grounds of wanting to build an interracial neighborhood, even while others were expressing criticism. The congregation as a whole appeared to support the plan; in June, at its 111th Congregational Annual Meeting, K.A.M. adopted a resolution asking the City Council to quickly approve the plan.¹⁸³

Together with black groups, many lay Catholics and clergymen were not united behind church’s opposition, which, ultimately, did not stop or force significant modifications to the urban renewal.¹⁸⁴ The HPKCC and SECC, for their part, attacked the Cardinal’s Committee as only concerned with keeping black residents out of white Catholic communities.¹⁸⁵ According to Rossi and Dentler, the Cardinal’s Committee was

foiled above all by timing: it raised criticisms late in the public comment period, after the plan had already been debated many times over within Hyde Park–Kenwood: “the City Council was not empowered to do more than give blanket endorsement or rejection of the Plan, and the latter appeared to all as too drastic a step to be seriously considered.”¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, the plan had the support of Mayor Richard J. Daley. In November 1958, the City Council approved the plan, with forty-four alderman in favor and none opposing.¹⁸⁷

Notably, the plan passed without any changes.¹⁸⁸ Many among both critics and supporters believed the plan ought to include public housing: the HPKCC had called for two hundred to two hundred fifty scattered public housing units.¹⁸⁹ The university and the SECC had been staunchly opposed to including any public housing in the plan; Levi said it would be “harmful to the neighborhood.”¹⁹⁰ But when the plan was approved, Mayor Daley, with the support of alderman, said that as part of the plan’s implementation 120 public housing units—sixty for families and sixty for elderly couples—would be built on cleared land.¹⁹¹

Alderman Despres, a K.A.M. congregant and an advocate for public housing, believed public housing was necessary to accommodate people relocated by urban renewal and considered this a victory. Weinstein view on public housing is unclear. Despres said that the Hyde Park–Kenwood Council of Churches of Synagogues and the Chicago Rabbinical

180. Martin, “Dope and Data,” *Chicago Defender*, June 14, 1958.

181. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 40–67.

182. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 233–34.

183. “Cardinal’s Conservation Committee Asks for Inclusion of Four Points in ‘Plan’,” *Hyde Park Herald*, June 18, 1958.

184. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 233–36.

185. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 166.

186. Rossi and Dentler, *The Politics of Urban Renewal*, 236.

187. “City Council OK’s Hyde Park Renewal Plan,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 8, 1958.

188. “Council Approves Plan 44 to 0,” *Hyde Park Herald*, November 12, 1958.

189. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 162.

190. *Ibid.*

191. “Council Approves Plan 44 to 0,” *Hyde Park Herald*, November 12, 1958.

Association, with which Weinstein was associated,¹⁹² supported 120 public housing units.¹⁹³ However, Weinstein wrote a January 1959 letter to the *Sun-Times* in which he identified himself as “one who took the opposite side” of Despres on “the question of public housing.”¹⁹⁴ Whether Weinstein was against any public housing or advocating for a different number of units, he was not marching arm-in-arm with Despres as an outspoken public housing supporter.

Of the 120 planned public housing units in Hyde Park, only thirty-four were constructed by 1968, twenty-two of them for the elderly.¹⁹⁵ By the late 1960s, urban renewal’s supporters and its detractors had shaped two distinct narratives of Hyde Park urban renewal. In a 1963 article, Elinor Richey identified a difference between Hyde Park urban renewal’s “official publicized effect” on the black population versus its “actual effect.”¹⁹⁶ The former, which Richey called the “official Hyde Park success story,” emphasized Hyde Park’s integration, rebuilding, and citizen participation in urban renewal. In 1961, for example, a *Hyde Park Herald* article commented that “the most difficult goal—readiness to welcome interracial evolution—has largely been won.”¹⁹⁷ According to Richey, the “actual effect” was the eviction of twenty thousand people from Hyde Park, fourteen thousand of them black: “The Urban League charged that eight out of ten of those relocated were Negro, and that the pile up

192. “Rabbi Morton Berman Elected President of Chicago Rabbinical Association,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, July 3, 1949. Weinstein was a former president of the Chicago Rabbinical Association.

193. Leon Despres, “Low Income Housing and the Redevelopment Plan,” December 29, 1958, box 4, folder 2, JJW Papers.

194. Jacob J. Weinstein to editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 26, 1959, box 4, folder 2, JJW Papers.

195. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 163.

196. Elinor Richey, “Splitsville, USA,” *New York Reporter*, May 22, 1963, 36.

197. “Chicago Neighborhood: Caucus or Eat?” *Hyde Park Herald*, May 3, 1961.

was ‘breeding more slums and worse slums’ and causing ‘further concentration, enlargement, and institutionalization of segregation.’”¹⁹⁸ By 1960, Woodlawn, the neighborhood directly south of Hyde Park, held eighty-two thousand people in a neighborhood designed to accommodate twenty-five thousand.¹⁹⁹ Moving into Hyde Park’s newly constructed units was only an option for black (or white) people able to pay the high prices. Richey concluded that “the Federally assisted ‘non-discriminatory’ pilot project has served to roll back the ghetto border, generating pressures that deliver displaced residents into the hands of greedy landlords and ruthless spectators.”²⁰⁰ This view of Hyde Park urban renewal was shared by black organizations like the *Defender* and the Urban League. A study found that residential segregation in Chicago actually increased between 1950 and 1960.²⁰¹

“Clean Hands and Serene Spirit”: Jewish Motives for Supporting Urban Renewal

The phenomenon of Jews who prided themselves on racial liberalism participating in activities opposed by the black community was not unique to Weinstein or to Hyde Park’s Jews. Cheryl Greenberg explores the politics of Jews in the 1950s and ’60s who politically supported civil rights and integration but still made racist decisions in their personal lives. Greenberg finds that while studies showed Jews expected themselves to be less racist than other whites—and black people expected the

198. Richey, “Splitsville, USA,” *New York Reporter*, May 22, 1963, 36.

199. Ibid.

200. Ibid., 38.

201. Ibid., 35.

same of a fellow minority—this wasn't always the case in practice.²⁰² Research was mixed as to whether white Jews actually exhibited less racist attitudes than other white people.²⁰³ Greenberg's analysis focuses on Jews who participated in white flight. They often supported racial equality, but chose to leave for all-white suburbs, often in search of better public schools, safer streets, and better social services. According to Greenberg, for many white American Jews, "integration as political action" often came into conflict with "integration as lived experience."²⁰⁴

The case of K.A.M., however, is more complicated. Weinstein and the K.A.M. members who stayed in Hyde Park *did* choose "integration as lived experience," but also used choosing integration as a justification for full support of urban renewal. Weinstein believed that participation in urban renewal was a rejection of the kind of hypocrisy described by Greenberg. He was no stranger to the fact that racism came in many forms. In a review of Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, he lauded Hansberry for making the play's only white character (a man from a homeowners association, who offers the black Younger family money if they won't move into his all-white neighborhood) not a bigot but "a kindly person who hates violence and who represents modest people like himself, who have put everything into their homes and want to preserve their investment and their way of life."²⁰⁵ He understood, therefore, that even a "kindly person who hates violence" could participate in racism. But Weinstein's writings indicate that he viewed K.A.M.'s work in the neighborhood as the opposite: an example of the congregation living up

to their values in their own backyard, in the face of great adversity. He viewed his own role as one of his proudest accomplishments.

In autobiographical notes written in 1973, after his 1968 retirement from the pulpit, Weinstein wrote that of all his social action he was "most proud of the great part which my Congregation played in the 25-year battle to integrate the races in our neighborhood."²⁰⁶ In a draft written for the *National Jewish Post* celebrating the passage of the urban renewal plan, Weinstein cheered the white K.A.M. members who he believed had lived up to their values: "When these white families denounce the savagery of Little Rock, they do it with clean hands and serene spirit. When these Jews read the passage from Amos: 'Are ye not as the children of Ethiopia unto me, O Children of Israel,' they read it with that understanding of the heart which only integrity can give."²⁰⁷ According to Weinstein, this was all the more laudable because it had not been an easy task—the approximately sixty K.A.M. families who remained had to accept the "arduous discipline of living in an integrated neighborhood" because, as he said in a speech, "people who live differently, think differently and the races had a sizable store of misconceptions about one another."²⁰⁸ Outside observers also viewed the congregation's neighborhood activities as a triumph for social justice. A 1956 book dedicated to describing how the principles of Judaism could be mobilized for social action praised K.A.M.'s decision to stay.²⁰⁹ Weinstein retained a

202. Cheryl Greenberg, "Liberal NIMBY: American Jews and Civil Rights," *Journal of Urban History* 38, no. 3 (May 2012): 463.

203. *Ibid.*, 455.

204. *Ibid.*, 453.

205. Weinstein, "A Raisin in the Sun," March 13, 1959, box 24, folder 7, JJW Papers.

206. Weinstein, "Autobiographical Notes of Jacob J. Weinstein—Class of 1923," April 1973, box 1, folder 1, JJW Papers.

207. Weinstein, "Urban Renewal and the Brotherhood of Man," October 23, 1958, box 2, folder 6, JJW Papers.

208. Weinstein, "Antidote to Current Mysticism," April 10, 1959, box 33, folder 2, JJW Papers.

209. Vorspan and Lipman, *Justice and Judaism*, 38.

reputation as a civil rights leader; in 1960 he earned an appointment to John F. Kennedy's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity.²¹⁰

Perhaps the clearest evidence for Weinstein's sincere belief in urban renewal as a social good is the fact that he was actually willing to leave in 1957. Hirsch argues that many Hyde Parkers used their advocacy for an interracial neighborhood via urban renewal as mostly an excuse, because they wanted to stay in their homes. Weinstein, however, in nearly choosing to leave K.A.M., showed that he was open to moving his pulpit to the North Shore and abandoning Hyde Park; "the resources for such a move will be found," he wrote.²¹¹ Much of the pressure he received to stay mentioned that if he left it would have been viewed as abandoning the cause. Therefore, Weinstein himself, congregants, and outside observers clearly viewed K.A.M.'s commitment to Hyde Park urban renewal as a political action in support of interracial living and civil rights, not just a plan to help themselves stay in the neighborhood.

Why, then, did Weinstein believe the urban renewal plan was an instrument for justice, even as it gained opposition from local groups, the archdiocese, the NAACP, and the Urban League? Weinstein's pride in K.A.M.'s activities in Hyde Park stemmed partially from a belief in integration as an interpersonal effort, in which black and white people learning to get along with one another could have a profound impact on civil rights. In the review of *Raisin in the Sun*, for example, he commented on the symbolism of the plant carried off by Lena Younger at the end of the play and the lesson it held for other white people: "The plant is the hardy perennial we call brotherhood and whether it lives or dies at 406 Cleburne is going to depend not only on the loving care of the Youngers, but on the attitude of their neighbors. If the people in 404 and 408...open their hearts and treat the Youngers as fellow humans,

210. "JFK Names Rabbi Weinstein to Committee on Equal Employment," *Chicago Sentinel*, April 13, 1961.

211. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Memo on the Temple Program," n.d., box 25, folder 5, JJW Papers.

that plant will grow and become a great tree and give us all its fruit."²¹² The ability of the Youngers' new white neighbors to act neighborly and not racist, according to Weinstein, was the primary determinant of the Youngers' ability to thrive in a racist city.

Weinstein was very proud when K.A.M. modeled such neighborly behavior. He celebrated the fact that K.A.M., working with the Girl Scouts, had participated in establishing an interracial Girl Scouts troop in Hyde Park. The troop was equally divided between white girls, most of them Jewish, and black girls, and came into existence four years before *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregated schools in 1954. Weinstein expressed pride that the girls got along well and that the parents were growing more comfortable with one another, though he acknowledged that this was "but one small community experience" and that it "must be repeated a million times in every corner of the land."²¹³ Putting together an interracial Girl Scouts troop was certainly no small feat in the 1950s, when public schools remained segregate and many whites would have refused to participate. On the other hand, creating interracial Girl Scouts troops across the country wouldn't remove the structural basis of racism. Black Chicago families like the fictional Youngers faced not only violent and racist neighbors, but also FHA loan discrimination, exploitative contract selling, and reduced political power.²¹⁴ The Girl Scouts experiment didn't address the role of class in race issues: Weinstein admitted that the Brownie troop worked because most of the black girls came from upper-middle-class homes. This was a common concession

212. Jacob J. Weinstein, "A Raisin in the Sun," March 13, 1959, box 24, folder 7, JJW Papers.

213. Jacob J. Weinstein, "Desegregation Working Well in Our Own Backyard," *The National Jewish Post*, May 25, 1955.

214. See Satter, *Family Properties*, 56, for the experience of one Chicago family, the Boltons who could not find a comfortable home due to the overcrowding of the Black Belt, an exploitative real-estate seller, Hyde Park urban renewal, restrictive city housing codes, and reduced organized black political power.

among Hyde Park neighborhood activists; HPKCC Executive Director Cunningham freely acknowledged that urban renewal was likely to make Hyde Park more expensive but that economic diversity would have to be sacrificed for the sake of racial diversity.²¹⁵ Separating race from class, however, ignored how racism, through mechanisms like job discrimination and discrimination in housing prices, affects black people's chances of achieving economic mobility. K.A.M.'s willingness to participate in interracial activities was laudable, but such activities didn't address all the problems that black Chicagoans faced.

In an era in which advocating for more leftist ideas could lead activists to be tarred as Communists, a focus on interpersonal goodwill, rather than structural racism and class divisions, isn't surprising. Weinstein had already had to defend himself against charges of Communism; advocating more radical ideas may have increased the scrutiny. Leftist groups and individuals in the 1950s often found themselves smeared as Communists even if they had no party affiliation. Elizabeth Wood, head of the Chicago Housing Authority from 1937 to 1954, pursued a policy of integrated public housing and was called a "pinkie." According to Hirsch, the local paper in South Deering, a South Side neighborhood where whites engaged in violent protest against integration of the CHA's Trumbull Park Homes in the neighborhood,²¹⁶ even called for the CHA to be investigated by Senator McCarthy.²¹⁷ The Chicago Committee to End Mob Violence, an organization founded by Urban League executive Sidney Williams to take an strong stand against racist violence and the city's approach to countering it, was marred by accusations of Communism because it had some left-wing members, which dragged down the Urban League's reputation.²¹⁸

215. Cunningham, "Will Negroes Get Fair Deal in Hyde Park?" *Chicago Defender*, March 8, 1958.

216. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 56.

217. *Ibid.*, 202.

218. *Ibid.*, 247.

Despite his focus on interpersonal relations, Weinstein did recognize that simply advocating neighborly goodwill would not be enough to prevent his congregants from fleeing to the suburbs. As Greenberg describes, even Jews who believed in integrated living didn't want to sacrifice safety or the quality of their children's schools, which often suffered in majority-black neighborhoods because of structural racism.²¹⁹ In February 1958 Weinstein lobbied the Chicago Board of Education to ensure that it would maintain the quality of Hyde Park High School, including its accelerated courses, even as the neighborhood integrated. His congregants, he explained, were deeply committed to living in an interracial neighborhood, but they were also Jews, with a tradition of emphasizing education, and they would prioritize good public schooling over everything.²²⁰ As he wrote to his congregants, the greatest "pity" of declining public schools would not be that many would have to leave the neighborhood, but that the dream of an interracial neighborhood would die.²²¹ Weinstein, therefore, understood that white flight was not just about individual attitudes about race, but about the availability of resources and safety in all-white suburbs as compared to mixed or majority-black neighborhoods. A portion of K.A.M. members were willing to stay in the city not just because of their considerable enthusiasm for social justice, but also because their neighborhood had an urban renewal program aimed at rooting out slums. For Weinstein, therefore, the harms of urban renewal to poorer residents of Hyde Park were worthwhile to keep his white Jewish congregants in the neighborhood and to keep it integrated. Sacrificing economic diversity made "integration as lived experience" an easier choice by preserving middle-class neighborhood conditions.

219. Greenberg, "Liberal NIMBY," 452.

220. Jacob J. Weinstein, "An Open Letter to the Chicago Board of Education," February 18, 1958, box 4, folder 2, JJW Papers.

221. Jacob J. Weinstein to congregants, February 10, 1958, box 26, folder 6, JJW Papers.

In a letter to the *Sun-Times* on January 1958, Weinstein compared the ongoing housing crisis to the racist violence of the South, writing “I daresay that as many Negroes have been burned in our foul tenements as have been lynched by Southern mobs.” He called for remedies including federal low-income housing, open occupancy throughout the city, and regulation of exploitative landlords. Yet he also noted that white neighborhoods had an “absorptive capacity..., which can be disregarded only at the cost of a white exodus and the abandonment of interracial living.”²²² Weinstein did not see his calls for an “absorptive capacity,” or a limit on how many new black residents a neighborhood like Hyde Park might be able to take in, as contradicting his support for open-occupancy and just-housing policies. Instead, he saw it as a necessary part of city planning in order to prevent whites from fleeing and to create an interracial neighborhood.

According to Hirsch, many liberal Hyde Parkers used the goal of creating an interracial neighborhood to justify the price of urban renewal to themselves and ease their consciences troubled by demolitions and forced removals.²²³ But Hirsch’s cynical framing of the goal of an interracial neighborhood as an ad hoc justification, rather than a driving force, underestimates the commitment many Hyde Parkers, such as the Jews of K.A.M., had to integration. Social justice was not just a side-project but an essential component of faith and community for Weinstein and his congregation. Weinstein’s approach to neighborhood politics suggested not a willful misunderstanding of urban renewal’s consequences but a *miscalculation*. Weinstein was aware that there would be sacrifices, but believed that an integrated neighborhood was important enough to make them necessary. Of course, K.A.M.’s own interest was also at stake in the calculation. To concede that urban renewal was problematic would be to question K.A.M.’s entire identity as a liberal congregation, an identity rooted in carrying out the Jewish religious

222. Jacob J. Weinstein to the editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 27, 1958, box 4, folder 2, JJW Papers.

223. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 181.

mandates to treat others equally and adopting the support for civil rights that was part of Reform Jewish identity at the time. By focusing on the goals of Hyde Park’s urban renewal—creating an interracial neighborhood—rather than its negative consequences, and viewing those consequences in service of the goal, K.A.M. could place urban renewal within the narrative of how it saw itself: as a minority group dedicated to helping another minority group.

Furthermore, focusing on creating an interracial neighborhood became a way for K.A.M.’s Jews to bring a liberal Jewish identity into harmony with their newly earned whiteness. According to Weinstein, the Jews who stayed “found they could not visit their friends in the segregated suburbs without feeling a certain lack in the tone and texture in their friends’ lives,” indicating that many liberal Jews were averse to the prospect of simply blending into a white monolith. Through urban renewal, members of K.A.M. could distance themselves from suburban insularity without distancing themselves from the advantages of the suburbs. Many of the Hyde Park urban renewal projects, such as tearing down a dense commercial block to build a shopping center with a parking lot, reshaped the neighborhood landscape to more closely resemble the suburbs. Liberal Jews like Weinstein wanted the benefits that whiteness could bring, like clean, crime-free neighborhoods and high-quality schools, without the cost of dissolving into the white mainstream. To believe in the good of urban renewal was to believe that such an identity was possible.

Epilogue

When Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at K.A.M. in 1966, nearly a decade after the passage of the urban renewal plan, he encountered a neighborhood where rates of black in-migration had leveled off and housing prices were on the rise. One year earlier, in 1965, a K.A.M. newsletter had announced data on where congregants resided: the largest proportion still lived in Hyde Park–Kenwood (45 percent) and South Shore (15

percent). The ground had been broken on new townhouses, and K.A.M. was hopeful that potential new members would move into them.²²⁴ The dream of an interracial neighborhood had materialized: in 1960, Hyde Park's population was 59.9 percent white, 37.7 percent black, and 2.6 percent other. Internally, however, the neighborhood was not uniformly integrated; certain census tracts were heavily black and others heavily white.²²⁵ By 2000, the neighborhood remained integrated: 45.8 percent white, 38.1 percent black, 11.3 percent Asian, and 4.1 percent Latino.²²⁶ A 1990s history of K.A.M. Isaiah Israel produced by the congregation announced that K.A.M. and Isaiah Israel's actions in the face of demographic change were "certainly one of the proudest moments in our congregational history."²²⁷

On a racial dot map of Chicago—a map that represents each individual with a dot that is color coded by race, using 2010 census data—Hyde Park is a multicolored anomaly in a sea of segregated neighborhoods.²²⁸ The integration of Hyde Park did not spread to the rest of the South Side; most South Side neighborhoods are majority black, many of them are low income and have suffered from years of disinvestment, with serious consequences. A 2017 Metropolitan Planning Council report found that if black-white segregation in Chicago was reduced to the

224. "K.A.M. News," June 2, 1965, box 9, folder 7, Hyde Park and Kenwood Inter-faith Council Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

225. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 262.

226. Max Grinnell, "Hyde Park," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, ed. James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), accessed April 4, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/622.html>.

227. Meites, "Chapter 12: They Lived What They Believed."

228. "2010 Census Block Data," Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, accessed April 4, 2017, <https://demographics.virginia.edu/DotMap/index.html>.

national median, income for black Chicagoans would increase by \$2,982 per person and Chicago's homicide rate would drop by 30 percent.²²⁹

Most contemporary scholars and commentators on the legacy of urban renewal do not share K.A.M. Isaiah Israel's tone of pride; instead, they place urban renewal within a longstanding history of Chicago's abuses towards residents of color.²³⁰ Rather than provide a model of integration, Hyde Park's urban renewal contributed to further segregation by displacing black families and pushing them into other areas of the city, where they experienced overcrowding and slum conditions.²³¹ Hyde Park urban renewal also had national implications: Hirsch describes how Hyde Park's urban renewal program—including its emphasis on "conservation" and slum "prevention"—helped influence federal policy in the Housing Act of 1954.²³² When discussed today, urban renewal usually has a negative connotation. Indeed, when President Donald Trump talked about an "urban renewal agenda" in December 2016, the *New York Times* associated urban renewal with "vast destruction of minority communities, when entire neighborhoods were razed for housing, highways and civic projects."²³³

The legacy of urban renewal—the continuing segregation of Chicago—demonstrate how the efforts of Hyde Park Jews to both reap the benefits of whiteness and fight segregation through urban renewal fell

229. "The Cost of Segregation," Metropolitan Planning Council, n.d., accessed April 5, 2017, <http://www.metroplanning.org/costofsegregation>.

230. See Samuel Zipp, "The Cultural Structure of Postwar Urbanism," *American Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (June 2014): 477–88.

231. Richey, "Splitsville, USA," *New York Reporter*, May 22, 1963, 37.

232. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 271.

233. Emily Badger, "Why Trump's Use of the Words 'Urban Renewal' Is Scary for Cities," *New York Times*, December 7, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/upshot/why-trumps-use-of-the-words-urban-renewal-is-scary-for-cities.html>.

short. While Weinstein emphasized creating an interracial community as a model for the nation to justify the downsides of urban renewal, Hyde Park ultimately did not spur the creation of an integrated Chicago or nation. Weinstein and K.A.M. Jews were unable to avoid complicity in racist policy, despite their conviction that they were living up to their beliefs, which speaks to the power of white identity in conferring privileges and the magnitude of forces supporting segregation. While much has been made of the supposed golden age of alliance between blacks and white Jews in fighting for civil rights, Goldstein points out that the term “alliance” might be a misnomer given that blacks and white Jews have rarely stood on equal footing in the United States.²³⁴ Many K.A.M. congregants could choose between living a middle-class life outside of Hyde Park or a middle-class life inside Hyde Park via urban renewal, while many of their black neighbors did not have the same access to a middle-class life. Therefore, even though they advocated for interracial living, Jews did so knowing they had the security to benefit from urban renewal and would not be displaced by it.

In a 1963 review of Rossi and Dentler’s study of urban renewal in Chicago, Herbert J. Gans argues that social programs that attacked the root causes of slum development could have benefited Hyde Park and its residents—especially displaced residents—more than urban renewal. To Gans, the lesson of urban renewal was that “our greatest urban need is to solve the basic economic and social problems of the people condemned to live in slums.”²³⁵ Likewise, Greenberg notes that American Jews’ hypocritical choices “reflected the impact that racism had on every institution in this country and the failure of liberalism to dismantle those structural impediments to equality.”²³⁶ Of course, violent white

234. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 217.

235. Herbert J. Gans, “Planning and Power,” *Commentary Magazine*, February 1, 1963, <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-politics-of-urban-renewal-the-chicago-findings-by-peter-h-rossi-and-robert-a-dentler>.

236. Greenberg, “Liberal NIMBY,” 463.

protests and McCarthyism’s association of leftist public policy with Communism made alternatives to urban renewal, such as scattered interracial public housing, hard to achieve in the 1950s.

The case study of Hyde Park suggests rethinking approaches to desegregation that prioritize individual choices—such as staying in a neighborhood versus participating in white flight—over tackling the roots of segregation, including loan discrimination, exploitation, and economic inequality. Furthermore, the history of Hyde Park provides lessons for future Jewish communal politics. According to Goldstein, “if Jews will ever be able to avoid the tensions between acceptance and group assertion that they have felt since the late nineteenth century, a necessary prerequisite is the ultimate dissolution of the dominant culture of which Jews have long strived to be a part,” by which he refers to whiteness.²³⁷ The case of Hyde Park shows how the same prerequisite applies to white Jewish efforts in solidarity with black Americans. Despite good intentions, straddling the line between white middle-class comfort and dissent from the norms of whiteness was not enough for Hyde Park’s liberal Jews to make a lasting impact on Chicago’s segregation. For white Jews to truly reject participation in white domination would require an upending of the American social, cultural, and economic norms that privilege whiteness.

237. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 239.

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“A Highly Complex Set of Interventions”



The University
of Chicago as Urban Planner,
1890–2017

JULIET SPRUNG ELDRED, AB'17

Introduction

The University intended to provide its own landscape. Or at least it gave evidence that it would do so eventually.¹

My interest in the University of Chicago's boundaries was piqued as a first-year student during Orientation Week in September 2013. The upperclassmen leading discussions of transportation and city life did not explicitly tell us where we should or should not go, but instead told us the boundaries of the University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD) patrol zone: 37th Street to the north, 64th Street to the south, Lake Shore Drive to the east, and Cottage Grove Avenue to the west. Two things struck me about this comment: the UCPD's patrol area extended so far beyond the main campus² and the framing of urban space in terms

1. Neil Harris, foreword to *The Uses of Gothic: Planning and Building the Campus of the University of Chicago, 1892–1932*, by Jean F. Block (Chicago: University of Chicago Library, 1983), xii–xiii.

2. See “University of Chicago Campus Boundaries,” University of Chicago Safety & Security, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://d3qi0qp55mx5f5.cloudfront.net/safety-security/uploads/files/Campus-Boundary>

of policing. The comment stuck with me throughout my time at the University of Chicago and informed much of my creative and academic output for the remainder of my undergraduate experience.

This thesis is not an overview of the university's construction and property acquisitions or a comprehensive narrative of university history.³ Rather, I emphasize how policies and the built environment reveal the university's values and attitudes toward its surrounding neighborhoods. From Marshall Field's 10-acre land grant in 1890 to 217 acres and 197 Hyde Park properties in 2016, I investigate how the University of Chicago has understood its role as an agent in the urban environment, how the university has demarcated its boundaries, and how these roles, boundaries, and relationships have shifted over the course of the university's 127-year history.⁴

A Very Brief History of American University Planning

Universities—particularly American universities—have historically been defined not only by their faculty and their contributions to academic inquiry, but also by their campuses. Although the college campus can be traced back to the medieval universities of Europe, in which students and faculty lived and worked together in a cloister, American universities developed college campuses as separate entities, with distinct characteristics. Early American universities were based on a classical curriculum and typically started with a single multipurpose building to house classrooms, offices, and students.⁵ Thomas Jefferson's "academical village" at

3. John W. Boyer already wrote this book, *The University of Chicago: A History*, which was an invaluable resource for me.

4. "Campus and Capital Projects: At a Glance," University of Chicago Data, accessed March 13, 2017, https://data.uchicago.edu/at_a_glance.php?cid=19&cpid=4&sel=atg.

5. Paul Kapp, "The University Campus: An American Invention," Building the University: The History and Architectural Sociology of Universities Conference (Chicago, IL, February 2, 2017).

the University of Virginia departed from this model. He believed that physical form could express pedagogical function, and he designed a campus to encourage scholarship. Jefferson constructed "a small and separate lodge for each professorship," connected the lodges to student dormitories by covered passageways for "dry communication between all the schools," and arranged them around "an open square of grass and trees."⁶

After the Civil War, the Land-Grant College Act of 1862 provided states with land for colleges that specialized in agriculture, engineering, and military science. This practical curriculum changed the physical space of campuses with specialized buildings, such as laboratories and observatories. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the City Beautiful movement revived classical aesthetics and principles, which influenced Columbia University's Morningside Heights campus. In contrast, the University of Chicago was one of the first American universities to use the neo-Gothic style, based on English colleges; Duke University and Princeton University also used the neo-Gothic style in the following decades. By the mid-twentieth century, modernist principles declared university master plans to be "corsets," cumbersome and restricting.⁷ Universities like the Illinois Institute of Technology, primarily designed by Mies van der Rohe, sought a more porous and open campus framework.⁸ By the mid- to late twentieth century many city universities moved toward a "UniverCities" model, with "meds and eds" (universities and hospital complexes) becoming one of the great forces in contemporary urban development. In the latter decades of the twentieth century, as the global North's economy abandoned large-scale manufacturing for information, cultural, and educational services, urban

6. M. Perry Chapman, *American Places: In Search of the Twenty-First Century Campus* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 5–6.

7. Kapp, "The University Campus."

8. "IIT Campus Historical Architecture," IIT College of Architecture, accessed March 14, 2017, <https://arch.iit.edu/about/iit-campus>.

universities became economic engines.⁹ Contemporary urban American universities can no longer be ivory towers: they are major employers, developers, and landowners whose decisions affect people far beyond their campus boundaries.

Town-and-Gown Relationships

The phrase “town and gown” comes from the distinctive robes, cloaks, and hoods worn by students and faculty at medieval European universities, which distinguished them from the townspeople. Relationships between universities and surrounding communities were strained in early American universities, especially at universities founded to train future ministers, which viewed cities as morally corrupt and which sought to insulate their students from urban vices.¹⁰ Many universities located their campuses in the country or used spatial practices and policies to insulated their students from the outside world. The town-gown split was further reinforced in the latter half of the twentieth century when the majority of American universities adopted the campus model, in which students could have the majority of their needs met without leaving campus. This separation divided university and city and facilitated distrust between the two.¹¹ Columbia University, the University of Cincinnati, the University of Pennsylvania, and numerous other urban universities have experienced conflicts and tensions with their

surrounding communities.¹² Though this paper focuses on the University of Chicago, its conclusions have wider implications.

Overview

Each section of the thesis covers a particular time period. The first section (1890–1932) covers the University of Chicago’s use of the neo-Gothic architectural style to cloister the university from the city. The second section (1933–1948) discusses the university’s covert financial support of racially restrictive covenants in the surrounding neighborhoods. The third section (1949–1962) covers urban renewal and the university’s active manipulation of the built environment. The fourth section (1963–1998) discusses policing and physical buffer zones. The fifth section (1999–2017) chronicles the 1999 Master Plan, university charter schools, the expansion of policing, and the simultaneous expansion and contraction of the university’s real-estate holdings.

While the University of Chicago’s understanding of its role in the built environment and its attitudes toward its peripheries have changed substantially since the doors of Cobb Hall first opened for classes in 1892, the university’s broad history can be described as a progression of barriers. These barriers—physical, legal, psychological—helped create and emphasize distinctions between “town” and “gown.” Many of the university’s programs in recent decades have sought to repair some of these divides. A study of the history and the development of the University of

9. Davarian L. Baldwin, “The ‘800-Pound Gargoyle’: The Long History of Higher Education and Urban Development on Chicago’s South Side,” *American Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (March 2015): 82, 88.

10. Stephen D. Brunning, Shea McGrew, and Mark Cooper, “Town–Gown Relationships: Exploring University–Community Engagement from the Perspective of Community Members,” *Public Relations Review* 32, no. 2 (June 2006): 126.

11. Dale McGirr, Robert Kull, and K. Scott Enns, “Town and Gown: Making Institutional and Community Development Work Together,” *Economic Development Journal* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 42.

12. Sewell Chan, “When the Gown Devours the Town,” City Room, *New York Times*, November 16, 2007, <https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/11/16/when-the-gown-devours-the-town/comment-page-1>; Hansi Lo Wang, “University Re-imagines Town and Gown Relationship in Philadelphia,” *Code Switching*, NPR, January 29, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2015/01/29/375415911/university-re-imagines-town-and-gown-relationship-in-philadelphia>; for relationships of American universities and cities see Thomas Bender, *The Urban University and Its Identity: Roots, Locations, Roles* (Boston: Kluwer Academic, 1998) and Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984).

Chicago's policies and practices has implications beyond Hyde Park: to what extent do private institutions have the right to alter urban space—particularly spaces that are occupied by people unaffiliated with the institutions—in order to further their own interests?

“Flourishing in Its Isolation”: The Neo-Gothic Period, 1890–1932

Marshall Field’s Land Grant

Rising from the “ashes” of its former incarnation, which shut its doors in 1886 due to financial problems, the present-day University of Chicago was chartered on July 1, 1890.¹³ The wealthy Chicago entrepreneur Marshall Field donated the land that initially comprised the university’s campus. Field had purchased sixty-three and one-third acres of land in Hyde Park in 1879 at \$1,253 an acre. In January 1890, he pledged to donate ten acres to the new university. The initial site stretched from 55th to 58th Streets, between Ellis and Greenwood Avenues, but was later amended to ten acre between 56th and 59th Streets. University trustees feared that the ten-acre site was too small to accommodate future campus expansion, and Field offered to sell them more nearby land. The final agreement included land from 57th to 59th Streets, between Ellis and Lexington (now University) Avenues. Field donated one and a half blocks and sold an additional one and half blocks for \$132,500 to the university. The university’s first action was to close off all streets and alleys running through the site, which would become a self-contained campus.¹⁴

13. Jean F. Block, *The Uses of Gothic: Planning and Building the Campus of the University of Chicago, 1892–1932* (Chicago: University of Chicago Library, 1983), 8.

14. Robin Faith Bachin, *Building the South Side: Urban Space and Civic Culture in Chicago, 1890–1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 34–35, 42–43.

Henry Ives Cobb’s Master Plan

The university convened and created the Committee on Buildings and Grounds nine days after Illinois granted its charter in July 1890. The committee’s primary tasks were to consider the site, prepare a preliminary plan, find an architect, and oversee the construction of the campus. Its members included Chicago businessmen Martin A. Ryerson, Thomas W. Goodspeed, and Charles L. Hutchinson; Ryerson and Hutchinson presided over the committee for the rest of their lives, ensuring a degree of aesthetic continuity and architectural unity in the fledgling campus. The committee chose architect Henry Ives Cobb to draw up a campus master plan and to design a “general recitation hall” and dormitories for divinity and graduate students. The committee wanted a master plan in order to avoid the ad hoc development of many other nineteenth-century universities, which often began with a single building and haphazardly added more as donors appeared.¹⁵

The trustees built the campus in the neo-Gothic style for practical, structural, and ideological reasons. The Gothic aesthetic gave institutional legitimacy to the new university by association with the ancient scholastic lineage of Oxford and Cambridge.¹⁶ The architect Michael Sorkin, in his hypothetical 1999 master plan for the University of Chicago, refers to neo-Gothic as a “simulacrum,” which served as a “grafted expressive authority... as if Chicago really were Oxford.”¹⁷ The lack of an opening ceremony also reflected a desire to situate the university in an ancient history of scholarship. In a letter to John D. Rockefeller, University President William Rainey Harper wrote that he did not want any special festivities; he wanted “the work of the University [to] begin on

15. Block, *The Uses of Gothic*, xviii, 8, 11.

16. Sharon Haar, *The City as Campus: Urbanism and Higher Education in Chicago* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 24.

17. Michael Sorkin Studio. *Other Plans: University of Chicago Studies, 1998–2000. Pamphlet Architecture 22.* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 15.

October 1 as if it were the continuation of work which had been conducted for a thousand years.”¹⁸ The University of Chicago held its first classes without fanfare.

A concern for legitimacy was partially rooted in the new money that paid for the university’s creation. Unlike early American universities, such as Harvard and Yale, which were initially funded by the colony and the church, the earliest benefactors of the University of Chicago had made their fortunes in oil (John D. Rockefeller), department stores (Marshall Field), and lumber (Martin A. Ryerson). Architectural scholar Sharon Haar in *The City as Campus* describes the disjunction between the industrial age and its aesthetic as an “architectural paradox”: the newer the university, the older it appeared to be.¹⁹

Social historian Neil Harris argues that the University of Chicago “began from its perimeters rather than its center.”²⁰ The university was not built around or defined by a single iconic structure but was defined by the quadrangle’s outer limits. The college quadrangle—based on the Oxbridge model and sequestered from the outside world—created a “fantasy of leavened monasticism” in a rapidly changing world.²¹ Cobb’s quadrangle buildings create a “wall against urban encroachment,” which reveal the university’s desire to close itself off from the distractions of the outside world (fig. 1).²² According to Sorkin, Cobb’s architectural plan is notable for what is not shown:

The perspectival image floats in abstraction, its context a continuous street grid, each block filled with greenery. Missing is any idea

18. Bachin, *Building the South Side*, 25.

19. Haar, *The City as Campus*, 25.

20. Harris, forward to *The Uses of Gothic*, xiii.

21. Michael Sorkin Studio, *Other Plans*, 9.

22. Haar, *The City as Campus*, 23–24.



Figure 1. Henry Ives Cobb Site Plan, 1893.

University of Chicago Photographic Archives, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library [SCRC subsequently], apf2-02712. <http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf2-02712.xml>



Figure 2. View of Campus Looking Southeast toward Cobb Hall, circa 1905

University of Chicago Photographic Archives, SCRC, apf2-02729. <http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf2-02729.xml>

of the community beyond its walls—those unspecified surroundings could be anything. The absence is strategic, a portrait of the ivory tower, flourishing in its isolation. While such disengagement may be the matrix of scholarly endeavor—the ground of “objectivity”—it also speaks of the unworldliness of the university and of a history of ambivalent relations to its neighbors.²³

The neo-Gothic style and the quadrangle plan also allowed “adaptability and variety within a controlled plan.”²⁴ The trustees knew they could not complete the ambitious project all at once, but Cobb’s plan gave them confidence that the campus would remain architecturally consistent when money became available to fund new construction.²⁵ Even though the buildings were designed by five different architects/firms²⁶ over forty years, they maintain a consistency and continuity that would have been impossible without the framework of Cobb’s neo-Gothic plan. The plan’s execution was haphazard and uneven, with large plots intended for future buildings creating gaps in the theoretically impenetrable fortress, but like many things at the University of Chicago, what mattered was not execution, but the underlying ideas and theories:

The first plan, and even the second and third, were fantasies of an ideal university. They would undergo many changes. But the idea of a plan, the notion that the growth of the University would be stylistically consistent, contained, and articulated—safe from the

23. Michael Sorkin Studio, *Other Plans*, 9.

24. Block, *The Uses of Gothic*, 13.

25. Ibid.

26. Henry Ives Cobb; Dwight Heald Perkins; Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge; Holabird and Roche; and Coolidge and Hodgdon. See “UChicago Heritage Map,” University of Chicago Facilities Services, accessed March 15, 2017, http://facilities.uchicago.edu/about/uchicago_heritage_map.

whims and caprices of individual donors—would persist, promising, as Martin Ryerson said in his report to the trustees, “beauty, simplicity, and stability” (fig. 2).²⁷

Continued Development and the South Campus Plan

Though Cobb’s plan was never fully realized, the University of Chicago’s leaders stuck to the plan’s aesthetic and structural parameters until 1932.²⁸ The construction of the main quadrangle began around Cobb Hall at 58th Street and Ellis Avenue, which opened in October of 1892; Gates, Blake, and Goodspeed Halls were also completed that year. The quadrangles took shape with the completion of such iconic buildings as Hutchinson Commons and the Reynolds Club (1903), the William Rainey Harper Memorial Library (1912), and Bond Chapel (1926).²⁹ During this period, the university also began to acquire land surrounding the quadrangles on both sides of the Midway Plaisance, a ninety-acre parkland that had been connected to the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition.³⁰

Trustee Frederic C. Woodward published a report in 1927 calling for the radical expansion of the campus housing system, as only 8.3 percent of undergraduates lived in residence halls.³¹ Woodward argued that unless students were living, socializing, and studying together in the same physical spaces it would be “impossible to achieve the social solidarity

27. Block, *The Uses of Gothic*, 13, 224–27.

28. Editor’s note: International House (1932) and the Field House (1932) were the final buildings constructed in a “minimal Gothic” style, streamlined by art deco and modernist design. See Block, *The Uses of Gothic*, 166, 180–85.

29. Block, *The Uses of Gothic*, 224–26.

30. “Midway Plaisance,” Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed May 6, 2018, <https://tclf.org/landscapes/midway-plaisance>.

31. John W. Boyer, *The University of Chicago: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 208.

and *esprit de corps* which are essential to the carrying out of a well-rounded educational program.” Trustee Harold H. Swift shared Woodward’s commitment and in 1927 he commissioned Philadelphia architect Charles Z. Klauder to draft a hypothetical south campus plan. Located between 60th and 61st Streets and Ellis and University Avenues and modeled on the Harkness Memorial Quadrangle at Yale, Klauder’s neo-Gothic plan included a tower, a library, a large central office and classroom building, and residence halls surrounding the tower that would have housed two thousand students (fig. 3). For administrative and financial reasons, the plan was scaled back to focus on residence halls and only Burton-Judson Courts, which opened in autumn of 1931 and housed 390 male undergraduates, was built.³²

In its first forty years, neo-Gothic architecture kept the university cloistered from the rapidly growing metropolis of Chicago. But the work of its own researchers, who used the city as a laboratory to study social processes in the 1920s and 1930s, suggested that the university’s aloof relationship to the city would have to change.³³ By the mid-1930s the economic and social shifts occurring in Hyde Park and beyond would eventually force the university to interact with its surroundings in unprecedented ways.

“The Problem of Our Property”: Racially Restrictive Covenants, 1933–1948

The Great Depression and the Great Migration

The University of Chicago’s relationship to its peripheries experienced a major change during the Great Depression. A 1933 survey concluded that the university’s neo-Gothic buildings were “educational obsolete” for new disciplines, especially the sciences, and their maintenance drained money

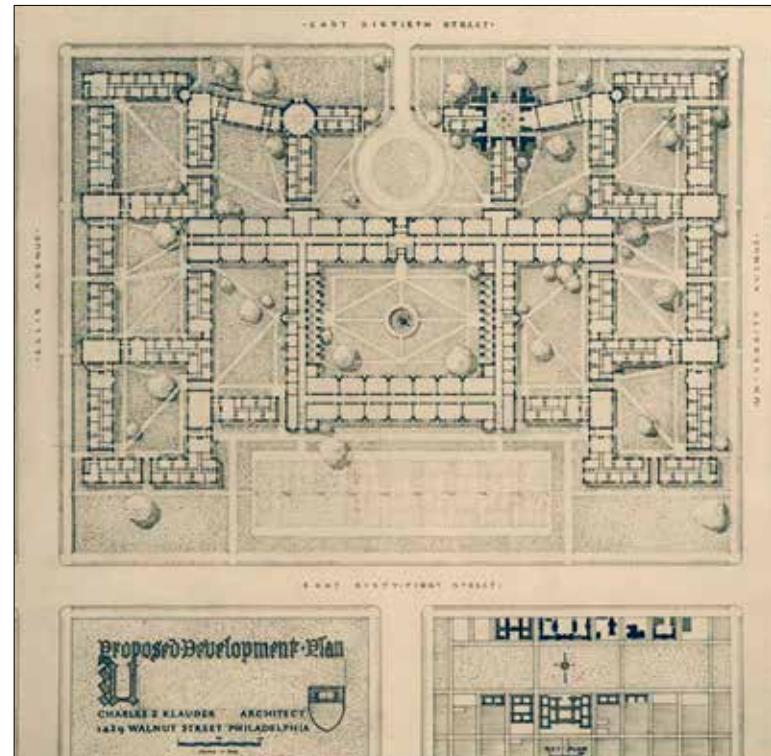


Figure 3. Site Plan of the College, South Campus, Charles Z. Klauder, Architect, circa 1927

University of Chicago Photographic Archives, SCRC, apf2-01885, <http://photoarchive.lib.uchicago.edu/db.xqy?one=apf2-01885.xml>

32. Ibid., 209–10.

33. Haar, *The City as Campus*, 44.

away from education during difficult economic times. Hyde Park historian Jean Block noted: "When the University resumed building after World War II, the designs would be in a contemporary style."³⁴

The early 1930s also saw the beginning of the university's attempts to control its surrounding neighborhoods by financial supporting racially restrictive covenants, which are contracts among property owners that prevent the lease, purchase, or occupation of their properties by specific groups of people.³⁵ They first gained widespread use in Chicago white neighborhoods in the late 1920s as a reaction to the Great Migration, when millions of blacks moved north in search of better employment opportunities.³⁶ In 1927, the Chicago Real Estate Board began a campaign to promote the use of racially restrictive covenants, and by the mid-1930s they were in widespread use across the South Side (fig. 4).

The University Steps In

In 1933 Frank O'Brien, the vice president of McKey & Poague realtors and a university alumnus, asked the university to finance legal resistance to the racial integration of the Washington Park Subdivision.³⁷ The subdivision, located directly southwest of campus, was at the center of a legal battle surrounding the use of racially restrictive covenants.³⁸ The university

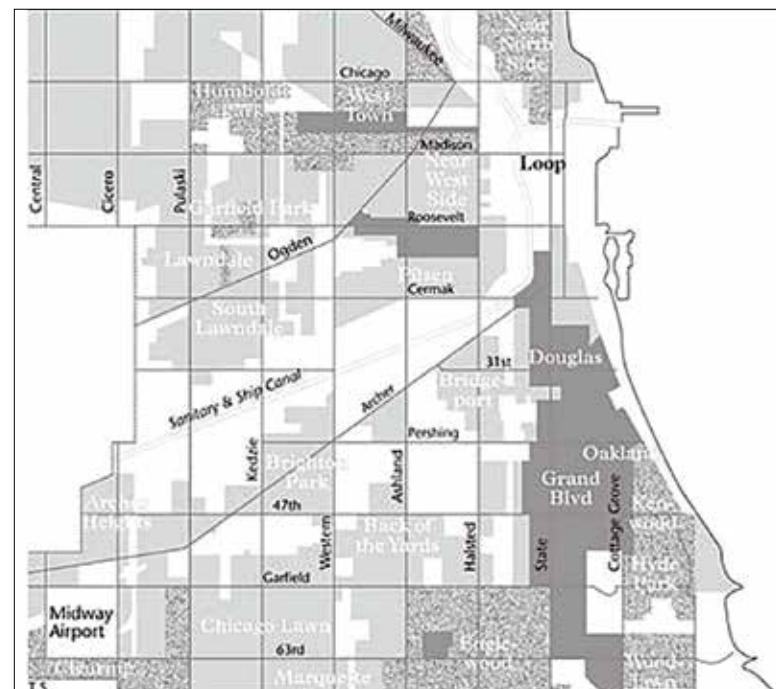
34. Block, "The Uses of Gothic," 189–90.

35. Arnold R. Hirsch, "Restrictive Covenants," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, ed. James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, Janice L. Reiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1067.html>.

36. James R. Grossman, "Great Migration," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/545.html>.

37. Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940–1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 144.

38. Amanda Seligman, "Washington Park Subdivision," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1320.html>.



- Predominantly white areas with racial covenants
- Predominantly white areas without racial covenants
- Predominantly nonwhite areas
- Nonresidential areas

Figure 4. Racially Restrictive Covenants on Chicago's South Side, 1947

(based on a map by Robert Weaver; source: Newberry Library)
The Encyclopedia of Chicago, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1067.html>

quickly stepped in to reorganize the existing property owners' association into the Woodlawn Property Owners League and also created similar associations in other surrounding neighborhoods: Hyde Park, Oakland, and Kenwood. Between 1933 and 1947 the university spent \$110,923.72 on "community interests," \$83,597.46 of which supported legal assistance for the defense of racially restrictive covenants.³⁹

The *Chicago Defender*, an influential black-owned newspaper on the South Side, criticized the university for supporting racially restrictive covenants, but the university stood by its decisions and denied allegations of racism. In 1937 University President Robert Maynard Hutchins responded to the *Defender's* charges: "an examination of the University's record will, I am sure, convince any fair-minded person that, in determining the policies of the institution, neither the Trustees nor the administrative offices are actuated by race prejudices." But at the same time, Hutchins stated that the university "must endeavor to stabilize its neighborhood as an area in which its students and faculty will be content to live," and that residents of Hyde Park and nearby communities had the right to "invoke and defend" racially restrictive covenants as legal instruments.⁴⁰

The Supreme Court ruled in *Hansberry v. Lee* (1940) that restrictive covenants in the Washington Park Subdivision were unenforceable and ruled in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948) that all racial covenants were wholly unenforceable.⁴¹ These rulings accelerated "racial succession" in numerous South Side neighborhoods in the 1940s and 1950s. The university worried about the rapidly advancing "dividing line between the colored and white neighborhoods" and turned to methods other than racially restrictive covenants to curtail what it perceived to be a serious threat to the institution.⁴²

39. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 144–45.

40. Ibid.

41. Seligman, "Washington Park Subdivision"; Hirsch, "Restrictive Covenants."

42. Quoted in Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 146. (Memo from Donald W.

The pull of forces beyond the university's walls—racial tensions, the Great Migration, and fear of "racial succession"—ended the university's cloistered isolation and spurred it to action. Financing and organizing neighborhood groups that supported segregation were indirect interventions, but, they nonetheless show a major change in the university's attitudes toward its surroundings. Hutchins's rationalization for these policies is also significant in that he explicitly states that the university is obligated to "stabilize" its surroundings in order to make them amenable to the institution. Though its strategies would soon shift, the University of Chicago's earliest forays into neighborhood intervention lay the foundation for what was to come.

"Tear It Down and Begin Over Again": Urban Renewal, 1949–1962

American Cities and Urban Institutions after World War II

American cities experienced large-scale changes after World War II that would eventually lead to urban renewal. The legacy of the Great Depression was still palpable in many American cities, with many buildings, including in Hyde Park, in disrepair.⁴³ New Deal programs, such as the Federal Housing Act of 1934, brought home ownership within reach of millions of Americans. However, these programs discriminated against minorities, which channeled funding from old inner-city neighborhoods to new white suburbs. These policies widened the wealth and resources gaps between black and white Americans, facilitated the process of white

Murphy to J. A. Cunningham, 31 December 1948, "Statement on Community Interests," p. 8, Presidents' Papers, 1945–1950, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Libraries [SCRC in subsequent footnotes].)

43. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 346.

flight, and decimated the tax bases of many major American cities.⁴⁴ The end of racially restrictive covenants and the influx of black residents before and after World War II to northern cities often led to predatory real-estate practices, including the illegal conversions of six-flat apartment buildings into twenty-four unit “rooming houses,” which were dangerous, unsanitary, and overpriced.⁴⁵ Many white residents of Hyde Park were worried about these conditions and sought to take action. Some groups, such as the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference, were progressive; established in 1949, its initial goals were to “keep whites from moving away, to welcome the new Negro residents into all community activities, and to maintain community property standards.”⁴⁶ Other conservative groups, such as the South East Chicago Commission, sought to maintain the white status quo.

Confronting “Racial Secession” through Alternative Means

Even before *Shelley v. Kraemer* ended racially restrictive covenants in 1948, University President Hutchins was confronting race in both the university’s admissions policies and property ownership. Hutchins took a progressive stance on admissions, arguing to his advisors and trustees: “A university is supposed to lead, not to follow... a university is supposed to do what is right, and damn the consequences.”⁴⁷ Hutchins advocated for the “absolutely indiscriminate selection of all students who meet our

44. George Lipsitz, “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the ‘White’ Problem in American Studies,” *American Quarterly* 47, no. 10 (September 1995): 372–73.

45. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 346.

46. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 1948.

47. Mary Ann Dzuback, *Robert M. Hutchins: Portrait of an Educator* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 144.

intellectual and moral requirements.”⁴⁸ Although Hutchins sought to eliminate discrimination in university admissions, he was unable to reconcile his egalitarian principles with the problems surrounding the university’s property and suggested a separation of academic and real-estate policies: “I have always been perplexed by the problem of our property on the south side... I think [the academic and real estate policies] are different, but don’t ask me why.”⁴⁹

By the mid-1940s the black population in the area immediately surrounding the university was increasing: Hyde Park had 573 black residents in 1940 and 1,757 in 1950, most of whom had arrived after 1948. In response, the University of Chicago decided to expand its real estate investments and engage in urban planning itself.⁵⁰ These methods would become the University of Chicago’s primary means of shaping the built environment over the next two decades.

The 1949 Treasurer’s Report

One of the first university documents to deal with “racial succession” in the wake of *Shelley v. Kraemer* was a report by the Treasurer’s Office in 1949. The report said that the “forces of deterioration” were greater than the university’s or nearby property owners’ efforts to “stabilize conditions,” and the university would need to take more drastic actions, especially in the area south of the Midway Plaisance. The report claimed that the “invasion” and decline of the area from 63rd to 67th Streets had “advanced too far to be checked” and that the costs of rehabilitating the area between 60th and 63rd Streets would be “more than the University can assume.” The report recommended that the university acquire the strip of land between 60th and 61st Streets to “serve as a buffer between the university and the deteriorating neighborhood to the south.” The

48. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 146.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., 139, 147.

report also contained suggestions for areas north of the Midway Plaisance, including an allotment of \$200,000 per year to eliminate “the most undesirable buildings and residents” west of Ellis Avenue, with the eventual goal of university ownership of the entire area and the removal of small “pockets” of blight between 55th and 59th Streets east of University Avenue.⁵¹

This report is significant for several reasons. First, it showed the university’s willingness to intervene in the urban environment beyond its earlier financial and legal support of neighborhood groups. Second, it indicated the university’s desire to further insulate itself by creating spatial buffer zones against outside conditions. Third, it provided a template for the large-scale urban renewal interventions that the university, with support from the city and the federal government, would carry out within the subsequent two decades.

The South East Chicago Commission

A turning point in community organizing occurred on March 17, 1952, when an armed man held a psychology graduate student hostage in her apartment for five hours and attempted to rape her. At an emergency meeting in Mandel Hall ten days later citizens condemned the police for failing to patrol Hyde Park adequately. In response, the university established the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) in June of 1952; the university provided \$15,000 of the initial \$30,000 budget, with the assumption that community members would contribute the other half. University Chancellor Lawrence Kimpton asked Julian H. Levi, a graduate of the College and the Law School, to serve as the executive director of the SECC in the autumn of 1952. The chancellor needed someone who could increase patrols by the Chicago police in Hyde Park and develop a “highly complex set of interventions.”⁵²

51. Ibid., 148.

52. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 347; editor’s note: Julian H. Levy was the

The SECC used its institutional connections to lobby for passage of laws favorable to urban renewal. The Urban Community Conservation Act of 1953 made “slum prevention” a public concern that warranted the use of public funds and allowed the City of Chicago to exercise eminent domain.⁵³ Chancellor Kimpton deemed the act “of vital importance to the University and its community.”⁵⁴ The 1941 Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act allowed three residents to form a private corporation; once they bought at least 60 percent of a designated area, they could exercise eminent domain to acquire the rest of the area.⁵⁵ Levi lobbied successfully in 1953 for an amendment to the act that would allow a neighborhood redevelopment corporation to exercise eminent domain if they obtained the consent of 60 percent of the property owners of a given area, without having to acquire a 60 percent ownership share.⁵⁶ The University of Chicago now had a powerful tool in its crusade against the encroachment of “blight.”

Urban Renewal

The four phases of Hyde Park’s urban renewal were the Hyde Park A & B Urban Renewal Project, the South West Hyde Park Redevelopment Corporation Plan, the Urban Renewal Plan, and the South Campus Plan. Cumulatively, these plans called for the demolition of buildings on 193 acres (20 percent of the total acreage); cost \$120 million (\$730 million when adjusted for inflation); displaced more than 30,000 people;

brother of Edward H. Levy, a Law School faculty member who would become president of the university (1968–75).

53. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 150.

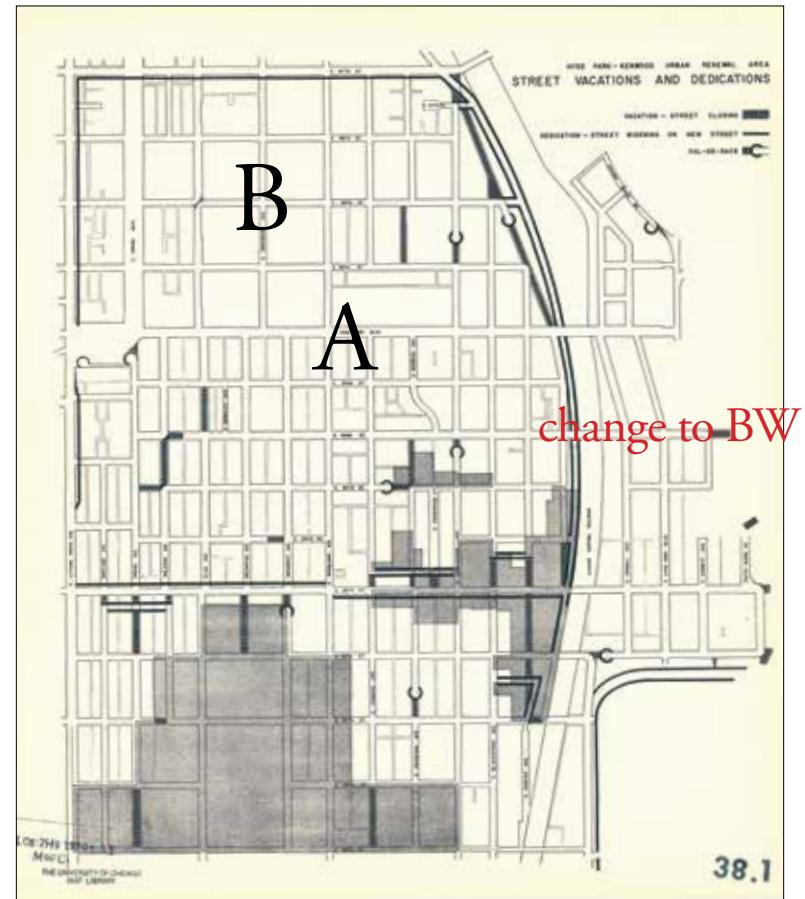
54. Quoted in Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 151. (Lawrence A. Kimpton to Walker Butler, 1 July 1953, Butler Papers, SCRC.)

55. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 151.

56. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 348.

and enabled the University of Chicago to add 41 acres to its campus.⁵⁷ The plans and policies of urban renewal, roughly from 1954 through 1962, radically changed the urban landscape and social dynamics of the neighborhoods surrounding the University of Chicago and demonstrated the extent to which the university responded to perceived threats by exerting greater control over the built environment.

Hyde Park A & B was launched in 1954 and aimed to clear and redevelop approximately 48 acres (fig. 5). The project stretched along the Illinois Central tracks from 54th to 57th Streets and on 55th Street from Lake Park to Kimbark Avenues, including a small section on 54th Street near Dorchester Avenue. The intent was to replace “blighted” buildings with new residences and businesses (fig. 6). It was financed with approximately \$3.6 million in city and state funds and \$6.5 million in federal funds.⁵⁸ The Chicago Land Clearance Commission, a city agency, managed the project. The city bought the land in 1957, demolished buildings, and sold the land to a New York developer, Webb and Knapp, which built townhouses along both sides of 55th Street, the twin towers of I. M. Pei’s University Apartments in a medium strip on 55th Street, and a shopping center at 55th and Lake Park Avenue. The project relocated 892 families who were 72 percent white, 18 percent black, and 10 percent Hispanic or Asian.⁵⁹ Afterward, the character of Hyde Park changed dramatically. Many small business owners agreed to the project, under the assumption that they would be able to relocate within Hyde Park,



**Figure 5. Proposed Street Vacations and Dedications,
Hyde Park A & B Urban Renewal Project**

Map Collection, University of Chicago Library

57. “The Urban Renewal Period in Hyde Park and Kenwood,” Hyde Park Historical Society, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.hydepark.org/historicpres/urbanrenewal.htm#opening>.

58. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 349.

59. Susan O’Connor Davis and John Vinci, *Chicago’s Historic Hyde Park* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 301–2, 308.

but found themselves displaced by the private developer who decided the size and tenancy of the new shopping center.⁶⁰

The Southwest Hyde Park Redevelopment Corporation guided the second phase of Hyde Park's urban renewal. The University of Chicago created the corporation and used the 1953 revision of the Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Act to take eminent domain of an area from 55th to 59th Streets and from Cottage Grove to Woodlawn Avenues (excluding property already occupied by the University of Chicago campus). Most of the 54 acres were marked for "rehabilitation"; only the 14.5 acres between 55th and 56th Streets and Cottage Grove and Ellis Avenues were slated for demolition and university acquisition.⁶¹

The third phase, the Urban Renewal Plan, was the largest and most comprehensive. It was drawn up and approved in 1958 and construction began in 1960 (fig. 7). In contrast with previous "slum clearance" efforts, the new plan called for some demolition, but also modernization of aging parks and streets. It covered 855.8 acres from 47th to 58th Streets and from Cottage Grove Avenue to Lake Michigan. Of the total acreage, 105.8 were subject to either total or "spot" clearance, including 638 structures containing 6,147 units slated for demolition.⁶² It also called for the creation and modernization of low- and high-density residential areas, parks, schools, residential and commercial areas, and additional amenities. The plan relocated 4,371 families (1,837 white and 2,534 black). The university, by way of the SECC, drafted the plan and community input was absent until the final stages.⁶³

The fourth and final phase of the University of Chicago's involvement in urban renewal was the South Campus Plan. Several new buildings increased the university's footprint south of Midway Plaisance: the Laird

60. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 158.

61. Ibid., 159.

62. Ibid., 161.

63. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 351.



Figure 6. Fifty-fifth Street from Lake Park Avenue looking West, before and after Urban Renewal

Hyde Park Historical Society, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.hydepark.org/historicpres/urbanrenewal.htm#opening>

Bell Law Triangle (1960), the New Graduate Residence Hall (1962), and the Edelstone Center (1966).⁶⁴ The university also followed through on one suggestion in the 1949 Treasurer's Report to acquire a strip of land between 60th and 61st Streets and between Cottage Grove and Stony Island Avenues in order to create a "buffer zone" between the campus and Woodlawn immediately to the south. The university convinced the city to purchase all private property in the strip and then sell the land to the university.⁶⁵ The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), a group of activist residents who opposed the university's encroachment into their neighborhood, organized fierce resistance to the plan. The university eventually reached an agreement with TWO in 1964 to not buy land south of 61st Street.⁶⁶ (The university's operation and expansion of the Woodlawn Charter School at 63rd Street and Woodlawn Avenue⁶⁷ calls into question whether it intends to keep the agreement.)

Prior to urban renewal, the university had exerted influence in the community through covert financial support of racially restrictive covenants. With urban renewal its strategies were outwardly apparent. The university used the SECC to exert influence and to create a "controlled, integrated environment"⁶⁸ in the neighborhoods surrounding campus.

64. UChicago Heritage Map," accessed March 15, 2017, http://facilities.uchicago.edu/about/uchicago_heritage_map.

65. Memo from G. L. Lee re: Purchase of Parcel 5A of the 60th and Cottage Grove Project, 3 April 1972, box 80, folder 6, Levi Administration Records, Office of the President, SCRC.

66. Carrie Breitbach, "The Woodlawn Organization," in 68/08 The Inheritance of Politics and the Politics of Inheritance: A Local Reader on the Legacy of 1968 in Chicago," special issue, *AREA Chicago* 7 (2008), accessed March 15, 2017, <http://areachicago.org/the-woodlawn-organization>.

67. Ben Andrew, "University Buys Land for Charter School Expansion," *Chicago Maroon*, February 23, 2016, <https://www.chicagomaroon.com/2016/02/23/university-buys-land-for-charter-school-expansion>.

68. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 137.

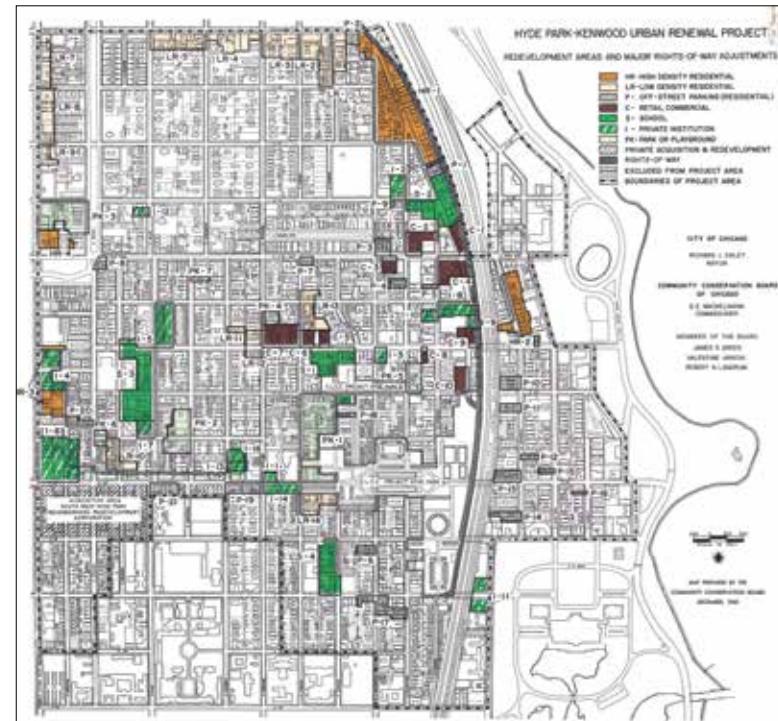


Figure 7. Hyde Park-Kenwood Urban Renewal Project, 1958

Map Collection, University of Chicago Library.

These policies had a profound effect on the populations and the built environment of Hyde Park. Thousands of families and dozens of small businesses were displaced between 1953 and 1962, and the physical legacies of these decisions are still tangible in Hyde Park's urban morphology. They also affected other cities. Julian Levi's report in the *Casebook on Campus Planning and Institutional Development* would influence urban renewal initiatives across the country.⁶⁹

“A Conspicuous Presence”: The Birth of the UCPD and other Post-Renewal Interventions, 1963–1998

New Types of Spatial Interventions after Urban Renewal

The SECC was also involved in crime prevention and served as a liaison between citizens and city police officers. By the early 1960s the SECC's crime prevention efforts were not enough and the university became increasingly involved in policing. The expansion of the university security force entailed a spectrum of spatial interventions: patrolling areas beyond the boundaries of campus, increasing the numbers and powers of its personnel, using private campus shuttle buses, installing an emergency phone network, and encouraging officers to create “invisible borders” around campus through racially targeted policing.⁷⁰ The expansion of policing went hand-in-hand with the expansion of off-campus university-owned housing. The university rationalized the

69. Julian H. Levi. “Expanding the University of Chicago,” in *Casebook on Campus Planning and Institutional Development: Ten Institutions, How They Did It*, ed. John B. Rork and Leslie F. Robbins (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1962), 107–27.

70. Joshua A. Segal, “‘We Must Do Something Ourselves’: Police Reform and Police Privatization in Chicago’s Hyde Park, 1960–1970,” in *Chicago Studies*, ed. David A. Spatz (Chicago: University of Chicago College, 2008), 216, 238.

expansion of their policing jurisdiction under the terms of its mandate to protect members of the university community. In contrast to the police force, buffer zones, and off-campus exclusively student housing, the University of Chicago's Office of Community Affairs (OCA), established in 1974, signaled the university's willingness to engage with neighboring communities. The OCA is best known for the Neighborhood Schools Program, which places university students as volunteer tutors and teaching assistants in local public schools.⁷¹

Early History of University Security

In the early 1930s university security was informal; academic divisions would hire one or two security guards who often also worked as a building's janitor.⁷² As concerns about “blight” and “racial succession” began to percolate in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the university formalized and expanded security. Between 1949 and 1958 the university doubled its security force from eighteen to thirty-six. The university also increased communications with the Chicago Police Department (CPD) through the SECC. In 1952 the SECC hired alumnus Don Blackiston as a full-time law enforcement officer and liaison between citizens and the police. The SECC pressed the CPD to respond promptly to complaints, no matter how trivial. Blackiston mainly “regulat[ed] the social character of the neighborhood” and maintained order, which included urging police to handle noise complaints or “racial undesirables,” rather than dealing with violent crime. Throughout the 1950s the SECC responded to Hyde Parkers’ perceptions of increasing crime by increasing police patrols and maintaining strong cooperation with the CPD. However, this changed in 1960 with the appointment of Orlando W. Wilson as the superintendent of the CPD. Wilson made a series of comprehensive

71. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 452.

72. Jordan Larson, “A Brief History of the UCPD,” *Chicago Maroon*, May 25, 2012, <http://chicagomaroon.com/2012/05/25/a-brief-history-of-the-ucpd>.

reforms that emphasized statistical analysis and reduced patrols in safer neighborhoods, such as Hyde Park.⁷³

In response to Wilson's reforms, the university made two changes in its security policies. First, the university took over its own security interests⁷⁴ and hired fifteen Chicago policemen to patrol Hyde Park in their off-duty time.⁷⁵ Second, it expanded policing to include both the campus and the neighborhood.⁷⁶ The university's assumption of policing beyond the campus core indicated a new understanding of its role in the urban environment—as an institution that could use resources to control both the space around it and the people within it.

Spatial Policies and Security Practices along 61st Street

The University of Chicago created and expanded its security forces to protect its reputation, property, and people. These forces now operated beyond the boundaries of the campus, affected residents not affiliated with the university, and highlighted the tensions between the rights of the public and the interests of the institution. University President Edward Levi argued that perceptions about crime would hamper recruiting efforts: "The whole future of the University depends on [the reduction of crime]."⁷⁷ The neighborhood immediately to the south of campus was a particular concern. Woodlawn's population change from 86 percent

73. Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 214, 216, 218, 221–3.

74. Ibid., 226.

75. "University Hires Off-duty Policemen to Replace Patrols Wilson With-drew," *Hyde Park Herald*, October 12, 1960.

76. Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 223.

77. Quoted in Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 229. (Letter from Edward Levi to Jack Wiener, 28 May 1968, File "U of C Security Committee," South East Chicago Commission, Unprocessed, In-office Papers.)

white in 1950 to 86 percent black by 1960.⁷⁸ The university engaged in racially biased "proactive" policing along the southern edge of campus. As early as 1963 security officers were encouraged to follow aggressive preventative action and to stop and question any "suspect persons" that they encountered on patrol. Tony Eidson, the university's security director, wrote that these policies were meant to "remind potential wrong-doers that we know they are here and that we are ready and willing to deal with them."⁷⁹ These policies were about more than just preventing crime; university administrators viewed the presence of young black men on campus as a security threat, regardless of their involvement in criminal activity. Between January 1 and August 31, 1965, 79.5 percent of the 541 persons detained by university security were under eighteen years old, and 90.4 percent of them were black.⁸⁰ Blackiston and Levi of the SECC were both alarmed by "the *mobility* of younger age groups" (Blackiston) and that they "originate from the south and, incidentally, on foot" (Levi).⁸¹ Administrators sought to reinforce the boundaries between Woodlawn and the University by restricting mobility of black adolescents between the two areas.⁸²

78. John Hall Fish, *Black Power/White Control: The Struggle of the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 12.

79. Quoted in Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 234. (Memo from Eidson to All full-time men and extra patrolmen, re: Street stops and aggressive patrol, 15 April 1965, Folder "Police-Campus Security, 1965," box 14, series 39, Unprocessed Presidents' Papers, SCRC.)

80. Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 232–35.

81. Emphasis in original. Quoted in Segal, "We Must Do Something Ourselves," 233. (Memo from Blackiston to Julian Levi, re: The Crime Situation in the Woodlawn Area, 6 April 1965, Folder "Police-Campus Security, 1965," box 14, series 39, Unprocessed Presidents' Papers, SCRC; letter from Julian Levi to Jack Wiener, 4 June 1968, File "U of C Security Committee," South East Chicago Commission.)

82. Ibid.

As mentioned earlier, university administrators had recommended a southern buffer zone in 1949, the South Campus Plan was first proposed in July of 1960, and the City of Chicago adopted ordinances in 1964 that approved the acquisition of land between 60th and 61st Streets and Cottage Grove and Stony Island, under the umbrella of the Cottage Grove redevelopment project.⁸³ The city would sell most of this land to the University of Chicago at \$1.10 per square foot. However, there were numerous “unresolved matters” that prevented the city from entering into a contract with the university to sell the entire tract at once.⁸⁴ The city agreed to sell the university particular parcels separately, but by 1972 the university had only purchased one parcel, 8A, which was part of an addition to the American Bar Association at 60th Street and Woodlawn Avenue (now the Harris School of Public Policy Studies).⁸⁵

Perhaps because of the slow pace of purchasing land in the southern buffer zone, the university created culs-de-sac in the 1970s to restrict “free and easy access”⁸⁶ and to “provid[e] definite boundary limits to the campus.”⁸⁷ These barriers remain in place today. University Avenue is

83. Haar, *The City as Campus*, 350; memo from G. L. Lee re: Purchase of Parcel 5A of the 60th and Cottage Grove Project, 3 April 1972, Levi Administration Records, Office of the President, box 80, folder 6, SCRC.

84. Memo from G. L. Lee, Levi Administration Records, SCRC.

85. Memo from G. L. Lee re: Purchase of land in the area bounded by 60th Street, 61st Street, Stony Island Avenue and the Illinois Central Right of Way (Parcels 1A, 2A, and 2B of the 60th and Cottage Grove) and the lease of said land to the Woodlawn Organization, 3 April 1972. Levi Administration Records, box 80, folder 6, SCRC.

86. Quoted in Segal, “We Must Do Something Ourselves,” 233. (Memo from T. W. Harrison to Julian Levi, 23 January 1961, Folder “Police–Campus Security, 1951–1962,” box 14, series 39, Unprocessed Presidents Papers, SCRC.)

87. Quoted in Segal, “We Must Do Something Ourselves,” 234. (Letter from Julian Levi to Jack Wiener, 4 June 1968, Folder “U of C Security Committee,” South East Chicago Commission.)

cut off from 61st Street by a sidewalk and a buffer augmented with trees and shrubbery that is no more than twenty feet wide; Kimbark Avenue becomes a dead-end approximately halfway into the block; Kenwood Avenue is split into a driveway going into a parking lot from the north and a cul-de-sac from the south; Blackstone exists only as a small cul-de-sac between 60th and 61st. In a 1968 campus map all four avenues ran straight through to 61st Street. However, by 1977 these street adjustments had been implemented (fig. 8).⁸⁸

Additionally, there is a high concentration of parking lots in the south campus strip (fig. 9). There are thirteen parking facilities between Cottage Grove and Stony Island Avenues: two surface lots on 60th Street facing the Midway Plaisance, four lots along the northern edge of 61st Street, six lots mid-block between 60th and 61st Streets, and a ten-story parking garage at the northwest corner of 61st Street and Drexel Avenue. These parking lots are a conspicuous presence on the southern edge of campus and create an urban “dead zone.”

Recently, the university has lessen the severity of this dead zone. The southern side of Renee Granville–Grossman Residential Commons (2009), located at the northeast corner of 61st Street and Ellis Avenue, has sloped roofs and is only five stories tall at street level. This brings the southern side of the building closer to the scale of the apartment buildings across the street and makes the nine-story building feel less imposing. The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts (2012), located at 60th Street between Ingleside and Drexel Avenues, has a driveway and southern entrance intended to signify openness and connection with the community.

Recent efforts notwithstanding, though, 61st Street still marks the great divide between University and City. Its land use and morphology demonstrate the university’s longstanding fear of crime seeping into

88. 1977 and 1994 campus maps shows that Ingleside Avenue was also blocked halfway through; Ingleside currently runs straight through, but I was unable to determine when it was reconnected.

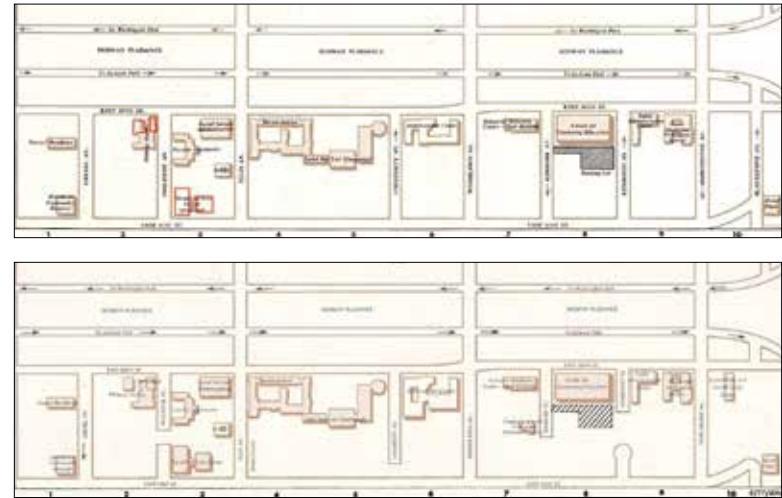


Figure 8. Campus Maps of 60th–61st Streets, 1968 (top) and 1977 (bottom)

Map Collection, University of Chicago Library

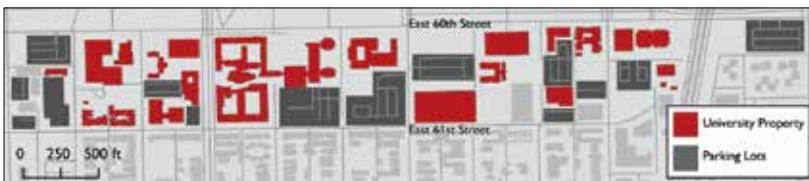


Figure 9. Parking Lots between 60th and 61st Streets

(map by author)

campus from Woodlawn and the deep connections between the university's policing strategies and its attempts to shape its environment.

Security: Policies, Controversies, and Expansions, 1968–1999

In 1968 Captain Michael J. Delaney, a thirty-six-year veteran of the CPD, was appointed to head campus security.⁸⁹ Delaney reorganized security into a more robust police force.⁹⁰ Jonathan Kleinbard, the University of Chicago's first vice president for community affairs, understood that the expansion of the force was not merely more officers, but was a comprehensive change in a community. He wrote to his counterpart at Harvard University:

As you know, security and all that word implies is a many-faceted effort here. It might also be called "neighborhood," since so many things seem to go together—schools, real estate, lighting, transportation, the amenities of the district (bookstores, shops, restaurants); and I suppose the view is that every thing [sic] that happens has some effect and must be viewed in that way—whether it is the opening of a building, the closing of an [Illinois Central] station or the failure of the City to repair roads or lights, and on and on. This includes, of course, the deployment of the City police in the neighborhood, mortgage funds and the relationship with financial institutions. I say all of this because I would not want to leave the impression that anyone believes that "security problems" can be handled merely by handling one aspect of neighborhood issues.⁹¹

89. "Police Youth Director to Head Larger U of C Security Unit: Chosen by Advisory Group," *Hyde Park Herald*, January 17, 1968.

90. Larson, "A Brief History of the UCPD."

91. Letter from Jonathan Kleinbard to Charles U. Daly, 2 January 1974, Levi Administration Records, box 80, folder 6, SCRC.

Kleinbard's comprehensive view of security shows that a university's "security problems" are closely tied to the built environment.

The University of Chicago's private police force continued to expand throughout the subsequent decades. When Leary was appointed in 1968 the force had eleven patrol cars and seventy-five emergency telephones, one of the first such systems in the United States.⁹² By 1980 the force had thirteen squad cars, 107 emergency phones, over one hundred officers, and its patrol area extended from 47th to 61st Streets, and Cottage Grove Avenue to Lake Shore Drive.⁹³ Expansion did not occur without opposition. In 1986 two student groups, the Organization of Black Students and the Black Graduate Forum, accused university security officers of racially biased policing for regularly stopping black students without cause, questioning them, and asking for student identification. Mark Graham, the security department director, denied these claims: "It is not happening... we have not received any evidence of it."⁹⁴ However, after meeting with the groups' representatives, University President Hanna Holborn Gray agreed to form a seven-member committee to evaluate complaints, primarily related to civil rights, against university security officers, as well as how those complaints are handled.⁹⁵ Gray's committee provided a way to hold university security officers accountable and was possibly the first institutional acknowledgement of the inequitable behaviors of its security officers.

The university appointed Rudolf Nimocks, the former deputy superintendent and thirty-three-year veteran of the CPD, as chief of the

92. "O'Leary Appointed Director of Security," *Hyde Park Herald*, June 21, 1972.

93. "Our Added Safety Factor: The University Police," *Hyde Park Herald*, April 30, 1980.

94. "Blacks at University Protest Harassment," *Hyde Park Herald*, May 7, 1986.

95. "Committee Forms to Study UC Security Complaints," *Hyde Park Herald*, October 29, 1986.

university security force in 1989.⁹⁶ One of his first actions was to enhance the status of the university's force from security officers to police officers certified by the state.⁹⁷ The 1989 Illinois Private College Campus Police Act allowed private universities to establish formal police forces with peace officer status.⁹⁸ The law allowed the University of Chicago to "broaden the department's authority to maintain public order" and enabled the agency's transition from security force to full-fledged police department.⁹⁹ Nimocks acknowledged that the university's new police department primarily attended to matters relating to university faculty, staff, and students, but he added, "any citizen who calls within the [university's] geographic area gets the same response from us. We are concerned about the whole neighborhood... you cannot logically separate one from the other."¹⁰⁰ Nimocks's remarks are reminiscent of Kleinbard's 1974 comments about the ties between university and neighborhood security. To Nimocks, the university and Hyde Park are more than just neighbors; they are essentially one and the same. This socio-spatial understanding has guided university policing up to the present.

96. "Deputy Police Supt. to Take Charge of UC Security Force," *Hyde Park Herald*, May 10, 1989.

97. Jordan Larson, "A Brief History of the UCPD."

98. Private College Campus Police Act of 1989, 110 ILCS 1020, General Assembly of Illinois, accessed March 5, 2017, <http://ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1176&ChapterID=18>.

99. "University Police Enforce Law throughout Neighborhood," *Hyde Park Herald*, September 12, 1990.

100. *Ibid.*

“We’re Not an Island Here”: From Master Plans to the Present, 1999–2017

1999 Campus Plan

In 1999 the University of Chicago commissioned the architecture, planning, and design firm NBBJ to update its master plan. The commission asked for short- and long-term improvements for further expansion and development within the context of its “built-up historic campus.” The university wanted to further the “strategic directives” of University President Hugo Sonnenschein: become a “top-five” university in all academic divisions, increase undergraduate enrollment, and improve the quality of campus life. The plan’s architectural component would derive from the “original design intent” of the campus and “reinforces the quadrangle as an organizational principle.” NBBJ recommended the “careful integration” of new structures into the present campus-neighborhood land-use pattern and shared campus-neighborhood amenities, such as recreation and retail facilities. The plan identified \$500 million worth of improvements to the University of Chicago campus and established guidelines to ensure that future development was “sympathetic to the Gothic legacy of the existing campus.”¹⁰¹

Education

Education is a core component of the University of Chicago’s community outreach efforts. In 1964 the Student Woodlawn Area Program (SWAP) connected undergraduate tutors with elementary and high school students in Woodlawn.¹⁰² In 1968 the Office of Special Programs organized a

101. “Gothic Revival: The University of Chicago Campus Master Plan, Chicago, IL, USA,” NBBJ, [1999], accessed March 13, 2017, <http://www.nbbj.com/work/university-of-chicago>.

102. “Our History,” The University of Chicago Civic Engagement, accessed April

variety of community projects, including Upward Bound, a summer youth program, the Pilot Enrichment Program, and the open tutorial program, which helped public schools students prepare for college. Founded in 1974, the Office of Community Affairs (OCA) began the Neighborhood Schools Program in 1976, which has placed hundreds of university students in local public schools as tutors and teaching assistants.¹⁰³

The university’s most substantial foray into public education occurred in 1998 with the opening of the first school in its charter school network. The University of Chicago was one of many American universities to open charter schools in the mid- to late 1990s.¹⁰⁴ Initially, the Illinois Center for School Improvement and the university’s Consortium on Chicago School Research ran the charter schools. These organizations saw the city as a “fascinating and comprehensive laboratory” for studying urban school policy and sought to create a “professional-development school for its work.”¹⁰⁵ University President Hugo Sonnenschein proceeded with the charter school application in October of 1997; when questioned by trustees about the university’s exit strategy, he replied: “We have none. We will make this work.”¹⁰⁶ The first school, the North Kenwood/Oakland Campus, opened in 1998, and serves students from pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade.¹⁰⁷ The network’s other school are Carter G. Woodson (grades 7–8), Donoghue (grades preK–5), and Woodlawn

25, 2017, <https://civicengagement.uchicago.edu/about/our-history>.

103. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 452.

104. Stanford University, Arizona State University, and the University of California, San Diego, also opened charter schools during this period. See Ron Schachter, “Universities Go to School,” *University Business*, February 1, 2010, <https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/universities-go-school>.

105. Boyer, *The University of Chicago*, 454.

106. *Ibid.*, 455.

107. “North Kenwood/Oakland,” University of Chicago Charter School, accessed April 25, 2017, <http://www.uchicagocharter.org/page.cfm?p=501>.

(grades 6–12). They are a key point of contact between the university and the surrounding neighborhoods and are tied to the expansion of the UCPD's patrol jurisdiction. Since 2001, the university has used the location of the charter schools in Kenwood/Oakland and Woodlawn to justify the expansion of the UCPD's geographic range into neighborhoods primarily occupied by people unaffiliated with the university.

Policing

In 1989 the UCPD's patrol zone spanned from 47th Street to the north, 61st Street to the south, Lake Shore Drive to the east, and Cottage Grove Avenue to the west. In 2001 the university sought to push the southern patrol boundary to 64th Street. This extension was part of a broader program of collaboration between the university and Woodlawn and included input from residents. Community groups lobbied for the extension of UCPD patrols; Leon Finney Jr., chairman of the Woodlawn Organization, remarked, “to make sure our redevelopment efforts are successful, we had to make sure the neighborhood is safe.”¹⁰⁸

In June 2003 Toni Preckwinkle, alderman of the 4th Ward, urged the northward expansion of UCPD patrols beyond 47th Street, which was initially approved by an advisory council, who welcomed the possibility of crime reduction. Longtime Oakland resident Loretta O’Quinn said: “It’s a plus for us... they’re offering to double the police, and it’s for free.”¹⁰⁹ In July 2003 Alderman Preckwinkle, Chair of the North Kenwood–Oakland Conservation Community Council Shirley Newsom, SECC Chair Valerie Jarrett, and the university’s Vice President of Community and Government Relations Hank Webber supported the expansion of the UCPD’s patrol zone to Pershing Road (3900 south) and a portion of East Oakwood Boulevard extending west of Cottage

108. Crystal Yednak, “U. of C. Police Extend Patrol Border into Woodlawn,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 16, 2001.

109. “Advisory Council Approves U. of C. Police Expansion,” *Hyde Park Herald*, June 11, 2003.

Grove Avenue. They framed the expansion as a symbol of progress: “[this] new partnership in public safety marks another major step forward.”¹¹⁰ Webber linked the proposed expansion with the university’s Employer-Assisted Housing Program and plans to open a new charter school in North Kenwood–Oakland; he said that the university wanted to “make way for what could be in the future.”¹¹¹ Webber’s sentiments are emblematic of the university’s twenty-first-century role in urban development, and he explicitly links the strength of the university to the surrounding neighborhoods: “We are a stronger institution if the communities and neighborhoods around us are stronger... I believe those living in Hyde Park and Kenwood believe the services of the University of Chicago Police Department are a great asset.”¹¹² The UCPD continued to expand its patrols over the next decade: in 2005 it proposed another northward expansion from 39th Street to 35th Street,¹¹³ and in 2006 it announced the installation of five new emergency phones between 47th and 49th Streets, bringing the total number of emergency phones in the UCPD coverage area to three hundred.¹¹⁴

Violent crime in Hyde Park and Kenwood dropped nearly 50 percent between 1997 and 2007, and overall crime reached a thirty-year low. Bob Mason, a former beat cop who compiled crime statistics for the SECC,

110. Toni Preckwinkle, Shirley Newsom, Valerie Jarrett, and Hank Webber, “Letter to the Editor: Benefits of University Police’s Northward Expansion,” *Hyde Park Herald*, July 2, 2003.

111. Jeremy Adragna, “University Police Looking Northward to Bronzeville,” *Hyde Park Herald*, February 11, 2004.

112. Ibid.

113. Kiratiana E. Freelon, “U. of C. Police Chief Aims to Expand Patrol North of 39th,” *Hyde Park Herald*, April 27, 2005. The UCPD patrol zone did move north to 37th Street, but not to 35th Street.

114. Nykeya Woods, “Police Cameras, Phones to Be Added to Drexel Boulevard,” *Hyde Park Herald*, May 10, 2006.

noted that this drop in crime was due to a “combination of efforts” by both the community and the university, which included the expansion of the UCPD, modernization of police technology, and “revitalization.” Longtime Hyde Park realtor Winston Kennedy agreed that revitalization reduced crime by overhauling housing stock.¹¹⁵ However, the November 2017 death of graduate student Amadou Cisse, who was fatally shot in a botched robbery attempt at 61st Street and Ellis Avenue,¹¹⁶ prompted university administrators to bolster policing efforts and resources.¹¹⁷ At present the UCPD patrol zone extends from 37th Street to the north, 64th Street to the south, Lake Shore Drive to the east, and Cottage Grove Avenue to the west (fig. 10).

While many community members welcomed the expansion of the UCPD patrol zone and applauded Hyde Park’s overall reduction in crime, the department nonetheless faced criticism from inside and outside of the university. Undergraduate Ashley P. White-Stern, in a fiery *Chicago Maroon* 2004 op-ed, described her experience telling prospective students and their parents about the university’s security situation while serving on an admissions Q&A panel. White-Stern situates the UCPD’s role in a (neo)colonial narrative:

The superficial claims of policing the campus and Hyde Park hides the reality that we live in a distrustful, colonial social order. Our colonial status is ensured by the distrust between temporary settlers (that’s us, the students) as a precious set of imported individuals, and the native “other” (often called community members),

115. Brian Wellner, “Hyde Park Crime Hits 30-year Low,” *Hyde Park Herald*, April 18, 2007.

116. Catrin Einhorn, “Killing of Chicago Student Unsettles Campus Life,” *New York Times*, November 22, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/22/us/22chicago.html>.

117. Kat Glass, “Fear Factor,” *Chicago Maroon*, June 3, 2008.



Figure 10. University of Chicago Police Department Extended Patrol Boundaries, 2017

University of Chicago Department of Safety & Security, accessed January 8, 2017.
https://d3qi0qp55mx5f5.cloudfront.net/safety-security/uploads/files/Extended_Patrol_Map.pdf

the dark peoples, savage and unknown. Since militarism is necessary when resources are unevenly accessible, we seek reassurance in the fact that our streets are heavily guarded by UCPD, rather than interrogating the ways that our social order is structured.¹¹⁸

Student concerns about of racial profiling continue to plague the UCPD, and they are similar to the 1986 allegations of the Organization of Black Students and the Black Graduate Forum. The Coalition for Equitable Policing (CEP) held a community hearing in October 2014 during which black students and community members spoke out about their racist experiences with the UCPD, which detracted from their college experience. One attendee remarked: “Even if you’re walking out of the library, you gotta make sure you’re wearing a book bag.”¹¹⁹ In early 2015 the CEP pushed for the passage of HB3932, an amendment to the Illinois Private College Campus Police Act that would hold private universities to the same standards as public police departments: “information and records in the custody or possession of a campus police department shall be open to inspection or copying in the same manner as public records under the Freedom of Information Act.”¹²⁰ The bill ultimately stalled in the Illinois State Senate; however, in part due to the activist pressure, the UCPD began to release its traffic-stop and field-

report data voluntarily in June of 2015.¹²¹ My analysis of UCPD data shows that blacks comprised 74.6 percent of the police traffic stops and 92.3 percent of field interviews between June 1, 2015, and April 14, 2017 (fig. 11). These rates are similar to the mid-1960s when black youths represented 90.4 percent of detentions by university security officers.¹²²

Announcements in recent years indicate that the UCPD is striving to increase both patrols and community communications. In the summer of 2016 University President Robert J. Zimmer announced plans to increase the number of UCPD officers by 28 percent, to augment patrols along the commercial parts of 53rd Street, and to increase the number of joint UCPD/CPD patrols. Zimmer also announced the creation of a “community engagement program” developed in partnership between the UCPD and the Office of Civic Engagement, intended to “inform the community about new safety measures.”¹²³ It remains to be seen when and how this program will be implemented.

Real Estate

Over the past twenty years the University of Chicago has simultaneously expanded and contracted its property holdings. The types of properties that it has chosen to buy, lease, and sell indicate shifts in the university’s overall land-use priorities. The Office of Civic Engagement manages many of the university’s recent real estate transactions. Its programs include the Employer-Assisted Housing Program (EAHP) and Arts and Public Life, a wing of OCE and UChicago Arts, which has been active

118. Ashley P. White-Stern, “University Benevolence Does Not Compensate for Lasting Inequality,” *Chicago Maroon*, November 22, 2004.

119. Tamar Honig, “Students Recount Racial Bias of UCPD,” *Chicago Maroon*, October 31, 2014.

120. Higher Ed-Campus Police of 2015, HB3932, 99th General Assembly of Illinois, accessed May 5, 2018, ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=09900HB3932&SessionID=88&GA=99&DocTypeID=HB&DocNum=3932&print=true.

121. Natalie Friedberg, “UCPD to Make Public Information on Traffic Stops, Field Stops, and Arrests,” *Chicago Maroon*, April 14, 2015; “Daily Field Interviews Archive,” University of Chicago Safety & Security, <https://incidentreports.uchicago.edu/fieldInterviewsArchive.php>.

122. Segal, “We Must Do Something Ourselves,” 232–33.

123. Sonia Schlesinger, “UCPD to Increase Number of Officers on Patrol by 28 Percent,” *Chicago Maroon*, August 17, 2016.

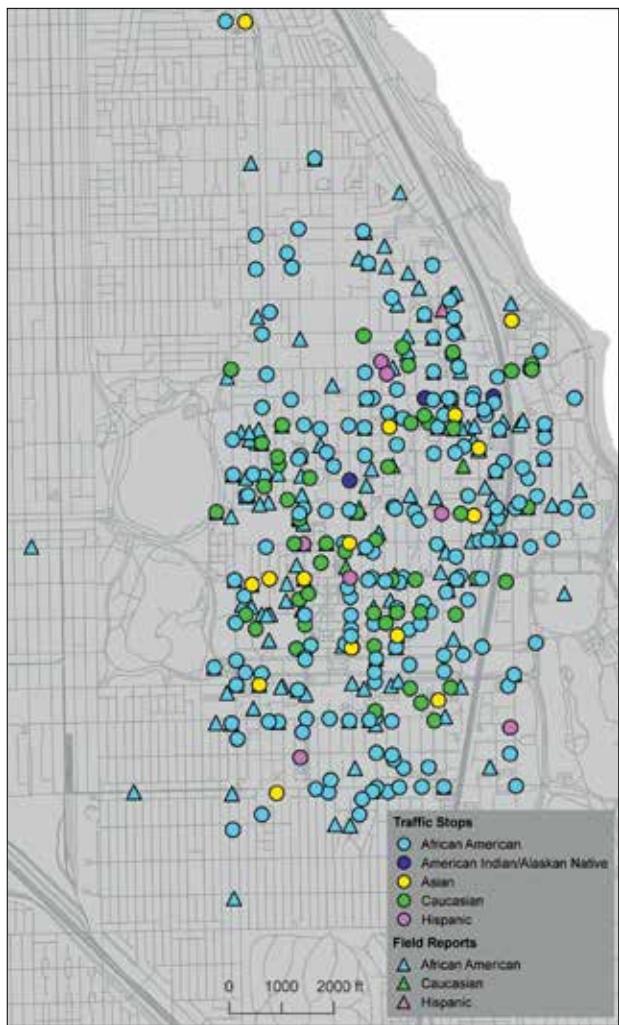


Figure 11. UCPD Traffic Stops and Field Reports, June 1, 2015–April 14, 2017

(map by author)

“Traffic Stops Archive,” University of Chicago Safety and Security, <https://incidentreports.uchicago.edu/trafficStopsArchive.php>

in property acquisitions in the Washington Park neighborhood. The university has simultaneously sought to shrink its portfolio of residential properties across Hyde Park, selling thirty-three residential buildings and four lots in Hyde Park between 2004 and 2016 and buying twenty-six mix-used properties in Washington Park since 2008.

The EAHP encourages full-time university employees to live near the university by providing mortgage down-payment and rental assistance in nine South Side neighborhoods: Woodlawn, South Shore, Greater Grand Crossing, Washington Park, Grand Boulevard, Douglas, Oakland, North Kenwood, and Hyde Park/South Kenwood (fig. 12). Program benefits are greatest in the “Woodlawn Focus Area,” a section of Woodlawn directly south of the university.¹²⁴ According to the university, the program “strengthens connections to surrounding neighborhoods, retains valuable employees, and helps staff optimize their work-life balance.”¹²⁵ The program, which has helped more than 240 university employees purchase homes near campus since 2003 and provides valuable investment in disinvested neighborhoods, nonetheless expands the university’s influence on the built environment.

The University of Chicago first began acquiring properties in the late 1950s and early 1960s in order to house students. The buildings were older residential buildings and former hotels, such as the Shoreland and the Broadview.¹²⁶ In 2004 the university sold the Shoreland to developer Kenard Corporation for \$6 million.¹²⁷ Kenard then sold the Shoreland to Antheus Capital for \$16 million in 2008. Students moved out in 2009,

124. \$10,000 in down-payment assistance or \$2,400 in rental assistance.

125. “Employer-Assisted Housing Program,” University of Chicago Civic Engagement, <https://civicengagement.uchicago.edu/anchor/uchicago-local/employer-assisted-housing-program>.

126. “Editorial: University: Friend or Foe?” *Hyde Park Herald*, August 10, 1966.

127. Rachel Cromidas, “Shoreland Residents Revel in Dorm’s Rough Edges as Closing Nears,” *Chicago Maroon*, October 21, 2008.



Figure 12. Employer-Assisted Housing Program, Frequently Asked Questions

Office of Civic Engagement, University of Chicago, accessed April 22, 2017, http://humanresources.uchicago.edu/benefits/retirefinancial/EAHP-FAQ_final_11%2030%202015.pdf

renovations began in 2011, and the Shoreland was reopened as an apartment building in the autumn of 2013.¹²⁸ In March of 2015, the university announced that it was planning to sell twenty-one properties (nineteen apartment buildings and two vacant lots) in Hyde Park. The university said it “purchased the majority of these properties many years ago, when the residential market in the communities surrounding the university was not as robust as it is now”¹²⁹ A total of 676 residential units were sold to Pioneer Acquisitions, a New York developer, for \$70.1 million in 2015.¹³⁰ In 2016, the university announced the sale of another thirteen properties (ten residential buildings with a total of 387 units, a building containing four local restaurants, and two vacant lots) to Pioneer Acquisitions for approximately \$54.9 million (fig. 13).¹³¹ The University plans to use the profits to support its teaching and research activities.¹³² Despite an outcry from students, the university closed four “satellite” residence

128. Lina Li, “Shoreland, Former Dorm, to Get a New Lease on Life,” *Chicago Maroon*, April 23, 2013.

129. University of Chicago News, “University to Sell Select Residential Real Estate Properties,” March 31, 2015, <https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2015/03/31/university-sell-select-residential-real-estate-properties>.

130. Eileen Li, “University Sells 21 Properties for Over \$70 Million,” *Chicago Maroon*, January 15, 2016.

131. University of Chicago News, “University to Sell to Sell Select Residential Real Estate Properties,” April 25, 2016, <https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2016/04/25/university-sell-select-residential-real-estate-properties>; Sam Cholke, “U. of C. Selling 387 Apartments and Home of Medici, Z & H, Packed,” *Chicago DNAInfo*, May 4, 2016, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20160504/hyde-park/u-of-c-selling-387-apartments-home-of-medici-zh-packed>.

132. University of Chicago News, “University to Sell,” April 25, 2016.

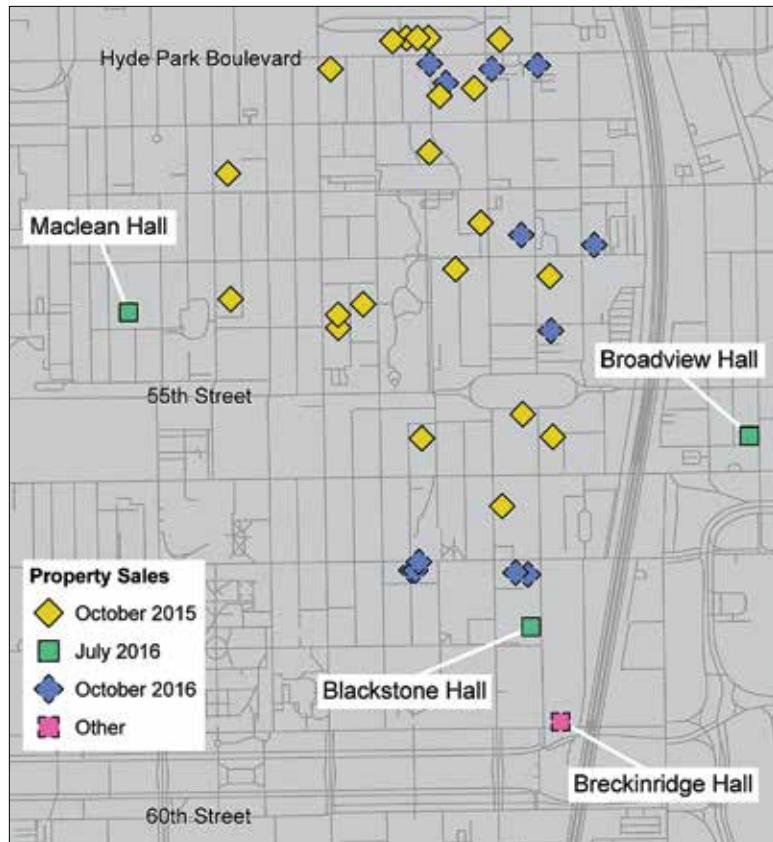


Figure 13. Satellite Dormitories and Residential Property Sales, 2015–16
 (map by author)

at the end of the 2015–16 academic year.¹³³ The real estate firm, 3L, purchased three of the satellites (Blackstone, Broadview, and Maclean) in 2016 for an undisclosed sum and operates them as private dorm-style rentals for students.¹³⁴ The university still owns the fourth satellite, Breckenridge Hall, and its future use is undetermined. The closure of the “satellites” coincided with the opening of Campus North Residential Commons in September 2016.¹³⁵ The commons, designed by Studio Gang, houses eight hundred students and contains a dining hall, classrooms, a coffee shop, and retail properties. Campus North is part of a longer-term goal of retaining a larger percentage of students in on-campus housing.¹³⁶

Beginning in 2008 the university began to quietly buy properties around the Green Line El stop at Garfield Boulevard in advance of Chicago’s (ultimately failed) 2016 bid to host the 2016 Olympics; by 2014 the university had acquired twenty-six properties for \$18 million, between 54th and 56th Streets and Martin Luther King Drive and Prairie Avenue.

133. Anne Nazzaro, “Residents of Satellite Dorms Protest Following Housing Changes by Admin,” *Chicago Maroon*, April 28, 2015; “Residence Hall Closures,” College Housing at the University of Chicago, accessed April 17, 2017, http://housing.uchicago.edu/houses_houses/community_and_traditions/residence-hall-closures.

134. Sonia Schlesinger, “University of Chicago Sells Three Residence Halls to 3L Real Estate,” *Hyde Park Herald*, July 19, 2016.

135. University of Chicago News, “University of Chicago Opens Campus North Residential Commons,” September 12, 2016, <https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2016/09/12/university-chicago-opens-campus-north-residential-commons>.

136. Camille Kirsch, “College Housing: Past and Present,” *Chicago Maroon*, February 9, 2017, <https://www.chicagomaroon.com/article/2017/2/10/new-era-college-housing>.

Pat Dowell, alderman of the 3rd Ward, called the university “greedy.”¹³⁷ The university’s Arts and Public Life initiative opened an art gallery, a restaurant, and a bookstore in buildings just west of the Garfield El stop; this “Arts Block” is the first phase of a long-term effort to develop the area around the El stop as a cultural destination.¹³⁸ Although Washington Park was an unsuccessful contender for the Barack Obama Presidential Center residents remain concerned about gentrification and displacement as a result of the Arts Block developments.¹³⁹

Conclusion

This thesis describes how University of Chicago acted as an agent in the built environment and how it has related to its peripheries. For 127 years the university constructed peripheral “walls” and although these “walls” were not always made of brick and stone, they were spatially manifested nonetheless. The first divisions were physical: the quadrangles separated “town” from “gown” and isolated the University from the outside world. The next divisions were legal: racial covenants that prevented blacks from living near the university. The urban renewal period combined legal (the legislative lobbying of the South East Chicago Commission) and physical means (demolition of housing stock) to insulate the university from

137. Sam Cholke, “U. of C. Buys 26 Properties on South Side Ahead of Obama Library Decision,” *Chicago DNAInfo*, December 10, 2014, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20141210/hyde-park/u-of-cs-washington-park-land-grab-could-secure-obama-library-for-s-side>.

138. Harrison Smith, “The Art of Development,” *Chicago South Side Weekly*, April 17, 2014, <http://southsideweekly.com/the-art-of-development>.

139. Kathy Bergen, Blair Kamin, and Katherine Skiba, “Obama Chooses Historic Jackson Park as Library Site,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 26, 2016, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/g00/news/obamalibrary/ct-obama-library-site-jackson-park-met-20160727-story.html?i10c.referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>; Christian Belanger, “Bringing Obama Home,” *Chicago South Side Weekly*, January 27, 2015, <http://southsideweekly.com/bringing-obama-home>.

people believed to threaten its institutional goals. The creation and expansion of the university’s private security force (later the UCPD) created psychological walls. Policing imprinted the university’s authority on the landscape—with a police presence, campus shuttles, emergency phones—and restricted campus access through racially biased stops, detentions, and arrests. The university has sought to mend some of the wounds of urban renewal, often in response to organizing and protests by black students and community groups.

The university’s interventions in surrounding neighborhoods raise broader ethical questions of how to mediate tensions between private interests and the public good. Should private institutions have the right to impose their values onto urban space and to reshape the urban landscape in ways that may benefit themselves but can harm nearby residents who are unaffiliated with the institution?

The University of Chicago’s policies toward its peripheries have implications beyond the quadrangles. The university’s support of racially restrictive covenants contributed to structural patterns of housing discrimination in other cities; the SECC’s urban renewal initiatives were used as a “pilot study” by the federal government for other urban universities to emulate. Further, the university’s private police force is part of broader trends toward the privatization of law enforcement and security.

American universities, particularly those in urban settings, have long sought to further their institutional goals through interventions in the built environment, and the University of Chicago is by no means the only university to have taken drastic measures in this regard. However, the ways in which the university has acted as an urban planner make it not only a prime example of such an institution, but also reveal it to be the archetypal “university as planner.” Its interventions into its surroundings have served as models for other universities to emulate, and they have broad implications for the future of American cities.

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The Aftermath of *Gautreaux*



Housing Discrimination and a Shift toward Housing Choice Vouchers in Chicago

VALERIE GUTMANN, AB'17

Introduction

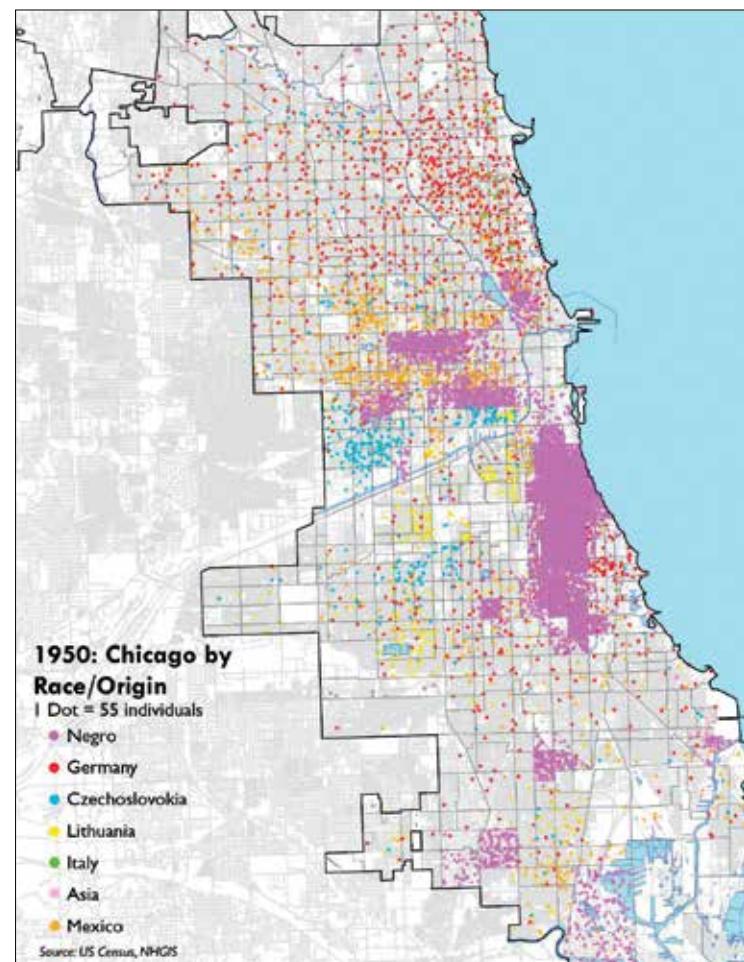
The history of public housing in the city of Chicago is fraught with racial tension that often manifested itself through segregationist policy. Racial tension in Chicago was paralleled by racial tension in the United States more broadly. The landmark public-housing desegregation lawsuit *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority* (1967, 1969) had already been filed when the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (led by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner Jr. and known as the Kerner Commission) released its 1968 report on the state of US race relations. The report concluded: “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal” (Polikoff 61–62).

In this paper, I explore the historical context that led to *Gautreaux*, review the wording of the decisions, examine the reaction of the Nucleus of Chicago Homeowners Association, a community organization opposed to public housing in white neighborhoods, and explore the connection between neoliberal ideology and the Housing Choice Voucher program. I also rely on data from interviews to reveal the obstacles faced by Housing

Choice Voucher participants¹ trying to secure housing, what this means for housing discrimination in Chicago, and what policy reforms would be necessary to promote more widespread housing stability. It is important to examine the obstacles facing voucher holders in an age when the idea of vouchers is entering national discourse, not only in conversations about housing but also in federal policy proposals about education and health care.

The Historical Context of *Gautreaux*

The Federal Housing Administration was established in 1934 at a time when public housing was intended primarily for working-class white families (Rothstein 45). The Neighborhood Composition Rule (NCR) had already asserted in 1932 that “occupants of completed [Public Works Administration] projects should conform to the prevailing composition” of the neighborhood as it was before redevelopment, a sentiment which was supported by the racist climate in Chicago’s city hall (Hunt 2009 54). Some argued that the rule was intended to match public-housing residents with communities where they were most likely to feel welcomed; in practice, it was a thinly veiled justification for relegating public housing to African American neighborhoods. Chicago, a racially diverse and segregated city, was an easy place to apply the rule and successfully exclude African American public-housing residents from white neighborhoods (Silver; US Census) (see Map 1). These segregationist policies also occurred in other cities across the United States. St. Louis began redlining with a ballot measure in 1916, which “won by a substantial majority, creating an ordinance that designated some areas as Negro blocks” (Covert). St. Louis realtors could only sell property to African Americans



Map 1: 1950: Chicago by Race/Origin

(US Census)

1. “CHA residents” refers to both public-housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher participants. “Public-housing residents” live in CHA housing and “HCV participants” or “voucher holders” participate in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s HCV program.

on designated blocks or risk losing their license. Restrictive covenants across the country created racially segregated cities that persists today, despite the fact that the NCR ended in 1949.

Yet in few cities was segregation so explicit as in Chicago. African American public-housing residents could not live in the small number of public-housing sites in white areas (Hunt 2004). The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) had maintained a policy to house only whites in projects that were located in primarily white neighborhoods, both before and after the Neighborhood Composition Rule (Hunt 2009 54). Trumbull Park Homes, located at 105th Street and Yates Avenue, in what as then a white neighborhood, were an example of such a project. Trumbull Park was accidentally integrated in 1953 when the CHA mistook the fair-skinned Betty Howard as white (Hunt 2004). Race riots broke out less than a week after Betty and her husband Donald moved in, and the things thrown at the couple included not just racial slurs, but fireworks and rocks (Hirsch 80). Racial tension in Trumbull Park periodically erupted into violence throughout the 1950s. By the 1960s working-class white families, who had benefited from the postwar economic boom and access to mortgages, rarely lived in public housing, and Chicago public housing was left about 90 percent African American (Lazin 264). New public-housing construction took place disproportionately in African American neighborhoods, many of which were impoverished and devoid of amenities, like public transportation (Pattillo 216).

It would be easy to vilify the CHA for not fighting harder to integrate its properties, but it is important to remember the complicated political workings of the City of Chicago, which determined where public housing was built. In the 1960s the CHA wanted to build public housing on vacant land scattered throughout the city. However, “since the City Council had a veto over CHA site proposals, the CHA had to comply with City Council demands” (Lazin 264). Powerful aldermen representing white communities thwarted every attempt to build public housing in white Chicago neighborhoods between 1950 and 1966 (Hirsch 214; Polikoff 61).

The *Gautreaux* Ruling and How It Was Received

Like the earlier *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), *Gautreaux* (1967, 1969) argued that the CHA violated the equal-protection and due-process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, and that the CHA’s tenant assignments and site selections were racial discrimination (296 F. Supp. 907 at 909–13; Polikoff 49). The US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois held that the CHA’s policies were in violation of the Constitution: “Plaintiffs... have the right under the Fourteenth Amendment to have sites selected for public housing projects without regard to the racial composition of either the surrounding neighborhood or of the projects themselves” (265 F. Supp. 582 at 913). Judge Richard Austin ruled: “No criterion, other than race, can plausibly explain the veto of over 99½ percent of the housing units located on the White sites which were initially selected on the basis of CHA’s expert judgment and at the same time the rejection of only 10% or so of the units on Negro sites” (265 F. Supp. 582 at 912). The veto power of the City Council and the pressures of public opinion did not exonerate the CHA from responsibility for correcting violations to the Fourteenth Amendment: “In fact, even if CHA had not participated in the elimination of White sites, its officials were bound by the Constitution not to exercise CHA’s discretion to decide to build upon sites which were chosen by some other agency on the basis of race” (265 F. Supp. 582 at 914).

A companion lawsuit, *Hills v. Gautreaux* (1976), argued successfully before the Supreme Court that the US Department of Housing and Urban Development had knowingly funded the CHA’s segregative actions and violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited “racial discrimination in programs that received federal funding” (Polikoff 49).

Gautreaux was important both for what it ruled and what it did not rule. It set a precedent of guilt specifically as a consequence of racially motivated intent. While government agencies could not explicitly wield

their programs to promote residential segregation, they were not explicitly barred from inaction in the face of racial segregation furthered by others (Wilen and Stasell 162). *Gautreaux* did not sufficiently address the historic role of racially motivated government policies in creating the existing patterns of residential segregation or what was at stake in contemporary government inaction in the face of those patterns of racial segregation. Austin's ruling was problematic because local government with access to other funds could avoid federally funded development programs, that mandated integration under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (O'Neill 687). The task of undertaking desegregation rested disproportionately with poorer municipalities. Chicago and other cities that were losing their tax base, due to white flight to suburbs, could not afford to opt out of federal funding (Polikoff 149–52). The result was the continued evolution of a decentralized, federally supported housing policy in which “the basic direction... has been the concentration of the poor in the central city and the dispersal of the affluent to the suburbs” (Jackson 230).

The exodus of affluent whites to the suburbs left remaining white voters and their alderman feeling even more embattled. Some of these opposing parties formed the Nucleus of Chicago Homeowners Association after Austin's 1969 ruling and in 1972 opposed the CHA's first set of sites for scattered-site public housing (Polikoff 162). *Nucleus of Chicago Homeowners Association v. Lynn* (1975) used the wording of “the human environment” in the National Environmental Policy Act to argue that, in the wake of *Gautreaux*, concerns other than racial discrimination ought to be central to the location of public housing (Polikoff 162). *Nucleus* “alleged that low-income housing tenants as a group... possess a higher propensity toward criminal behavior,... a disregard for... maintenance of personal property, and a lower commitment to hard work” (524 F. 2d 225 at 228). Considering that the majority of CHA residents were African American, *Nucleus*'s scathing account of the character of public-housing residents is a barely disguised proxy for race (Badger). Quillian and Pager demonstrate that people use danger as a proxy for race: “Neighborhood residents take strong cues from the race of their

surrounding neighbors, systematically inflating their perceptions of crime in the presence of blacks nearby” (738).

Nucleus further argued that “the proposed construction of CHA scattered-site housing [would] have a direct adverse impact upon the physical safety of those plaintiffs residing in close proximity to the sites, as well as a direct adverse effect upon the aesthetic and economic quality of their lives so as to significantly affect the quality of the human environment” (524 F. 2d 225 at 228). *Nucleus* likened public-housing residents to an infectious disease by suggesting that mere proximity to them would endanger personal safety and property values alike. The US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals rejected *Nucleus*'s “human environment” argument: “At the outset, it must be noted that although human beings may be polluters (i.e., may create pollution), they are not themselves pollution (i.e., constitute pollution)” (372 F. Supp. 147 at 149). The district court defined the question before them as “whether acts or actions resulting from the social and economic characteristics will affect the environment” (372 F. Supp. 147 at 149). *Nucleus*'s formal justification for invoking the National Environmental Policy Act had been HUD's failure to prepare an environmental impact statement when proposing the scattered-site housing (Polikoff 162). The rulings dismissed this complaint: “It is clear that HUD chose to consider the impact of the scattered-site housing on the social fabric of the recipient communities” (524 F. 2d 225 at 231), and “the CHA's tenant selection and eviction policies further diminish the possibility that prospective CHA tenants will pose a danger to the health, safety, or morals of their neighbors” (524 F. 2d 225 at 231).

Dispersion of Poverty, Growing Reliance on Vouchers, and Neoliberalism

The *Nucleus*'s argument that public-housing residents were equivalent to a disease was later employed to support scattered-site housing—the very thing *Nucleus* had opposed. Instead of thinking of public-housing residents as an infectious disease capable of overpowering new environments, this new ideology considered poverty (and by extension, the public-housing residents themselves) an infirmity best overcome by dispersion throughout the “body” of the city of Chicago (Goetz). The idea of poverty as a disease so thoroughly overtook public perception that in 1974 the *Journal of the National Medical Association* claimed poverty as the *cause* for physical infirmities from “mental retardation” to “heart disease” (Cobb 522).

After *Gatreaux* the CHA attempted to make public housing “available on a non-discriminatory, scattered-site basis, with low-income residents of CHA developments to be afforded opportunities to move to non-segregated areas” (Pennick). By 1987 the CHA suspended work on its scattered-sites projects and asked the federal courts to place the mismanaged and bankruptcy program in receivership (Ziemba and Reardon). Financial problems continued, and in 1995 the entire CHA board resigned and yielded control of the authority and its programs to HUD (Terry). The largest takeover of a city housing authority in the country’s history drew national attention to the CHA and to the persistence of the segregationist housing reality in Chicago that had spurred *Gatreaux* decades earlier.

In 2000, the CHA embarked on the Plan for Transformation, which, in the words of the CHA, “was the largest, most ambitious redevelopment effort of public housing in the United States, with the goal of rehabilitating or redeveloping the entire stock of public housing in Chicago” (CHA “Plan”). The plan included demolishing high-rise projects, citing physically unsafe conditions in the apartments and the difficulty of policing the buildings. Federal policy influenced the timing and

details of this initiative. A provision of the 1966 annual spending bill for HUD “mandated public housing authorities to do... viability studies for all the housing developments that had a vacancy rate of 10% and at least 300 units” (Bennett et al. 156). After years of neglected repairs, 17,859 public housing units—a significant portion of the total—failed viability tests in the 1990s (Venkatesh 265). The CHA conveniently incorporated federally mandated demolition of nonviable units into the Plan for Transformation.

The Plan for Transformation proposed to “promote the integration of public housing residents into less poor, more economically diverse neighborhoods in the city” (Chaskin and Joseph 9). However, the plan often fractured community bonds that had existed for generations in Chicago’s high-rise public housing, such as Cabrini-Green Homes. From the demolition of the first tower in 1995 to the razing of the final tower in 2011 the destruction of Cabrini-Green destroyed not only buildings, but a community (Bezalel). Cabrini-Green residents continued their strong community bonds after the demolitions at a weekly reunion called Old School Mondays, which began in 2003 as a time to reminisce and reconnect with old neighbors (Bezalel; Lydersen). It is impressive that these social bonds prevailed and that some of the Cabrini-Green residents were able to return to the mixed-income development built on the former site. However, for thousands of other public-housing residents, moving out of their high-rises meant a permanent separation from those social-support structures (Venkatesh and Celimli).

As public-housing authorities in many cities began to demolish centralized public housing in the 1990s “the federal government turned to two main strategies to deconcentrate poverty from public housing developments: [vouchers] and mixed-income developments” (Chaskin and Joseph 55). Both of these shifts away from high-rises align with the ideology of poverty as an illness that should be dispersed for best chances of mitigation. Since 1995, when the federal government rescinded a rule that required one-for-one replacement of any public-housing units demolished (Petty 222), HUD has awarded billions of dollars to cities

to topple housing projects and replace them with mixed-income developments (Brophy and Smith 4). However, even if mixed-income developments had as many units as the high-rise sites they were meant to replace (which they inevitably do not because the individual units are larger and the buildings include more amenities) only some of the units would be set aside for public-housing residents. The unsurprising result is more public-housing residents than available CHA properties.

The CHA issued vouchers for displaced CHA residents (as well as for those CHA residents who chose vouchers at the time of the high-rise demolitions). Vouchers are less expensive than new CHA construction and have a comparatively stable source of federal funding from Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937. In 2016 the CHA managed 46,823 clients in the Housing Choice Voucher program—a notable increase from even one year earlier, when 44,773 CHA residents held vouchers (CHA 2015 at 20; CHA 2016 at 19). The program advertises that “families can use their vouchers to rent a house or apartment in the private market throughout the city of Chicago, and the CHA pays a portion of eligible families’ rent each month directly to the landlord” (CHA “HCV”).

In order to understand the ties of the Housing Choice Voucher program to neoliberalism, it is necessary to first compare how the experience of voucher holders diverges from the experience of other CHA residents (Prasad 99). Voucher holders, like other CHA residents, are subject to a review process by the CHA (CHA “HCV”). Unlike other CHA residents, voucher holders must find their own apartments on the private market—a task complicated by illegal discriminatory renting practices and stringent CHA housing inspections, which discourage landlords from participating in the program (Jackson 205). If residents are unable to find housing by a set deadline, they forfeit their voucher to the next person on the HCV waitlist of 42,506 people (CHA 2016 at 20). Although it is possible and fairly common to apply for extensions, HCV participants still lament the short amount time they have to find a new unit (Bowean).

By shifting the burden of finding housing from an organization (the CHA) to the individual the voucher program aligns with neoliberal

ideology, which “involves a focus on individual responsibility rather than social structures” (Spalding 27–28). With the rise of neoliberalism, the United States increasingly stigmatized welfare programs as free handouts: “The United States leans away from cash benefit programs such as TANF and SSI, and puts greater emphasis on programs such as... the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), regardless of the fact that research on in-kind benefit programming has been inconclusive, contradictory, and mixed at best” (Haymes et al. 236). The CHA convinced the public that voucher participants—even though they receive subsidized rent for apartments on the private market—do not receive free government handouts because the participants pay 30 percent of their income to their landlord in rent.²

Methods

I gathered research for this paper using qualitative methods, including participant observation and interviews. I conducted twenty interviews, each about one hour in length, with people connected with the Housing Choice Voucher program. I developed interview questions after grounding myself in historical, theoretical, and legal frameworks: I explored Chicago’s history of racial segregation, the theory of concentrated poverty and its intertwinement with stigma, and the legal consequences of the *Gautreaux* cases. I asked questions categorized within six central topic areas: the interviewee’s organizational role, the privatization of subsidized housing, barriers to securing housing under the voucher program, contemporary implications of *Gautreaux*, assessment of the voucher program, and policy recommendations for the future. I interviewed legal-aid attorneys working in the areas of voucher preservation

2. “The conventional 30 percent of household income that a household can devote to housing costs before the household is said to be ‘burdened’ evolved from the United States National Housing Act of 1937” (Schwartz and Wilson, 1)

and housing discrimination, Housing Choice Voucher participants, fair-housing advocates and organizers, and academics.

Participant observation involved attending meetings of the Housing Choice Voucher Working Group of the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance, a nonprofit consortium of advocacy organizations, government agencies, and municipalities. I contacted people on the attendance list of my first meeting and then asked my initial contacts to connect me with others. All interviews but one were recorded and transcribed. I took handwritten notes during the conversation with the non-recorded interviewee. Interviewees could choose to identify themselves in a variety of ways: full name and employer, by employer alone, by field of occupation, or anonymously. Everyone agreed to be identified by occupation (a legal-aid attorney, an academic, an advocate, an HCV participant). I qualitatively coded the interview transcripts into four groups, each identified by the field of occupation of its interviewees. I identified points of consensus within a field and across fields. These recurring themes became the categories within which I organized my analysis. I also noted responses that differed significantly from points of consensus: these responses revealed where an interviewee's unique experiences or position may provide her or him insight that is unknown to others (even those knowledgeable about the voucher program, as all interviewees were). Because I was the sole transcriptionist and qualitative coder, there is the potential that my singular interpretation of the data limited the resulting analysis. This could be resolved by including a second qualitative coder, but it would then become necessary to establish standards for inter-coder consistency.

Analysis of Qualitatively Coded Interviews

The Housing Choice Voucher Program: Noble Intentions Coupled with Significant Barriers to Usage

I asked a framing question about the HCV program's intentions throughout the course of my interviews, and the answers consistently revealed two main points. The primary objective of the HCV program was to replace high-rise public housing with subsidized housing on the private market. The second objective of the program was to provide participants choice about where to live within the city of Chicago.

One HCV participant continuously interrupted her own description of the program to relay stories about when she used to live in Cabrini-Green. "It sure did have its problems," she commented, "but inside Cabrini we were a community. When the buildings came down and people scattered, we lost something more than our homes." Erana Jackson Taylor, a housing organizer at the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, explains that displaced public-housing residents were promised a right to return. Taylor emphasized that the right to return was perceived by residents at the time as a "guarantee from the CHA for housing support in the future equivalent to [that which] had been removed." As they would come to realize, residents who were living in a CHA public-housing unit on October 1, 1999, were promised a right to return to "CHA housing"—an umbrella term that includes both residents in CHA buildings and Housing Choice Voucher participants. A legal-aid attorney specializing in voucher preservation revealed that "although some former public-housing residents chose HCVs from the beginning, others were unexpectedly thrust into the HCV program when the CHA failed to build as many new units as the number which had been demolished." When the CHA moved toward mixed-income housing developments, it increased its usage of vouchers, lauding them as a less expensive and more consistently fundable replacement than CHA-managed housing.

Michelle Gilbert, a supervisory attorney with the Housing Practice Group at the Legal Assistance Foundation, described the second objective of the program: “At its most basic level, a voucher is intended to give participants choice about where to live... In theory, the voucher can be redeemed anywhere in the city without rendering the HCV participant cost burdened.” Generally, the participant pays 30 percent of their income to the landlord, and the remainder of the rent is covered by the CHA.

Housing experts acknowledge that the reality of program participants, who experience significant barriers to HCV usage, deviated from the noble intentions of the voucher program. When asked about barriers to use, almost half of interviewees deflected the question. Instead, they discussed the number of people participating in the voucher program compared to the larger number of people outside the program with housing instability. Ann Hinterman, a housing specialist for Joe Moore, alderman of the 49th Ward, lamented the shortage of affordable housing in Rogers Park: “One of the most common requests that we get from constituents is assistance finding affordable housing.” Hinterman, an active member of the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance who is thoroughly familiar with the workings of the voucher program, said “there just are not enough vouchers.” For Andrea Juracek, the associate director at Housing Choice Partners, “the waitlist is closed, the need for affordable housing is pressing, and the number of vouchers being dispersed is not rising to meet the demand.” This message stuck with me throughout the course of my research: although the complexity of the HCV program is important to analyze, it is also necessary to remember the hundreds of thousands of low-income renters in Chicago who remain cost burdened without realistic hope of ever receiving rental assistance in any form from the CHA.

There was overwhelming consensus among interviewees that even for the 46,823 people who receive a voucher (CHA 2016 at 19), significant financial and nonfinancial barriers remain. One financial barrier was the use of overly broad geographic zones to calculate fair-market rents, which led to inaccurate rates for North Side neighborhoods. A legal-aid

attorney who practices housing law commented that “the fair market rents, as calculated, have maximum payouts that effectively exclude HCV residents from Chicago’s most affluent neighborhoods.” Kenneth Gunn, the first deputy commissioner at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, explained: “The fair-market rent calculations are made too broadly to accurately reflect the price of housing in, for example, neighborhoods on the North Side of the city.”

Esther Choi, a staff attorney with the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, discussed another financial barrier to voucher usage: “HCV participants are required to pay for their own background and credit checks when they apply for a unit... HCV participants are repeatedly told no to renting a unit and must apply to more than triple as many units to find one that will accept them [compared with market-rate renters].” Jessica Schneider, another staff attorney at the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee, added: “High security deposits and nonrefundable move-in fees together create a financial barrier to using a voucher to actually find and move into a home... Move-in fees and high security-deposit payments require either savings or the flexibility to allocate much of a paycheck in a specific week to a single large expenditure.” For many HCV participants, neither of these options are readily accessible.

Nonfinancial obstacles were no less significant or problematic. Katie Ludwig, the CHA’s chief office of the Housing Choice Voucher program, pointing to a recurring complaint from landlords that the CHA’s unit inspection process is too slow and too stringent. One HCV participant said “from the time you tell the landlord you want to live in the unit to the time when you can actually move in, months and certainly weeks can pass... There is a long wait to get a CHA inspector out to the property, and then once they’re there they find every tiny problem that nobody cares about and force the landlord to fix it. It’s no wonder [landlords] don’t want to rent to [voucher holders].” An investigator at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations indicated that the HCV program uses taxpayer money to fund private landlords and must meet a high standard: “You can just imagine the headlines and negative press

if it turned out the CHA was paying private landlords for HCV participants to live in substandard housing.”

Another nonfinancial barrier is the short amount of time that HCV participants have to find an apartment. Juracek, an advocate who helps connect voucher holders with affordable housing, said “HCV participants often have ninety days to find a new apartment, apply for it and be approved, and agree on lease terms with the landlord... Ninety days seems at the outset like a long time, but HCV participants often struggle to find a landlord and unit combination that will work at the prices the CHA is able to pay. Ludwig, the CHA officer, said that HCV participants can receive “a [moving] extension in one or more increments not to exceed sixty calendar days, upon written request from the participant.” All of the HCV participants, except one, knew about the extension, but two mentioned that “the requirement to send a written request can be hard if you’re not in a place with stamps and envelopes and a post office nearby.” As a result, an option meant to bring flexibility to moving process could be thwarted by something as simple as the lack of a pen, paper, stamp, or envelope; the written requirement also carries an assumption of literacy.

The most significant nonfinancial barrier is the stigma and prejudice against voucher holders. Taylor, the housing organizer, voiced poignantly what many others expressed as well: “There’s this underlying belief among landlords that if you’re on Section 8 then you’re poor, if you’re poor then you’re lazy, and if you’re lazy then you won’t be respectful of the property or pay your rent on time.” According to the investigator at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, landlords assume that “HCV participants bring crime and chaos, disrupting community expectations and standards.” Eve Ewing, an assistant professor at the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service Administration, thinks landlords’ responses to renters with vouchers varies: “Although sometimes this is a conscious bias... often it is just a vague sense of distrust that guides landlord actions.” The often irrational subconscious nature of landlord stigma makes it difficult to combat. Allison Bethel, the director of the Fair Housing Legal Clinic

at the John Marshall Law School, said “stigma runs deep, and logic and evidence are often ineffective in the face of unwarranted belief.”

Source-of-Income Housing Discrimination

Source-of-income discrimination is illegally in Cook County, including in Chicago. Jason Jones, an investigator at the Cook County Commission on Human Rights, explained that “the unfair treatment of prospective tenants as a result of their status as HCV program participants” is a form of housing discrimination. Choi, attorney and advocate, indicated that the absence of housing discrimination laws at the state and federal levels “limit what court a source of income case can be tried in, thereby restricting the ability of legal-aid attorneys to gain more expansive and reliable source of income protections for their clients.”

Despite legal protections in Cook County, source-of-income discrimination against HCV recipients persists. According to JoAnn Newsome, the director of Human Rights Compliance and Fair Housing at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, one of the most consistent problems in enforcing source-of-income protections is “ignorance on the part of both tenants and landlords about their respective rights.” Jones, the investigator, explained that “while source-of-income protections have long been in place in Cook County, since 1993 those protections have explicitly excluded HCV program participants.” According to Jones, only on May 8, 2013, did Cook County add HCV participants to the list of protected groups: “Starting on August 8, 2013, landlords could no longer legally refuse to rent solely on the basis of an applicant’s status as an HCV program participant.” According to Bethel, director of a legal clinic, in the absence of any marketing campaign to notify landlords and tenants of this change in the law, three years later there remains confusion as to what constitutes illegal source-of-income discrimination: “Some landlords discriminate against HCV participants although they would not do so if they were aware it was illegal, and many tenants are not

aware of what constitutes legally recognized housing discrimination.” As a result, many cases of source-of-income discrimination go unreported.

I asked interviewees would the incidence of discrimination be reduced if landlords and tenants operate in a space of perfect awareness about source-of-income discrimination regulations? Would the percentage of reported discrimination cases increase dramatically? An investigator at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations asserted: “Even if imperfect access to information about current laws was resolved, there would still be an alarming amount of source-of-income housing discrimination happening in Chicago and Cook County.” Interviewees thought that for voucher holders the cost of reporting discrimination outweighed the benefit and that landlords could, therefore, afford to take the risk of discriminating.

City residents must file formal housing discrimination complaints with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, and residents of suburban Cook County file with the Cook County Commission on Human Rights. Staff members in the two organizations explained why housing discrimination continues to goes underreported. Gunn, a Chicago commissioner, said “the source-of-income discrimination complaint process typically takes around fourteen months from the time an HCV participant calls our office to the time a decision is reached as to whether or not discrimination occurred... [The complainant must] continuously communicate with the investigator assigned to the case.” Newsome, a Chicago commissioner, added: “When you consider the formality of the requested responses and the stringency of the timeline, when you consider how many times the complainant will be asked to verify and recount a situation of being discriminated against, it is not difficult to understand why some people choose not to file a complaint even if they are aware they have been the victim of source-of-income discrimination.” Jones, a Cook County commissioner, added: “Besides, even if the ultimate findings side with the complainant and acknowledge that housing discrimination took place, the tangible benefits associated with the ruling are minimal.” For the HCV participant, filing a formal complaint takes too long and

is too complicated to gain access to an apartment from a discriminatory landlord; the commissions do not force landlords to rent the unit (which is usually by that point occupied by someone else) to the complainant; and complainants are not typically awarded significant compensation. The landlord is on the radar of the regulatory agency, but that may only benefit future HCV participants who must also file formal complaints.

Several programs aim to lowering source-of-income housing discrimination. Bethel, director of John Marshall’s legal clinic, said that fair-housing testing “determine[s] how landlords react to different prospective tenants” by using testers who “present as an HCV participant and then note the landlord’s reaction and contrast it with what happens when another fair-housing tester inquires about the same unit but presents as a market-rate renter.” When an HCV participant is told the unit is already taken and a market-rate renter is told the unit is available, the legal clinic calls landlords and informs them about source-of-income discrimination laws. The hope is that educated landlords will not discriminate in the future.

Some organizations have embarked on marketing campaigns to raise landlord awareness. An investigator said that the Chicago Commission on Human Relations calls landlords that were bought to the commission’s attention by HCV participants who decline to file a formal complaints. These phone calls “are intended to notify the landlord about the law without specifically accusing them of wrongdoing.” According to Jones, the Cook County Commission on Human Rights adopted this practice more than a year ago: “Some landlords are genuinely swayed away from continuing to discriminate just by being made aware of its illegality.”

To avoid landlords frustration with CHA inspections, Ludwig said “the CHA is considering a reform that would pay landlords one month’s rent for the period between when an HCV participant indicates intent to move into the unit and when a CHA inspector approves the unit for habitability by the HCV participant.” If implemented, the policy would address a common landlord complaint—they are forced to leave a unit unoccupied during the CHA inspection process.

The Mobility Program

The Mobility Counseling Program is intended to enable HCV families with young children to move into “opportunity areas.” According to Schneider, an attorney and advocate, “the mobility program serves as a key example of how vouchers are in theory a pathway to residence in neighborhoods with greater access to resources and higher quality education.” Ludwig, the CHA officer, stated that “the CHA defines opportunity areas as census tracts with less than 20 percent of its individuals with income below the poverty level and a less than 5 percent concentration in subsidized housing.” The program provides supplementary counseling and support to aid low-income families with young children in their transition into higher-income neighborhoods.

A legal-aid attorney who practices housing law adding that “the mobility program, perhaps more than any other recent policy decision by the CHA, supports on a theoretical level the socioeconomically integrated neighborhoods that recent proponents of mixed-income housing have lauded.” HCV participants are less enthusiastic about the programs lofty goals. Gilbert, an attorney and advocate, explained that “many HCV families who were offered the opportunity to move to opportunity areas declined to participate,” choosing instead to stay in on the South and West sides of the city.

Professor Ewing offered one reason why HCV participants are loyal to their communities: “If generations of family members have attended a specific school, then that school has become part of the fabric of familial life.” General promises of higher quality education will not convince this population to move to an opportunity area. Housing experts also point to the importance of informal social-support structures in determining a family’s location. According to Betsy Shuman-Moore, the director of the Fair Housing Project at the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, “especially in low income households, the support of extended family is absolutely crucial.” Extended family members who live nearby may be able to babysit, cook, clean, or drive. Mary Rosenberg,

a staff attorney at Access Living, explained that “although the mobility program provides transition counseling about fitting into the new neighborhood, it does not replicate the expansive social support implicit in living near family... [Certain] populations may require additional support, including people who are disabled.” The mobility program narrowly targets families with young children, who most likely require their extended families. A legal-aid attorney specializing in voucher preservation commented: “Perhaps if the program were expanded to include adults without children, a more mobile population capable of more easily separating from community support structures, then it would see a more enthusiastic response and increase in take-up rates.”

Policy Reform Proposals

With significant barriers to voucher usage, housing discrimination, and a flawed mobility program, HCV participants do not always find housing stability that many assume comes with acceptance into CHA housing. The majority of interviewees acknowledged these barriers and recommended improvements, including education, streamlined procedural bureaucracy, targeted responses to barriers to voucher usage, and structural reforms.

Education centered primarily on raising awareness of the law. Newsome, a government agency officer, indicated that “a mandatory know-your-rights-and-responsibilities workshop for all landlords in Chicago would provide a ubiquitous way to disseminate information about anti-discrimination source-of-income regulations.” Gunn and Jones, Chicago and Cook County commissioners, respectively, supported informal calls to landlords accused of source-of-income discrimination to notify them of the law and engage in a conversation about changing future behavior before a complainant brought a formal complaint. An HCV participant recommended that participants receive “more explicit information about what source-of-income discrimination is and how to recognize if it is happening to you.”

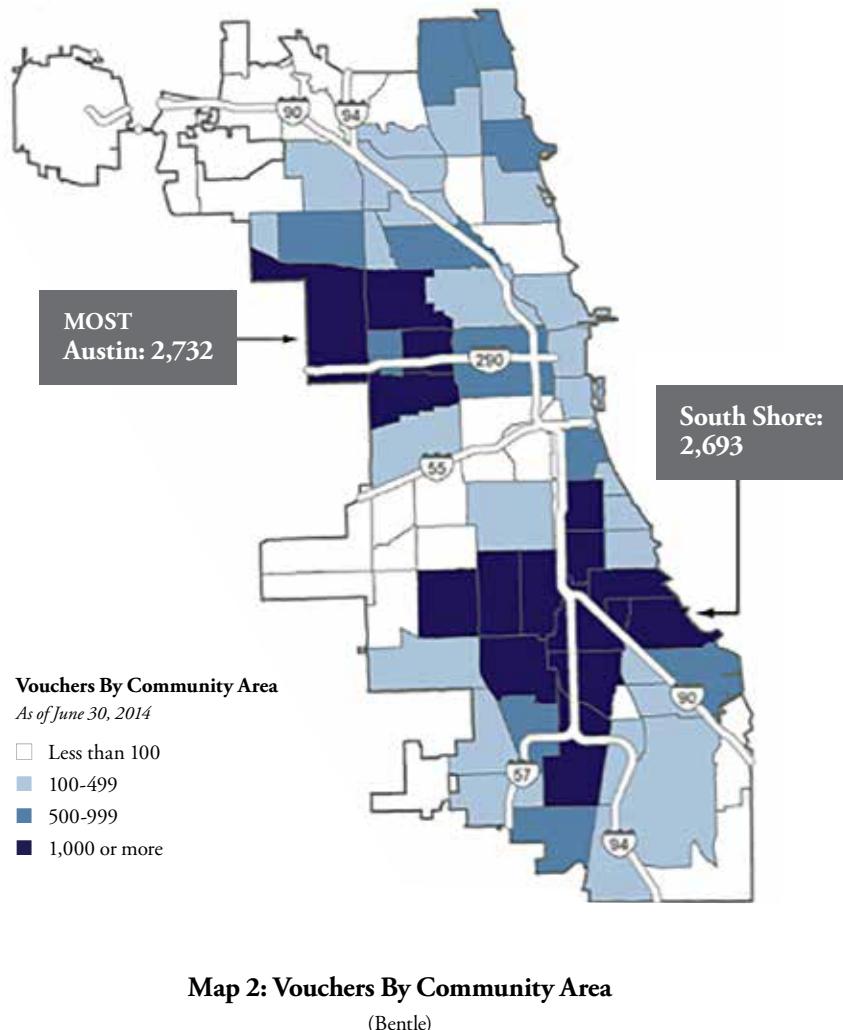
Regarding streamline procedural bureaucracy, an especially disgruntled HCV participant admonished the investigation process of source-of-income discrimination, calling it a “year-long goose chase that led nowhere, proved nothing, was extremely time consuming, and did not succeed in changing the landlord’s behaviors.” Hinterman, a Chicago ward staffer, indicated that a streamlined CHA inspection process would “do wonders to reduce experienced rates of housing discrimination against HCV participants.” Ludwig’s discussion of the CHA proposal to pay landlords a month’s rent as compensation for the length of the inspection process is intriguing. Juracek, a housing advocate, and a legal-aid attorney specializing in voucher preservation want the CHA to provide better customer service and accurate information that would prevent clients from wrongfully losing their access to vouchers: “Clients will call the CHA to ask a simple question and end up waiting in long queues only to receive contradictory information from uninformed and frequently impolite staff members.” One HCV participant recounted how the CHA denied losing her moving papers three times: “If each CHA resident had a single case manager assigned to them, communication would be much clearer and more consistent than it is now.”

Regarding barriers to voucher usage, a legal-aid attorney who practices housing law described the incredible impact of a prior eviction: “When landlords run background checks and look for a past history of eviction, they are using evidence of an eviction case being filed as an assumption of guilt. Even if the case was ultimately dismissed, the mere act of it being filed has the same effect on future housing prospects as an Order of Possession.” One HCV participant, who was continually denied apartments based on a thirty-year-old eviction case, proposed a ten-year limit to eviction records on background checks: “If you have changed yourself and stayed changed for a decade, chances are you’re not going back to your old ways.” Schneider, an attorney and advocate, focused on financial supports, including CHA “funding for the move-in fees and background check fees that HCV participants are currently expected to pay out of pocket.”

The final group of reform proposals was structural changes intended to alter law and public opinions. Choi, an attorney and advocate, proposed “adding source-of-income protections to the Fair Housing Act of 1968... The patchwork geographical protection against source-of-income discrimination exacerbates confusion about the law and harmfully restricts attorneys’ ability to try cases in the most appropriate level of court.” Choi asserts that trying source-of-income cases in state and federal court by reclassifying them as racial discrimination is “imprecise and offensive to the importance of source-of-income protection in its own right.” Taylor, a housing organizer, argued for the importance of “rent control as a means of artificially preserving the rapidly declining stock of affordable housing in Chicago.” Based on the success of rent-control policies in New York City, Taylor has devoted much of 2015 to advocating for a similar rent-control policy in the neighborhoods of Kenwood and Oakland where her organization works. An HCV participant suggested an ambitious campaign to change public opinion about HCV recipients. Targeting the widespread stigma that feeds bias and housing discrimination is the most fundamental of all the reforms proposed, because it underlies the arguments and the efficacy of every other proposal.

Conclusion

Gautreaux left a long shadow on the history of public housing. But was a case that was meant to reduce segregation in public housing successful? At a recent Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance meeting, professionals in the Chicago housing organizations discussed the administrative difficulties associated with using vouchers in the private renting market: vouchers must be redeemed within a few months from the time they are issued; discrimination against voucher holders often goes unreported; and the majority of voucher users live in poor, predominantly African American neighborhoods on the South and West sides (Bentle 2014) (see Map 2).



Gautreaux required the CHA to desegregate its public housing, which many at the time imagined would involve building new public housing in predominantly white areas. Facing backlash from aldermen of predominantly white wards and white citizens who filed a counter case, the CHA found implementing the reforms outlined in *Gautreaux* difficult. The public stigmatization of public-housing residents, neoliberal ideology, and the rhetoric of concentrated poverty as an illness led to the Plan for Transformation, which included the demolition of high-rise public-housing buildings and the dispersal of CHA residents. The CHA used the Housing Choice Voucher program to provide housing for people without bearing the burden of finding the housing or negotiating the price. Additional support services that the CHA offers to public-housing residents are not offered to HCV participants. By emphasizing individual responsibility for securing housing, the voucher program attempted to remove stigma attached to welfare, which is categorized by many as a handout. Nonetheless, the institutionalized racism that prompted *Gautreaux* still exists today in Chicago's system of subsidized housing.

Conversations with legal-aid attorneys, Housing Choice Voucher participants, housing advocates and organizers, and academics have revealed the complexity of the current voucher system. The CHA and others laud vouchers for providing housing on the private market and giving recipients geographic choice about where to live. Other experts lament the shortage of affordable housing in Chicago and the shortage of vouchers—there are 42,506 people on the HCV waitlist, which was last opened to new applicants in 2014 (CHA 2016 at 20). Yet even for voucher holders, credit and eviction-notice checks, high security deposits, and move-in fees create financial barriers for many HCV recipients. Some landlords discriminate against HCV participants for economic (source-of-income) and social reasons; while other landlords wish to avoid CHA inspections that delay occupancy of rental units.

From 2003 to 2013 the Chicago Commission on Human Relations received 773 complaints of housing discrimination (Applied Real Estate Analysis 119). Of these complaints, 49 percent were source-of-income

discrimination and 45 percent involved a refusal to rent/lease (Applied Real Estate Analysis 119). Many cases of housing discrimination go unreported, making the true severity of the problem difficult to assess. Housing experts attribute discriminatory behavior to ignorance on the part of both tenants and landlords about their respective rights, the length of investigations, and inadequate compensation or punishments. In response, legal-aid clinics have expanded income testing, and some organizations are educating landlords and tenants about the law. The CHA, for its part, has responded by proposing to cover one month of rent for inspection.

The Mobility Counseling Program, which is intended to help HCV families with young children move into “opportunity areas,” is flawed. Because the mobility program is not paired with childcare subsidies, families often choose to remain in poor neighborhoods that are nonetheless rich in social connections and informal childcare from family and friends. The mobility program raises questions about the social intentions of the CHA: is the goal to house the most impoverished Chicagoans in inspected apartments? Or, is the goal to prevent intergenerational poverty for certain families by housing them in middle-class neighborhoods with better-ranked schools and low crime rates? The answer is probably somewhere in the middle. I asked the CHA several times for a list of legislative priorities after an employee mentioned that such a list existed. They did not respond to my requests.

Despite the problems facing the Housing Choice Voucher system in Chicago, the majority of my interviewees—the legal-aid attorneys, Housing Choice Voucher participants, housing advocates and organizers, and academics—remained steadfast in their optimism about the future. This optimism was not the result of naivete, but of belief in the importance of housing as a human right and the conviction to keep fighting for increased housing stability among Chicago’s poorest residents. In addition to providing direct legal and supportive services, housing experts advocated for substantive policy changes. Many pointed to simple ignorance and proposed better education, such as know-your-

rights-and-responsibilities workshops for landlords and tenants. Streamlined inspections, clearer communication between the CHA and tenants, and the eradication of old eviction records would remove specific barriers to usage for HCV recipients. Other housing experts focused on structural changes: adding source-of-income protections to the Fair Housing Act of 1968, expanding the number of vouchers, and implementing rent control. The current political climate makes structural reforms unlikely and narrowly targeted local proposals retain a higher chance at successful passage and implementation.

Regardless of the specific policy reforms that different housing experts support, they agreed that the barriers to usage for HCV participants are too high and the legal processes to combat housing discrimination are insufficient. There is also the persistent underlying problem of stigma surrounding recipients of subsidized housing. Until the societal norm of blaming the poor for their poverty changes, housing reform that goes sufficiently far to cultivate housing stability for Chicago’s poorest residents remains infeasible.

Appendix: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

The Aftermath of the Gautreaux Court Cases:

Housing Discrimination and a Shift toward Housing Choice

Vouchers in Chicago

Valerie Gutmann

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SBS IRB No. 16-0956

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Just to be clear, I will be asking about Chicago's Housing Choice Voucher program. I am most interested in understanding your perspectives about housing discrimination.

In addition, I hope to gain a better understanding of how legal experts, policymakers, advocates, and others think about the ability of public housing residents in Chicago to reside in affordable, quality, conveniently located homes. For the purpose of this study, I am looking at the privatization of subsidized housing and barriers to housing access for HCV program participants. I am also interested in the contemporary implications of the Gautreaux court cases.

Do you have any questions before we begin? *Have the interviewee sign the consent form, give a blank copy of the consent form to the interviewee for their own records, and clarify how the interviewee would like to be identified: by name? by organization? by category (legal experts, policymakers, advocates, and others)?*

A. Introduction and Organizational Role / 5 minutes

First, I would like to learn more about [name of organization] and your background.

1. What has been [name of organization] role in Chicago's Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program? (*probe: policy design, management, advocacy, oversight of implementation, etc.*)
2. Can you briefly describe your professional experience as it relates to the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program?
3. What is the purpose of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program?

B. Privatization of subsidized housing / 15 minutes

I want to begin by talking about some of the reasons behind turning to the private sector to provide greater choice to low-income residents in Chicago via the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program.

1. Do you believe an opportunity to rent in the private market offers better/different outcomes than residing in traditional family public housing? Senior public housing? At a mixed-income development?
2. How successful do you feel the private management of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program is? (*probe: for CHA? For residents? For the private sector? Etc.*)
3. If CHA regained control of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and managed the program 'in-house,' do you think outcomes would change for residents? Why? How so?

C. Barriers to securing housing under the Housing Choice Voucher program / 15 minutes

In this next part of our conversation, I want to focus more closely the barriers that voucher holders face in securing a housing unit (*probe: discrimination, procedural issues, enforcement, inspections, and so on*)

1. What do you think is the most significant barrier to securing a housing unit for voucher holders? (*probe, based on response: what are some of the reasons landlords discriminate?*)
2. While the Fair Housing Ordinance is intended to prevent source of income discrimination, it is clear that voucher holders continue to face difficulties in securing housing under the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program in Chicago. How can we better enforce the Fair Housing Ordinance?
3. What are some of the reasons that residents do not file discrimination complaints?
4. How can we educate landlords about their responsibilities under fair housing legislation more broadly?
5. Do you believe the current rent calculation mechanism in place at CHA is sufficient? (*probe: Fair Market Rent for the metro areas*) Would small-area fair market rents afford residents greater choice about where to use their vouchers? At what level should FMR be set, and at what geographic scale? Are there any alternatives to the current system?
6. Is the current system sufficient for voucher holders with accessibility needs? Should rent be calculated differently for these households?

D. Contemporary implications of the Gautreaux cases / 10 minutes

At this point, I would like to ask you about the contemporary implications of the landmark Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority court case (and the later Hills v. Gautreaux Supreme Court case).

1. Do you see the Gautreaux court cases as being an important historical legacy that continues to shape contemporary housing policy in Chicago?
2. *If yes to 1)* In what ways has Gautreaux been integral in shaping this policy?
3. *If no to 1)* What have been some of the more important factors that have shaped contemporary housing policy in Chicago?
4. In your opinion, what specific components of the Gautreaux ruling were formative in the development of the Plan for Transformation and the Housing Choice Voucher program?
5. If the Gautreaux cases had not occurred, in what ways, if at all, do you think the HCV program would be changed? (*probe: existent? Non-existent? Reformed?*)

E. Assessment of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and Policy Recommendations for the Future / 15 minutes

Finally, I'd like to ask you to step back and consider how you would assess the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program as a whole.

1. What factors do you think contribute to the success and/or challenges of using vouchers in the private market? (*probe: In what ways are the unit inspections an asset or a detriment to the HCV program?*)
2. What is your sense of how the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program has impacted the supply and demand of both affordable and subsidized rental housing?

3. Do you have any suggestions on alternative strategies that Chicago should consider in order to provide affordable housing for low-income residents?

4. We know that voucher dispersal strategies focus on income integration and that the majority of CHA residents are black. In what ways do you think race is relevant within the policy design and implementation of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program?

5. What policy recommendations about Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program reforms would you like to suggest to CHA, the city, or federal officials?

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. Before we finish up, are there any individuals that you would recommend I reach out to interview for this study?

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“We Need More Power”



The Bargainer Role and Interorganizational Social Capital on Chicago’s Southeast Side

NORA HARDY, AB’17

“We need more power.” This simple statement, spoken by a Southeast Environmental Task Force staff member during an interview with me, summarizes some of the main tensions and struggles involved in environmental work in this complex area of Chicago. Local environmental groups have long fought for environmental justice on the Southeast Side in a grassroots effort. Will working with larger, better-funded “outsider” environmental groups—organizations that are increasingly looking to build networks of local support in the region, but that often have different organizational priorities—give these grassroots groups the power they need to pursue local environmental concerns? Can these outsider and local environmental organizations, who come to the table with different histories and missions, work together in ways that benefit all groups involved? This paper explores these questions.

Introduction

The high biodiversity and rare habitat types of Chicago’s Southeast Side have attracted conservation-focused environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) since the 1970s. At the same time, the region has played host to a number of much smaller, local grassroots groups that

have evolved out of environmental justice concerns in the area, namely, the region's past industrial pollution and its lingering effects on the health of community members. This paper will focus on interactions between three groups currently and historically involved in environmental work on the Southeast Side: large environmental NGOs, grassroots environmental groups, and local residents. For the purposes of this paper, "large environmental NGOs" or "outsider environmental organizations" refers to city, county, or nationwide nongovernmental environmental groups that do not originate from the Southeast Side (the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, and Friends of the Forest Preserves). "Local" or "grassroots groups" refer to environmental groups that began on the Southeast Side and have always been led by Southeast Side residents (the Southeast Environmental Task Force and People for Community Recovery). "Local residents" refers to individuals living on the Southeast Side who are not organizational staff.

During the 1980s and 1990s, relations between larger environmental NGOs and grassroots groups working on the Southeast Side were tense and disagreements were common, largely due to differences in organizational priorities and competition for funding. Tensions between these organizations have cooled in recent years, and larger environmental NGOs have stepped up efforts to engage with local residents. The aim of this thesis is, first, to identify the historical and present problems that have muddled relationships between these three overarching parties; second, by drawing from the region's unique historical background, interviews with organizational staff, and a review of the academic literature, to assess the applicability of bargainer theory of inter-NGO relationships¹ to environmental groups of various sizes working on the Southeast Side; and, third, to broach an important underlying question: does the process of bargaining ultimately lead to results that are mutually beneficial to *both* large and local environmental groups working in the

1. See the section on theory for a discussion of the bargainer role for large environmental NGOs drawn from Princen, Finger, and Bryant.

region? In other words, if bargaining does occur, is it a process that helps both of these types of groups advance their individual goals and objectives?

Given the Southeast Side's strong, historical base of grassroots environmental work, I first explore the applicability of the bargainer arrangement on the Southeast Side. In such an arrangement, large environmental NGOs build social capital and support for their *own* work in the region by acting as intermediary bargainers, providing local groups with the resources they need to advance environmental issues that are of high concern to *local residents*. In this way, the concerns of grassroots environmental groups are backed by the increased funding and reach of larger environmental NGOs. At the same time, by forming strong positive relationships with local grassroots groups—and by extension, the local constituencies they serve and influence—large environmental NGOs can advance their own goals via their support of local projects and interests. Rather than aggressively asserting their own objectives and plans, which has caused tension between environmental groups working on the Southeast Side, larger environmental NGOs seek to find points of resonance between their own missions and those of grassroots groups.

The Sierra Club's founding role in the creation of the Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago, which supports connections among grassroots environmental groups across the South Side, demonstrates the real-world possibilities of this type of bargainer collaboration on the Southeast Side.² Despite the recent successes of the bargainer role in the region, I stress that, in accordance with the geographer Raymond Bryant's criticisms, this set of relationships may not be the only solution to the region's interorganizational conflicts. Rather, the current coalescence of certain goals between large NGOs and local environmental groups make bargaining mutually beneficial. In the future, if significant

2. Michael Hawthorne, "Environmental Justice Groups Fight Pollution Problems on Southeast Side," *Chicago Tribune*, September 15, 2011.

changes in organizational priorities and strategies were to arise, then the collaboration between large NGOs and local environmental groups may no longer work.

The body of this paper includes (1) a review of literature aimed at familiarizing readers with the specifics of the bargainer theory and the role of social capital in environmental work more generally; (2) a historical background section, which establishes the origins of the Southeast Side's strong history of grassroots environmental justice activism and identifies past sources of interorganizational conflict; (3) an updated look at these relationships, drawing from interviews with organizational staff and a review of mission statements to identify current priorities and interactions; and (4) a synthesis of my findings in which I conclude that the bargainer role does currently foster amiable relationships with grassroots groups and local residents on the Southeast Side, but will require diligence in order to avoid the region's past history of interorganizational conflict.

Why focus on interactions between these three parties?

To put it simply: because environmental organizations working in the region have deemed mutually beneficial interactions between these three groups to be desirable and important to the success of their respective goals for the region.³ Past and present attempts at coalition building by environmental organizations, along with more recent attempts by certain environmental groups to step up community outreach in the area demonstrate a desire for increased collaboration between these parties. Interviews with staff from environmental organizations working on the Southeast Side indicate that these groups are cognizant of their relationships with one another and local residents, and feel that positive interactions between these groups will be beneficial to their own goals.

3. See the section on theory for an in-depth description of the meaning of social capital and its importance for environmental work.

This thesis, therefore, operates on the assumption that both large and small environmental organizations working on the Southeast Side have an interest in maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with these other parties.

Why should Chicagoans care about environmental work on the Southeast Side?

Ecological and human health on the Southeast Side has consequences for the Chicago region as a whole; therefore, understanding environmental work in the region is significant for all Chicago residents. For Chicagoans who are already interested in land conservation, ecology, outdoor recreation, and environmental justice, the importance of environmental work on the Southeast Side may be clear, or quickly become obvious. The region's high biodiversity, rare habitat types, and history of pollution make it a site of interest for environmentally conscious individuals across the city.

Chicagoans who are less engaged with these topics are indirectly affected by environmental work on the Southeast Side. In order to make the city more inviting to all residents, the city needs to "expand and improve parks and open spaces" because of their aesthetic, recreational, and ecological value.⁴ Open space also serves as "green infrastructure," especially ecosystem services like flood protection and water treatment, because of the increased rainfall predicted for coming years due to climate change.⁵ The Southeast Side's rare wetland habitats, some of the last remaining in Chicago, are clearly important to the region's overall sustainable future. It is important to understand how environmental organizations in this region operate and if there are any opportunities for positive changes in interactions among larger environmental NGOs,

4. *Go to 2040: Comprehensive Regional Plan* (Chicago: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2014), 15, 117–20.

5. Ibid., 121, 126–35.

grassroots environmental groups, and communities. One recent example is the Chicago Park District's purchase and restoration of Big Marsh, a large wetland fragment to the northeast of Lake Calumet, and subsequent development of the Big Marsh Bike Park. Developments like this demonstrate the city's interest in the preservation and renewal of degraded habitats, both as an economic and ecological asset.

The Southeast Side's environmental justice concerns may seem more niche and disconnected from the lives of most Chicagoans, but they do influence the city's annual health-care budgets. The city has allocated around \$150 million for health for 2016, much of this investment provides "health programming for families and those most vulnerable," particularly uninsured low-income residents.⁶ Residents of Southeast Side neighborhoods, like Altgeld Gardens and other "toxic doughnut" areas that have high exposure to postindustrial waste report higher levels of cancer and respiratory problems than residents in other areas of the city. The present and future development of health problems in these vulnerable populations should be a concern, not only for their well-being and quality of life, but because of the potentially significant future costs associated with treating serious illnesses in a large segment of the population.

Theory: The Bargainer Role and Social Capital in Environmental Work

I begin with a brief review of relevant literature on social capital, the difference between environmental justice and conservationist ideologies, and the implications of the bargainer theory on large NGOs in environmental work.

6. Rahm Emanuel, *City of Chicago 2016 Budget Overview* (Chicago: City of Chicago, 2016).

What is social capital and why do environmental NGOs want more of it?

Social capital is broadly defined as "the variety of quite specific benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information, and cooperation associated with social networks."⁷ For an environmental organization social capital is the potential benefits that an organization receives from building positive relationships with other parties: be they governments, other environmental organizations, or communities. The benefits of social capital may come in many forms, including community outreach, volunteer engagement and support, and inter-NGO coalition building (sharing resources between environmental groups to address certain needs and working towards common goals).⁸

Environmental NGOs pursue social capital for a variety of related reasons. Smaller local organizations tend to be interested in "reaching up" to larger better-funded environmental NGOs.⁹ These larger NGOs can provide resources to grassroots groups that would otherwise be out of reach, for example, access to legal representation, grant-writing experts, connections with press and media, or even on-the-ground personnel to help manage events and campaigns. For small, local environmental organizations—many of which are primarily run by volunteers and have very limited budgets, as is the case for Southeast Side groups—the ability of larger environmental NGOs to provide resources is a major draw for building social capital.

7. "About Social Capital," Harvard University Kennedy School, n.d. Web, 2017.

8. Cathy C. Conrad and Krista G. Hilchey, "A Review of Citizen Science and Community-based Environmental Monitoring: Issues and Opportunities," *Environmental Monitoring Assessment* 176, no. 1–4 (May 2011): 273–91.

9. Thomas Princen and Matthias Finger, *Environmental NGOs in World Politics: Linking the Local and the Global* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Larger environmental NGOs, on the other hand, can build social capital by “reaching down” to grassroots groups and residents.¹⁰ These better-funded groups are generally less interested in monetary resources and more interested in forming relationships with a large base of local people. The benefits of such relationships to large environmental NGOs are twofold: first, community members can provide a “cost effective alternative” to hired staff.¹¹ Many environmental organizations, especially those involved in conservation and restoration work, may be drawn to the low-cost and high-volume assistance that community members can potentially provide.¹² Second, on a deeper level, community involvement in environmental restoration and monitoring activities promotes public support for habitat conservation and other environmental issues.¹³ There are several modern examples on the Southeast Side of “reaching down” by larger environmental groups active in the region. Examples from other urban areas, like Portland (the Community Watershed Stewardship Program) and New York City (Million Trees NYC), demonstrate the powerful, positive impacts that citizen involvement can have on environmental work.¹⁴

The draw of increased social capital attracts both large environmental NGOs and grassroots groups, but difficulties in maintaining relationships with community members and other NGOs are both evident on

10. Ibid.

11. Conrad and Hilchey, “A Review of Citizen Science.”

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Vivek Shandas and W. Barry Messer, “Fostering Green Communities through Civic Engagement: Community-based Environmental Stewardship in the Portland Area,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 74, no. 4 (2008): 408–18; Dana Fisher, Erika S. Svendsen, and James J. T. Connolly, *Urban Environmental Stewardship and Civic Engagement: How Planting Trees Strengthens the Roots of Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2015).

the Southeast Side during the region’s past and present. So far, attempts at collaboration between large environmental NGOs, local groups, and Southeast Side residents have been mixed: while there have been more positive interactions in recent years, the region’s past reveals a history of conflict between these groups.

Conservation versus Environmental Justice

The priorities of groups within the environmental movement have diversified extensively since the emergence of the first American environmental organizations in the late nineteenth century. As discussed in more detail in the Historical Background section, a particularly noteworthy shift was the emergence of large numbers of small, local, resident-led environmental groups, often referred to as “grassroots” efforts, in the 1980s and ’90s.¹⁵ The memberships of these groups were generally people of color or white blue-collar workers and they tended to focus on health issues caused by local pollution, unlike larger environmental organizations, which generally focused on the conservation of natural areas and wildlife.¹⁶

Local activists used the term “environmental justice” to argue that humans who are socially vulnerable due to their class or race also suffer from the effects of human activity, particularly industrialization and pollution.¹⁷ While the terms “environmental justice” and “conservatism” are certainly complex, for my purposes, I focus on the difference in how these two realms of thought construct the relationship between humans and the environment and how this difference affects

15. Nicholas Freudenberg and Carol Steinsapir, “Not in Our Backyards: The Grassroots Environmental Movement,” *Society & Natural Resources* 4, no. 3 (1991): 235–45.

16. Ibid.

17. Alejandro Colsa Perez et al., “Evolution of the Environmental Justice Movement: Activism, Formalization and Differentiation,” *Environmental Research Letters* 10, no. 10 (October 2015): 1–12; Freudenberg and Steinsapir. “Not in Our Backyards.”

organizations' goals and aims. This difference is particularly important in the Calumet region, a patchwork of industrial and remnant natural sites that attracts individuals and organizations who ascribe to both these ideologies, opening up opportunities for both collaboration *and* conflict.

Large Environmental NGOs as Intermediary Bargainers

Historically, small local environmental groups on the Southeast Side often struggled to gain influence over and access to government officials, media, certain industries, and other parties. Large environmental NGOs can build social capital with local groups and communities by providing resources normally out of their reach.

Princen and Finger argue that environmental NGOs can serve a unique bargaining role between grassroots groups, communities, and state government. Individuals and grassroots organizations represent a “bottom-up” model of power by “reaching up” to government and bringing their concerns to policymakers. Governments, in return, operate “top down” by bringing their own interests and priorities down to the people via laws and policies. Princen and Finger argue that larger environmental NGOs can mediate bottom-up and top-down processes, promoting compromise between the government and locals. They argue that this unique ability stems from the “legitimacy” and “transparency” of large NGOs: “In the environmentalism realm, NGOs are perceived as defenders of values that governments and corporation are all too will to compromise”¹⁸ Princen and Finger claim that the public perceives environmental NGOs as less easily swayed by economic influences than governments and businesses, allowing them to serve as bargainers through which local needs are communicated to government. In situations where environmental crises are

unfolded across city, state, or national boundaries, NGOs are not bound by political boundaries and can act more freely than government officials. Large-scale NGOs have the ability to “create linkages between the local and global” by using their platform and resources to bring publicity to local environmental issues; large NGOs’ flexible geographic boundaries and separation from the state give them this unique ability to act as intermediaries between locals and government.¹⁹

While Princen and Finger’s model is elegant in its simplicity, many environmental NGOs bring their own ideology to the table and do not serve as unbiased bargainers between the state and the people. For example, the divergence in ideology between the conservationist priorities of large environmental NGOs and the environmental justice concerns of grassroots groups during the 1980s and ’90s made it almost impossible for these different types of organizations to collaborate.

Bryant characterizes large NGOs as “moral entrepreneurs” with their own interests and priorities, who rely on creating an illusion of impartiality and objectivity to maintain credibility: “it is when they are seen as fighting for the Right and Good on behalf of others and not simply for themselves that NGOs may actually be best placed to acquire power.”²⁰ Bryant argues that many large NGOs gain power by maintaining a reputation of being aligned with dominant forms of morality, but morality is not constant, may “differ from place to place,” and is an outcome of “specific cultural and historical moments.”²¹ Larger NGOs’ ability to serve as successful bargainers is contingent and may no longer be effective if they cannot maintain positive, mutually beneficial relationships with local groups or if priorities (Bryant’s “moralities”) between groups change.

19. Ibid., 42.

20. Bryant, *Nongovernmental Organizations*, 18.

21. Ibid., 22.

18. Princen and Finger, *Environmental NGOs in World Politics*; Raymond L. Bryant, *Nongovernmental Organizations in Environmental Struggles: Politics and the Making of Moral Capital in the Philippines* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 35.

Historical Background: A Brief History of Environmental Work on the Postindustrial Southeast Side

The Southeast Side is a postindustrial region still reeling from the withdrawal of major industries. Historically, its communities and grassroots groups have been torn between improving the environment and choosing economic improvement, and various environmental organizations have had varying goals and priorities for the region. Regional geographer Mark J. Bouman aptly frames the situation: “the notion that what is important is in dispute, is, in fact, part of the point: as citizens and others who work in the Calumet region struggle to rehabilitate the economy and the environment, what rises to the top of the agenda depends on how the region is comprehended.”²²

Industrialization

Chicago’s Southeast Side is part of a larger ecological area known as the Calumet, which stretches across Lake Michigan’s southern Illinois shore, through Indiana, and into southwest Michigan. As the meeting point of a number of habitat types—deciduous forest, coniferous forest, prairie, and wetlands—the Calumet supported abundant ecological niches, allowing for the development of high biodiversity in plant and animal life.²³ The region’s shoreline was dominated by a rare “dune-and-swale” habitat: a series of elevated, drier sand dunes alternating with wet low-land swales that emanate outward from the shoreline. The intense, compact ecological variation that occurs within a dune-and-swale

habitat fosters biological diversity,²⁴ and its abundant food and raw materials first attracted permanent white settlements in the 1830s.²⁵

Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, the extraction-based economy of the small number of Calumet residents began to alter the region’s natural landscape. Hunting and dredging of the area’s sprawling wetlands for farmland depleted the region’s once immense biodiversity.²⁶ Sand and clay reserves, which are plentiful in dune-and-swale habitats, were transported to factories and made into bricks and glass to support the growth of Chicago. The construction of the railroads in the 1850s supported the transportation of these raw materials.²⁷ The Great Chicago Fire in 1871 prompted the growth of the steel industry on the Southeast Side, whose steel helped rebuild the city with the world’s first tall buildings.²⁸ The invention of the Bessemer process in 1857—a revolution that allowed steel to be produced cheaply and in large quantities—aided this growth.²⁹ American demand for steel during the First and Second World Wars kept the Calumet region’s steel industry booming through the mid-twentieth century.³⁰

The region’s natural environment played a significant role in determining its ultimate industrialization. Remnant wetland and drained marshes tend to flood, which discouraged building of large amounts of

24. Ibid.

25. Kenneth J. Schoon, *Calumet Beginnings: Ancient Shorelines and Settlements at the South End of Lake Michigan* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2003).

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Boebel, *The Evolving Calumet*.

29. *Feasibility Study* (Chicago: Calumet National Heritage Area Initiative, July 2017).

30. Ibid.

22. Mark J. Bouman, “A Mirror Cracked: Ten Keys to the Landscape of the Calumet Region,” *Journal of Geography* 100, no. 3 (2001): 104–10.

23. Chris Boebel, dir., *The Evolving Calumet: A Journey* (Chicago: Calumet Ecological Park Association, 2006), DVD.

housing stock and devalued the land's value in the eyes of many developers.³¹ The region was still sparsely populated and cheap land was plentiful up until the late nineteenth century. Where housing developers had seen nothing of value, the steel industry saw promise. Compared to Chicago's expensive and heavily industrialized downtown, the Southeast Side provided space for expansive steel plants and the Calumet River's connections to the Mississippi River and Great Lakes made transportation of the heavy materials for making steel cheaper and faster.³² The region's wetlands were even useful to the steel industry as dump sites for waste, like Big Marsh, which was used as a slag dump for the now closed Acme Steel, located directly north of the marsh.³³

The Making of Southeast Side Communities

Chicago experienced rapid population growth during its march toward industrialization. Aided by waves of emigration out of Europe and the annexations of smaller towns (the Southeast Side was not annexed by the City of Chicago until 1889), the city's population grew exponentially, from four thousand in the 1840s to over one million by 1890. The growth of the steel industry during the late nineteenth century prompted the dense settling of the Calumet and the construction of much of its permanent housing stock. Industry tycoons Adolph Hegewisch of the Pressed Steel Car Company and George Pullman of the Pullman Palace Car Company created the company towns and housing of Hegewisch and Pullman, which retain the names of their developers.³⁴ Many European immigrants settled on the Southeast Side and took these relatively

high-paying factory jobs.³⁵ With the decline of the steel industry, the descendants of European factory workers, who were generally middle class, left in search of other work. The Southeast Side remained a majority White area until the 1980s and '90s, at which point it became a majority African American and Latino area.³⁶ As a whole, the city's population began to decline during the 1970s and '80s, gradually shrinking from its peak of about 3.4 million to its current level of about 2.7 million. Chicago's largest population losses have occurred on the city's far South Side (encompassing the Southeast Side), which has lost almost 150,000 residents since 2000 alone.³⁷

A Divided "Environment"

The planned company towns on the Southeast Side created relatively isolated communities in close proximity to factories, unlike the more organic expansion of neighborhoods seen in other areas of Chicago. Similarly, the construction of post-World War II, racially segregated Chicago Housing Authority communities such as Altgeld Gardens and Trumbull Park—initially created for returning veterans, but later used by many low-income Chicagoans—contributed to the Southeast Side's hallmark patchwork of industrial, postindustrial, natural, and residential areas that is seen to this day.³⁸

35. Ibid.

36. "Chicago Racial Demographics, 1910–2000," *Huffington Post*, December 6, 2017.

37. Greg Hinz, "As Loop Population Booms, South Side's Plummets," *Chicago Tribune*, December 13, 2016.

38. Beverly Anne Lesueur, "Altgeld Gardens: The Evolution of Culture and Education in an Isolated African American Community," (PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2010), 1–14; D. Bradford Hunt, "Trumbull Park Homes Race Riots, 1953–1954," in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, ed. James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, Janice L. Reiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

31. Ibid.

32. Boebel, *The Evolving Calumet*.

33. *Feasibility Study*.

34. Schoon, *Calumet Beginning*.

This complex matrix attracted many different kinds of environmental groups, from those focused on conserving natural areas and species (e.g., the Nature Conservancy), to those invested in the clean energy and sustainable development (e.g., the Sierra Club), to those interested in human health and environmental justice (e.g., People for Community Recovery).

The Calumet region's prairies and wetlands are surviving remnants of a once vast ecosystem that spanned across the southern coast of Lake Michigan (fig. 1).³⁹ Though greatly fragmented by industrial and residential development over the past century, these habitats still host a number of endangered species, and Chicago's Southeast Side remains one of the most biologically diverse areas in the state of Illinois.⁴⁰ Of particular note is the region's "food, nesting sites, and resting points for a wide variety of migrating birds" (fig. 2).⁴¹ This rich ecology has drawn the interest of older, conservation-minded environmental organizations.

Local groups, like the Southeast Environmental Task Force and People for Community Recovery, emerged in the 1980s to address regional pollution caused by the region's industrial past and its effect on human health. Part of a national trend of grassroots organizing for environmental justice, these groups focused on postindustrial waste sites and the introduction of garbage landfills in the area. Their efforts to cleanup postindustrial sites were not centered on the preservation of habitats or species, but on the improvement of human health.⁴²

39. Jefferey M. Levengood, Walter J. Marcisz, Allison M. Klement, and Margaret A. Kurcz, "Nesting Ecology of Black-crowned Night-Herons at Lake Calumet Wetlands," *Illinois Natural History Survey Bulletin* 37, no. 3 (August 2005): 95–108.

40. Ibid.

41. Bouman, "A Mirror Cracked," 106.

42. Sherry Cable and Michael Benson, "Acting Locally: Environmental Injustice and the Emergence of Grass-roots Environmental Organizations," *Social Problems* 40, no. 4 (November 1993): 464–77.

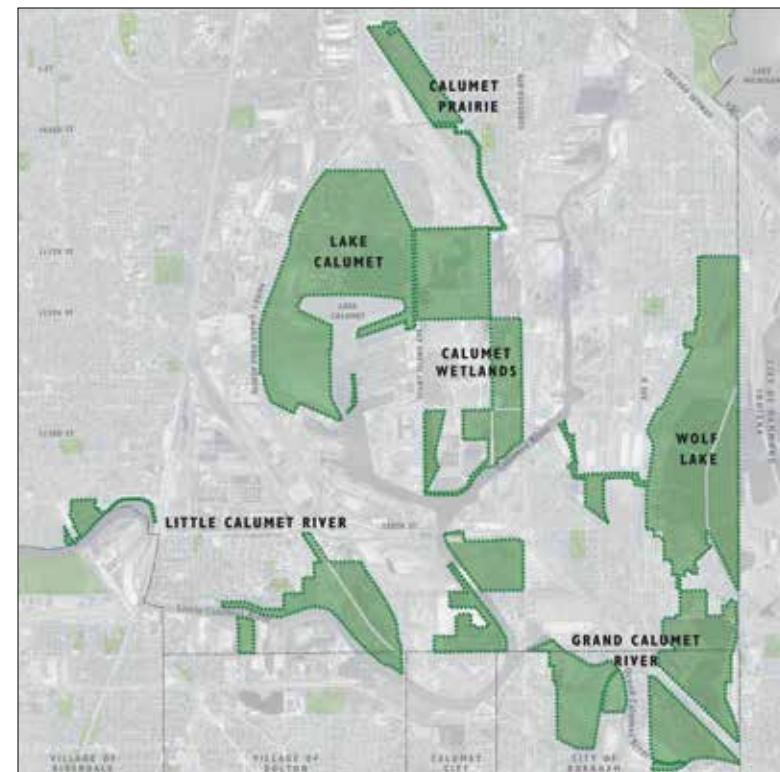


Figure 1. The major natural areas on Chicago's Southeast Side.

The Calumet Open Space Reserve Plan, City of Chicago,
https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/zlup/Sustainable_Development/Publications/Calumet_Open_Space_Reserve/COSR_maps.pdf.



Figure 2. Black-crowned night-herons perched along Lake Calumet, near a coking plant.

Photograph by Michael Jeffords, Illinois Natural History Survey.

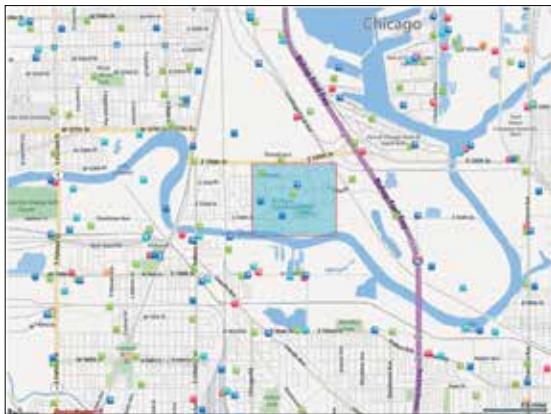


Figure 3. Altgeld Gardens and surrounding hazardous toxins, indicated by colored squares.

Brandi M. White and Eric S. Hall, "Perceptions of Environmental Health Risks among Residents of the 'Toxic Doughnut': Opportunities for Risk Screening and Community Mobilization," *BMC Public Health* 15 (December 2015).

The Origins of Environmental Justice Activism on the Southeast Side

The movement of heavy industry in to and out of the Southeast Side and the greater Calumet region has left its mark on the landscape and the bodies of local residents. Although many of the area's factories have been defunct or demolished since the 1980s and '90s, the by-products of a century of operation remains. Today, around 90 percent of Chicago's landfills—along with EPA-designated postindustrial Superfund Sites like the "Calumet Cluster"—are located on the city's Southeast Side.⁴³ The Calumet region is home to many "toxic doughnuts," residential pockets boxed in by sources of toxic emissions, whose "residents bear a disproportionate price of the region's industrial past and present in a variety of physical ailments."⁴⁴ Toxic doughnuts of the Southeast Side, like the Altgeld Gardens neighborhood, have some of Chicago's highest mortality rates for environmentally related lung cancer and stroke, in part due to residents' above-average exposure to radon, asbestos, and other airborne toxins (fig. 3).⁴⁵

The seeds of community concern surrounding environmental pollution and human health were planted on the Southeast Side even before the national boom in environmental justice activism of the 1980s. As early as the 1940s, community members began to be concerned about local pollution. A former Altgeld Gardens resident Rosemarie Harding recalled: "There were days when the old smells of what lay beneath the

43. Christine J. Walley, *Exit Zero: Family and Class in Postindustrial Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

44. Bouman, "A Mirror Cracked," 108.

45. Brandi M. White and Eric S. Hall, "Perceptions of Environmental Health Risks among Residents of the 'Toxic Doughnut': Opportunities for Risk Screening and Community Mobilization," *BMC Public Health* 15 (December 2015).

earth would come up and pinch the inside of your nose. Some people said the dump held chemical refuse and that the fumes were noxious.”⁴⁶

A mid-1970s survey of environmental attitudes across Chicago revealed that residents of Southeast Side neighborhoods, like Calumet Heights and Pullman, had higher levels of concern about issues such as pollution than wealthier areas on the city’s North Side. The survey’s findings quashed assumptions that “concern about environmental pollution is a white, middle-class, suburban phenomenon.”⁴⁷

Deindustrialization and the Growth of Southeast Side Environmental Groups

The deindustrialization of the Southeast Side in the 1980s and ’90s pushed the environmental justice movement to the forefront, and was a critical time period that has shaped the Southeast Side’s current economy, society, and environment. Wisconsin Steel closed in 1980. The Calumet region continued to lose industrial jobs throughout the 1980s that had sustained its residents’ middle-class lives. Nationally, the steel industry employed around 400,000 individuals in 1980 and only around 164,000 in 1990.⁴⁸ Waste management companies bought vast tracts of blighted, cheap land vacated by industry for landfills and garbage incineration plants (often without the input of community members).⁴⁹

It was in this context that several local environmental organizations

46. Rosemarie Freaney Harding and Rachel Elizabeth Harding, *Remnants: A Memoir of Spirit, Activism, and Mothering* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 76–77.

47. Susan Caris Cutter, “Community Concern for Pollution: Social and Environmental Influences,” *Environment and Behavior* 13, no. 1 (January 1981): 106–7.

48. James B. Lane, *The Uncertainty of Everyday Life: A Social History of the Calumet Region during the 1980s* (Valparaiso, IN: Home Mountain Printing, 2007).

49. David Naguib Pellow, *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002); Boebel, *The Evolving Calumet*.

formed, including two groups that remain active today: People for Community Recovery (1982) and the Southeast Environmental Task Force (1989). People for Community Recovery, under the leadership of Hazel M. Johnson, a neighborhood resident who would later be dubbed a “mother of the environmental justice movement,” responded to the heightened occurrence of certain cancers in the Altgeld Gardens neighborhood.⁵⁰ The task force was a conglomeration of a number of smaller grassroots groups led by local resident Marian Byrnes; it opposed the proposed construction of a new garbage incinerator on the former Wisconsin Steel site.⁵¹ These groups have continued to fight for local environmental interests over the past several decades.

Historical Relationships between Environmental Groups on the Southeast Side

Local Southeast Side environmental groups have gone through periods of cooperation and discord.⁵² Some collaborations were mutually beneficial, for example, the coalition known as CURE (Citizens United to Reclaim the Environment) successfully fought against the construction of a landfill at O’Brien Lock and Dams during the 1980s. Disagreements were not uncommon: for example, the question of the expansion of garbage incineration facilities and the location of Chicago’s proposed third airport, which would drain Lake Calumet and its adjacent marshes, created tensions between local groups during the 1980s and ’90s.⁵³ Some groups supported limited expansion of garbage incineration facilities, under the assumption that the potential economic benefits would outweigh the dangers to human health or the environment. People for Community

50. Margaret Ramirez, “Hazel M. Johnson, 1935–2011.” *Chicago Tribune*, January 16, 2011.

51. “History,” Southeast Environmental Task Force, n.d. Web, 2017.

52. Pellow, *Garbage Wars*; Walley, *Exit Zero*.

53. Pellow, *Garbage Wars*.

Recovery, which had experience with several incineration facilities in close proximity to Altgeld Gardens, felt that their neighborhood was likely to be targeted for new facilities and was steadfastly opposed to more landfills.

Mayor Richard M. Daley proposed a third airport in 1990, which would have demolished Hegewisch and smaller portions of surrounding neighborhoods.⁵⁴ While the airport could have brought jobs to the struggling region, Hegewisch residents feared for their homes and their natural areas. In an attempt to highlight the area's rich biodiversity, local environmental activists engaged in "the Great *Thismia* Hunt of 1991," a campaign that asked local residents and experts to comb Hegewisch's marshlands for an incredibly rare species of plant, thought to only exist in the Calumet.⁵⁵ The public outcry and protest from Hegewisch residents eventually squashed the proposal.

Racial and class conflicts between local environmental groups on the Southeast Side affected organizations' relationships with outside institutions and organizations. Though residents across the Southeast Side suffered economically after deindustrialization, not all neighborhoods suffered equally. During the 1980s, residents of Hegewisch, a primarily White neighborhood, were "fighting to hold on to 'middle class' respectability" and Altgeld Gardens' primarily African American population had "long struggled to find any work at all (fig. 4)."⁵⁶ People for Community Recovery, an African American group based in Altgeld Gardens, built bridges with the middle- and upper-class academic, public health, and environmental justice worlds. The Southeast Environmental Task Force, based in Hegewisch, formed connections with middle- and upper-class, conservationist groups that at the time were more focused

54. James Strong, "Southeast Side Airport Studied," *Chicago Tribune*, February 8, 1990.

55. Cynthia L. Ogorek, *Images of America: Along the Calumet River* (Chicago: Arcadia, 2004).

56. Walley, *Exit Zero*, 137.



Figure 4. Altgeld Gardens and Hegewisch neighborhoods.

Green Economic Industrial Corridor, Southeast Environmental Task Force, <http://setaskforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Calumet-Vision-Plan.jpg>.

on restoration and recreation than human health.⁵⁷ Racial and class differences also contributed to different environmental priorities: People for Community Recovery did not find the same commonalities that Hegewisch had with the larger, wealthy, and overwhelmingly white environmental NGOs.

Local Groups and Larger Environmental NGOs

Interactions between local groups and larger NGOs were fairly rocky during the 1980s and '90s. Though both large and small organizations have certain shared goals, the subtle differences in priorities between more traditional conservation work versus human-centric interests (like health and economic development), competition for funding, and "credit"

57. Ibid.

for environmental work have contributed to disagreements between groups, as evidenced by the following statement from People for Community Recovery's executive director Hazel Johnson in 1993:

We don't need White people to speak for us. We speak for ourselves... We ain't going to participate if they come with their own agenda. We want our own agenda. The Sierra Club and the Wildlife Federation use information from grassroots groups like us and take it back to their offices to get grants and we don't get any of the money.⁵⁸

Such criticisms of large conservationist organizations by local groups were widespread in the United States at the time. In 1990 a group of environmental justice organizations and activists across the nation signed a letter condemning the limited outlook of traditional environmentalist groups, which they dubbed the "Group of Ten."⁵⁹ Activists argued that the Group of Ten ignored the economic suffering of postindustrial low-income communities of color.⁶⁰ One well-publicized critique of the Group of Ten focused on the Nature Conservancy and the Audubon Society's opposition to sustainable development by Hispanic shepherds in New Mexico, on the grounds that grazing would damage protected natural areas.⁶¹

58. Pellow, *Garbage Wars*, 76.

59. Richard Moore et al, "Letter to the National Wildlife Federation," Southwest Organizing Project, March 16, 1990. Web, EJnet.org: Web Resources for Environmental Justice Activists, 2018.

60. According to Pellow, "Big Ten" or "Big Green" are environmental organizations with a national or international reach: Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Defense Fund, Greenpeace, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and World Wildlife Fund.

61. Pellow, *Garbage Wars*.

Takeaways from the History of the Southeast Side

This brief history of environmental work in the Southeast Side reveals that environmental groups have struggled to interact in mutually beneficial ways due to subtle but significant differences in organizational goals. Many of the larger environmental NGOs were formed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and sought to preserve a pristine nature from industrialization and urban development.⁶² Though these larger groups are not bound to their founding principles, elements of their preservationist mind-set were evident in their disagreements with local environmental groups during the 1980s and '90s.

The locally led environmental groups that remain active in the region, People for Community Recovery and the Southeast Environmental Task Force, were formed during the 1980s as part of a national boom in grassroots environmental activism, centered around the related issues of environmental justice, pollution, and human health.⁶³ Some local groups, like People for Community Recovery, felt that larger groups were taking advantage of them for personal gain and not sharing the benefits they reaped. The issue of credit and compensation was highly important to these local groups, who operated—and continue to operate—primarily through volunteer support with very few external sources of funding.

Class, race, and strong ties to neighborhoods often prevented collaboration during the 1980s and '90s in important debates over the expansion of incineration facilities and the location of a proposed third airport. For some local environmental groups, the economic gains associated with a

62. Robert J. Brulle, "Environmental Discourse and Social Movement Organizations: A Historical and Rhetorical Perspective on the Development of U.S. Environmental Organizations," *Sociological Inquiry* 66, no. 1 (January 2007): 58–83; three of the large, most active environmental NGOs on the Southeast Side—Sierra Club (1892), Audubon Society (1897), and the Nature Conservancy (1946)—arose during what Brulle describes as the "preservationist" movement of environmentalism, which conceived of "wilderness as an alternative to urban life."

63. Cable and Benson, "Acting Locally."

development might outweigh the environmental toll placed on another community; the region's poor economic condition in the postindustrial era contributed to this difficult balancing act of environmental and economic improvements.

Current Interactions: Large Environmental NGOs, Local Groups, and Communities

Very little academic literature discusses how and if relationships between large environmental NGOs and grassroots groups on the Southeast Side have changed since the 1990s. In this section I analyze the scant sources and present findings from my own qualitative interviews of organizational staff and reviews of organizations' websites (mainly organizational mission statements). These interviews and materials provide a preliminary analysis of the kinds of environmental work happening on the Southeast Side, inter-NGO interactions, and NGO-community interactions. Further interviews with community members who are not organizational staff would provide important information about public opinion and perception of environmental groups and issues and create a fuller, more complete picture of these interactions. For the purposes of this exploratory paper and the limited amount of time available for interviews, I limited my efforts to organizational staff, who often had broad perspectives on both interorganizational interactions and community outreach. Therefore, this section should be understood as an initial step into understanding a set of topics that have been relatively unexplored in this region, rather than a complete or conclusive look.

Current Environmental Attitudes of Southeast Side Residents

The most recent study of environmental attitudes of Southeast Side residents in Altgeld Gardens in 2015 reported that community members'

awareness of environmental risks remains very strong.⁶⁴ The majority of surveyed residents expressed a lack of trust in the government's ability to address environmental crises, but most residents strongly agreed that "if people work together, they can change the environment." Concerns over hazardous waste and landfills are similar to the perceived threat of drugs and crime in the community. Most residents reported receiving most information on the environment from People for Community Recovery, their local environmental organization. Altgeld Gardens' residents are very aware of environmental health risks, believe in the power of community activism, and have close ties to their local environmental group. Over 60 percent of Altgeld Gardens residents surveyed indicated that they would not rely on large outsider agencies, like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to inform them of environmental risks in their community. None of the residents surveyed reported that they received "a lot" of environmental information from the EPA; over 30 percent reported that they received "almost none" from the agency. Similarly low numbers were reported for other groups perceived as outsiders by the surveyed Altgeld Garden residents: the City of Chicago's Department of Public Health, the Chicago Housing Authority, and universities. On the other hand, over 45 percent reported receiving "a lot" of information about the environment from People for Community Recovery; only about 11 percent reported receiving "almost none" from the group. Overall, it appears that People for Community Recovery has had the most influence over and access to community residents.⁶⁵

Another notable finding from the 2015 study is the relative priorities that residents place on different environmental issues: generally, residents think more localized environmental problems pose a greater threat to the community than broader issues like climate change. Residents considered "dumping hazardous waste" (79 percent) and "landfills" (74

64. White and Hall, "Perceptions of Environmental Health Risks."

65. Ibid.

percent) to be “high risk” to both the community and to individuals; residents considered global issues, like “depletion of the ozone layer” (52 percent) and “global warming” (48 percent), as “high risk” to the community.⁶⁶

These findings have important implications for larger environmental groups seeking to establish stronger relationships with local community members. Larger groups must learn that local groups influence residents’ opinions on environmental issues and that many residents have preconceived feelings of distrust towards outsider organizations. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, larger environmental organizations should be aware that local issues, like pollution, matter more to community members than global environmental issues, like climate change.

Current Inter-NGO Relationships: The Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago

One major development in inter-NGO relationships on the Southeast Side over the past decade has been the Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago. The alliance was formed in 2011 with the encouragement of the Sierra Club to bring local environmental groups on Chicago’s South Side together and oppose a new coal-to-gas plant on 114th Street.⁶⁷ The alliance currently consists of the Sierra Club, People for Community Recovery, the Southeast Environmental Task Force, and several other grassroots environmental groups in the Little Village neighborhood and the nearby city of Cicero, Illinois. The alliance meets monthly and focuses on banning petroleum coke, also known as “petcoke,” a by-product of the refinement of oil from tar sands that is

carcinogenic at elevated levels.⁶⁸ The city has passed ordinances that require factories to keep petcoke piles covered rather than left exposed to the air, but the alliance is fighting to have the petcoke removed from the Southeast Side entirely.⁶⁹

The alliance’s projects to ban petcoke and to reduce “dirty industry” fit within each local group’s goals, despite organizational differences. The alliance also aligns with the Sierra Club’s nationwide clean energy campaign, “Beyond Coal,” which highlights the impact on climate change caused by coal-produced energy and addresses the health impacts of carbon emissions.⁷⁰

Analysis of Organizational Mission Statements

I compared the mission statements of two local groups (the Southeast Environmental Task Force and People for Community Recovery) and two outsider groups (the Nature Conservancy and the Sierra Club). Given the historical interorganizational tensions between environmental justice (human health, sustainable economic development) and traditional conservation groups on the Southeast Side, it is important to understand how these organizations currently align themselves.

The mission statements of People for Community Recovery and the Southeast Environmental Task Force both focus on pollution prevention above all other environmental issues.⁷¹ Both organizations support sustainable development in the region, promoting “green” economic growth

68. “Health Effects of Petroleum Coke,” United States Environmental Protection Agency, n.d. Web, 2017.

69. Curtis Black, “Petcoke Controversy a Sign of Environmental Racism,” *Chicago Reporter*, April 10, 2014.

70. Beyond Coal: About Us,” Sierra Club, n.d. Web, 2017.

71. “Mission Statement,” People for Community Recovery, n.d.; “Mission & Values,” Southeast Environmental Task Force, n.d. Web, 2017.

66. Ibid.

67. Hawthorne, “Environmental Justice Groups Fight,” *Chicago Tribune*.

akin to recent projects in the nearby neighborhood of Pullman.⁷² This balance of economic and environmental improvements are linked to environmental justice, which is the priority of the populations that these organizations primarily serve.

Sierra Club lists five “overarching visionary goals” for its nationwide environmental campaigns. These goals include climate change, clean energy, conservation, and environmental justice:

Protect our air, land, water, and communities from pollution... and help our activists, local communities and allies win on the environmental issues most important to them. Engage in strategic alliances on broader issues if this can help further environmental causes and remain consistent with our values.⁷³

The Nature Conservancy, while still primarily focused on preserving natural areas, also has incorporated environmental justice into its “Our Values” page:

We respect the needs, values and traditions of local communities and cultures, and we forge relationships based on mutual benefit and trust. [We] demonstrate our respect by committing to local, on the ground involvement with people, communities and cultures. We respect the needs, values and traditions of local communities and cultures, with an awareness and sensitivity to their economic realities.⁷⁴

72. Patrick Sisson, “Manufacturing’s Green Future Taking Shape at Method’s New Pullman Plant,” Curbed Chicago, February 23, 2015. Pullman, a Southeast Side neighborhood to the west of Lake Calumet, has experienced a number of developments aimed at promoting green economic growth in recent years (LEED-certified Method Factory, Gotham Greens greenhouse, plans for a Whole Foods distribution site, etc.). The goal of such developments is to provide economic opportunity to residents while avoiding the pollution-producing practices of the region’s industrial past.

73. “Sierra Club Strategic Plan: Overarching Visionary Goals,” Sierra Club, n.d. Web, 2017.

74. “Our Values,” The Nature Conservancy, n.d. Web, 2017.

It is notable that these national groups have incorporated some of the criticisms they faced during the 1980s and ’90s into their current missions statements. The interest of the Sierra Club and the Nature Conservancy to become locally involved and connected suggests that there may be more grounds for future collaboration between local and large environmental groups than in previous decades.

Interviews with Organizational Staff

Given the lack of current research, I conducted a series of short interviews with staff members of environmental organizations that are currently active in the region. The goal was to understand interactions between organizations and with local residents, to learn how historical relationships had evolved in recent years, and to determine the applicability of the bargainer theory to environmental work in this complex region.

Interview Methods

I chose staff members based on their involvement in projects and campaigns on the Southeast Side. I wanted interviewees who had personal experience working in the region and could speak to on-the-ground challenges and interactions with other organizations and community members (This was more of an issue in larger organizations, as many regional staff members were not involved in Calumet-specific projects.)

Staff members could choose an in-person or telephone interview; all participants chose a telephone interview, mainly due to their limited and sometimes unpredictable availability throughout the week. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes and followed a qualitative interview format.⁷⁵ All interviewees were asked essentially the same questions, but the order and phrasing of questions varied to facilitate the flow of conversation and to avoid awkward transitions. If an interviewee brought

75. Robert Stuart Weiss, *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

up an interesting topic or experience, I asked follow-up questions, encouraging them to elaborate.

I began each interview by asking the staff member to describe their organization's projects and campaigns on the Southeast Side. From there, I asked questions about which constituencies their organization was attempting to serve and attract. I asked them to describe the main ways in which their organization came into contact with these communities, such as public events, meetings, educational programs, etc. I then asked staff members to discuss any difficulties in maintaining community interest in their projects. From there, I generally asked about interactions with other environmental organizations in the region, such as the ways in which their organization collaborated with groups and with which environmental groups they were regularly in contact.⁷⁶

Geographical Scope

The Calumet is generally defined as an ecological region that stretches around the southern shores of Lake Michigan. I chose to focus on organizations working on the Southeast Side of Chicago, within or just over (in the case of the Nature Conservancy) the city limits (fig. 5). By limiting my focus, I was able to ensure that all the organizations I interviewed were engaging with a similar, if not identical, group of community members and natural and industrial spaces.

Interviewees

One staff member from each of the following NGOs was interviewed. For confidentiality purposes, interviewees are not mentioned by name. Below is a short description of each organization, its regional scope, and its main projects on the Southeast Side:

Sierra Club—*National*

This organization is connected to the Southeast Side through its

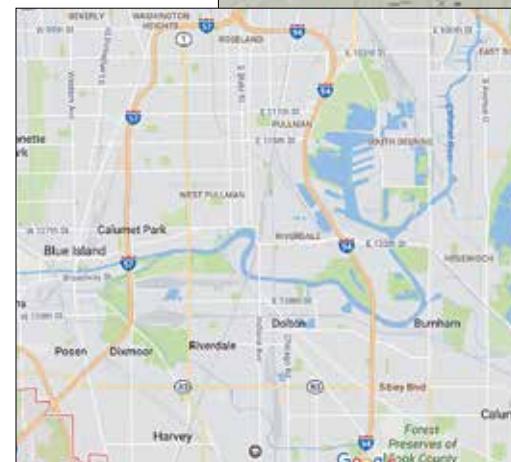
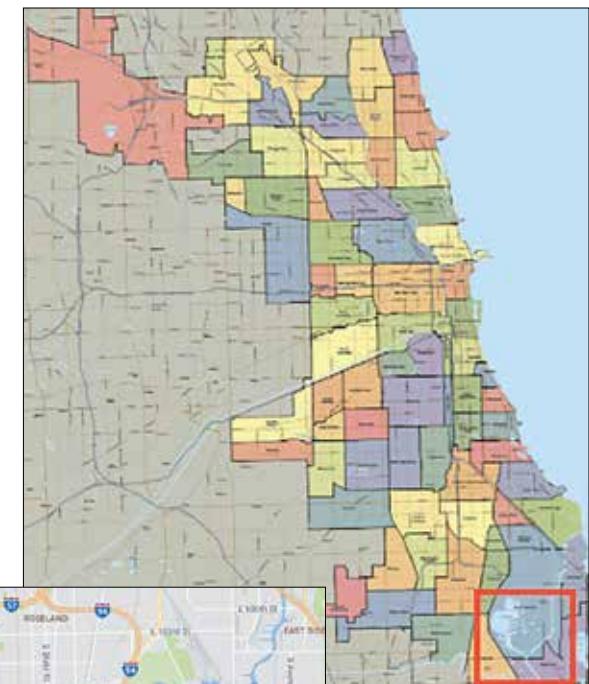


Figure 5. Approximate geographical boundaries of the study area.

76. See the appendix for a list of guiding interview questions and topics.

nationwide “Beyond Coal” campaign. In 2011, as part of this campaign, the Sierra Club sought the support of local environmental groups to oppose the proposed construction of a coal-to-gas plant on 114th Street. Sierra Club continues to work with local environmental groups throughout the Southeast and West Sides via the Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago.

The Nature Conservancy—National

The conservancy has been active on the Southeast Side since the 1970s. It collaborated with scientists at Northeastern Illinois University, who had been studying the Indian Boundary Prairies since the 1960s. The site is just south of the city limits in Markham, Illinois. Despite its long presence in the region, it has only begun developing a community outreach plan over the past two years.

Friends of the Forest Preserves—County

This group is a countywide organization that helps maintain several natural sites on the Southeast Side—Kickapoo Woods, Whistler Woods, Beaubien Woods, and River Oaks—through volunteer stewardship and restoration events.

Southeast Environmental Task Force—Local

Formed in 1989 by community activists in the Hegewisch neighborhood, the task force continues to run campaigns dedicated to reducing pollution and increasing environmentally friendly economic growth on the Southeast Side. It is member of the Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago.

Interview Findings

Despite a history of conflict, current interactions between local groups and larger NGOs are largely positive. The sustained collaboration between local and large environmental groups with the Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago similarly indicates an interest in collaboration among local environmental groups.

The Southeast Environmental Task Force reported largely positive interactions with larger environmental organizations. Sierra Club provides legal representation to the group, allowing them to build a case against the planned construction of a coal-to-gas plant in the area, and the Natural Resources Defense Council helped the task force with grant writing. The South East Environmental Task Force staff member expressed interest in continuing to collaborate with the Sierra Club and other larger environmental organizations, while echoing some of the concerns voiced by Hazel Johnson in the 1990s: that local groups feel appreciated and that their contributions to broader campaigns be recognized. It is important that grassroots groups feel that their interactions with larger environmental groups are mutually beneficial, not extractive or domineering, given the limited funding available for environmental work in the United States.

The Sierra Club likewise reported positive interactions with the task force and People for Community Recovery. The Sierra Club interviewee stressed the importance of local knowledge in developing effective policy: “It’s hard to get anything done alone.” The Sierra Club also intended to continue to working with Southeast Side groups on the upcoming People’s Climate March.⁷⁷ Overall, despite its roots in traditional conservationism and past conflicts with environmental justice groups, the Sierra Club currently appears to be on very good terms with local Southeast Side groups.

Other larger environmental groups, like Friends of the Forest Preserve and the Nature Conservancy, have historically had limited contact with local grassroots groups in the region. More recently, they have expressed a desire to increase their interactions with community members. Friends of the Forest Preserve wanted to attract a more volunteers to participate in its restoration events, and the Nature Conservancy, which has struggled

77. Editor’s note: The People’s Climate Movement uses mass rallies and the alignment of people and groups “to demand climate [change], jobs, and justice.” “About Us: Our Movement,” People’s Climate Movement, n.d. Web, 2018.

with littering and other destructive activities at Indian Boundary Prairies, hopes to reduce misuse of the preserve by building relationships with locals. Few of the conservancy's preserves in the United States are located in urban areas, which in part explains the late addition of community outreach to its strategy. Lack of community engagement plans and policies at the conservancy's national level required self-motivated efforts by on-the-ground staff members in the Calumet region, according to my interviewee.

All groups interviewed expressed some degree of difficulty in attracting and maintaining the interest and involvement of local residents. The Southeast Environmental Task Force reported having a strong core base of support, but could not branch out and broaden their reach, in part because of limited resources and personnel. The Nature Conservancy and Friends of the Forest Preserves noted, perhaps unsurprisingly, that events with opportunities to socialize and participate in recreational activities tended to attract a far greater number of residents compared to restoration-only events (e.g., invasive species removal, trash pickup, etc.).

Reflecting on Changes in Organizational Relationships

The collaboration of larger NGOs with local organizations and a willingness to search for points of resonance stems from a shift in the dominant environmental concerns among the American people over the past half-century. The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 was a turning point in the American environmental movement and a predecessor for modern environmental justice activism.⁷⁸ Widely read, *Silent Spring* criticized the use of the pesticide DDT, which accumulates in ecosystems, and sparked activism that led to a ban of the pesticide for agricultural uses in 1972. For the first time, everyday Americans began to link chemical pollution to the environment. Environmental

78. Robert Cameron Mitchell, Angela G. Mertig, and Riley E. Dunlap, "Twenty Years of Environmental Mobilization: Trends among National Environmental Organizations," *Society & Natural Resources* 4, no. 3 (1991): 219–34.

organizations started to incorporate toxins in their platforms, expanding beyond the "defensive" protection of habitat and wildlife to "offensive" efforts to control ecological damage from compounds developed by the American chemical industry.⁷⁹

Understanding the ecological impacts of manufactured chemicals required a high level of scientific expertise, and banning them at the national level required political and legal knowledge. Environmental NGOs increasingly shifted away from volunteer-based models and hired high-paid experts, like scientists and lawyers, with the skills and background to lobby for policy change.⁸⁰ American interest in environmental issues during the 1960s and '70s increased membership in environmental groups, which supported the shift towards more paid staff. Advancements in technology allowed environmental organizations to reach more and more Americans via direct mail (and eventually email) campaigns, broadening their reach and base of support.⁸¹

By the 1980s, many began to view American environmental NGOs as bloated, overly bureaucratic, and out of touch with the concerns of ordinary people.⁸² According to critics, elite experts now did environmental work, rather than the community members and volunteers who had once formed the backbone of American environmental organizations. Memberships were larger, but members' participation was limited to monetary contributions rather than direct action. A significant subset of the American public, including lower-income people and people of color, began to feel shut out and disconnected from the work of these large environmental organizations. This "criticism from radical and grassroots strands of environmentalism has provoked a good deal of

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

soul-searching within the national organizations.”⁸³ The process of deindustrialization left communities across the United States in similar predicaments to Calumet residents, without work and living in polluted landscapes.⁸⁴ Feelings of frustration with, fear of, and disenfranchisement from establishment environmental NGOs prompted a surge in the formation of grassroots activist groups who felt their needs and concerns were not being addressed. Just as *Silent Spring* had changed the environmental movement during the 1960s, deindustrialization prompted the call for environmental justice, which “was institutionalized as a central priority of the federal government in 1994 through an Executive Order by President Bill Clinton.”⁸⁵

The shift away from the more adversarial relationships of the 1980s and ’90s has been an undoubtedly complex process, involving a shift from the traditional conservationist values by the nationwide organizations and a recognition of environmental justice concerns. The issue of industrial development, for example, draws the attention of all large NGOs, grassroots groups, and local residents on the Southeast Side for different reasons. For the Sierra Club, the current fight against coal-to-gas plants fits perfectly into its “Beyond Coal” campaign and its organizational aim to reduce usage of fossil fuel sources nationally. The Southeast Environmental Task Force and People for Community Recovery come to the fight from a local, environmental justice perspective, seeking to protect the health of local residents. Despite these differences in perspective, these groups have been able to unite around this shared objective: local and global goals become joined in a mutually beneficial way.

83. Riley E. Dunlap and Angela G Mertig, “The Evolution of the U.S. Environmental Movement from 1970 to 1990: An Overview,” *Society & Natural Resources* 4, no. 3 (July 1991): 215.

84. Freudenberg and Steinsapir, “Not in Our Backyards.”

85. Colsa Perez, “Evolution of the Environmental Justice Movement,” 2.

Synthesis: The Applicability of the Bargainer Role and Suggestions for Southeast Side Environmental Work

Based on my review of the history of environmental work on the Southeast Side and my interviews with staff members of local and large environmental groups, I observed elements of Princen and Finger’s bargainer theory in interactions between environmental groups working on the Southeast Side. This arrangement did increase positive social capital between these different parties. It is important to recognize that the bargainer arrangement is not a static solution to the region’s struggles with interorganizational collaboration. Taking into account Bryant’s misgivings that large NGOs may not bargain as equal partners or in good faith, I offer concrete suggestions that I believe will help maintain mutually beneficial relationships in years to come.

NGO Bargainers on the Southeast Side?

The divide between the environmental justice interests of grassroots groups and the traditional conservationism of large environmental NGOs during the 1980s and ’90s prevented effective collaboration.⁸⁶ Currently, NGOs have taken on a bargainer role, a mutually beneficial arrangement between local groups and large NGOs. Through the successful Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago, the Sierra Club has gained a local base of support for its nationwide “Beyond Coal” campaign and local groups gain a powerful, well-connected ally with resources to help them protect their communities from a polluting industry. Studies in Africa and Asia have found that environmental projects with large-NGO mediators were just as successful, if not more successful, than projects that relied on collaboration between grassroots

86. Brulle, “Environmental Discourse and Social Movement Organizations.”

groups alone.⁸⁷ In regions where grassroots groups struggle to maintain positive relationships—a historical problem on the Southeast Side—mediation by large NGOs was found to be helpful in encouraging collaboration between groups.⁸⁸ In the right contexts, the bargainer model of large NGO involvement can facilitate the building of social capital for all parties involved.

The ongoing success of the bargainer arrangement on the Southeast Side has relied on two important factors: (1) a shared goal or mission across all organizations involved, and (2) a balance of corresponding needs and resources between large and small groups—each group has a need that is met by working with the other organization. In general, given the strength of grassroots environmental justice activism on the Southeast Side and the strong ties that residents feel to the local groups, larger NGOs may find more success in building connections with residents if they work in closer contact with the grassroots groups already serving these constituencies. Unless other larger groups are able to find points of commonality with the antipollution and human health goals of local groups, as the Sierra Club has done, it may be very difficult for them to act as effective bargainers.

Maintaining Effective Bargainers

Given Bryant's qualms surrounding the bargainer theory *and* the Southeast Side's history of interorganizational conflict, it would be naïve to assume that the bargainer arrangement will continue to benefit all parties indefinitely. Another sea change in environmental priorities, like the

87. L. David Brown and Darcy Ashman, "Participation, Social Capital, and Intersectoral Problem Solving: African and Asian Cases," *World Development* 24, no. 9 (September 1996): 1467–79.

88. Yvonne Rydin and Mark Pennington, "Public Participation and Local Environmental Planning: The Collective Action Problem and the Potential of Social Capital," *Local Environment* 5, no. 2 (May 2000): 153–69.

growth of American environmental justice activism in the 1980s, could make it difficult for large NGOs to work effectively with local groups. I recommend that NGOs build social capital with the community and among themselves and pay attention to changing priorities of local groups.

Building Social Capital between NGOs and Community Members

Despite the importance of community involvement in environmental work, many organizations struggle with "volunteer dropout and disinterest"⁸⁹ and all Southeast Side environmental organizations interviewed tried to attract and maintain community members' attention. There is no universal answer to this challenge, but aligning volunteer skills more closely with a community's interests can help, such as on the Southeast Side, where residents are more concerned with pollution.⁹⁰ Awards, recognition for service, or volunteer training can provide positive reinforcement and make restoration work accessible to community members with a variety of backgrounds and levels of experience. Another strategy is to collaborate with other environmental organizations, which can "widen the net" in the search for interested community members.

The social aspects of events are often the biggest draw for volunteers, not necessarily a desire to help the environment. The Nature Conservancy and Friends of the Forest Preserves both reported that events with recreational activities were far more popular than restoration-only events. Studies of the motivations of environmental volunteers have found that the most frequent and consistent attendees are drawn to events that facilitate socialization; "ecologically focused" programming without

89. Conrad and Hilchey, "Review of Citizen Science."

90. White and Hall, "Perceptions of Environmental Health Risks."

opportunities for volunteers to interact with one another are less likely to attract consistent participation.⁹¹

All of these factors open up opportunities for pooling resources. The larger environmental groups use their funding to provide resources (for example, boat rentals, art supplies, equipment, or training experts) and the local groups bring their base of regional support and knowledge. Such collaborative events could attract more people than any single environmental group working independently.

Building Social Capital among Environmental NGOs

On the Southeast Side local groups have historically struggled to build social capital with one another. Authors Dütting and Sogge analyze the primary factors that drive or hinder successful networking and collaboration between NGOs. Common factors for collaboration include basic trust among leaders of different organizations, a shared project or crisis, strength in numbers (especially among NGOs who focus on protecting minority or targeted groups), a desire for higher political standing and leverage, and a desire to incorporate “themes” or ideas from other NGOs. On the other hand, irreconcilable differences in ideology or leadership style, competition for donor funding, and fears of loss of autonomy and visibility push NGOs apart and prevent effective collaboration.⁹²

Dütting and Sogge noted the complexity of national-level NGOs interacting with local organizations: “With many NGOs working at the

91. Robert L. Ryan, Rachel Kaplan, and Robert E. Grese, “Predicting Volunteer Commitment in Environmental Stewardship Programmes,” *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 44, no. 5 (2001): 629–48; Stanley T. Asah and Dale J. Blahna, “Motivational Functionalism and Urban Conservation Stewardship: Implications for Volunteer Involvement,” *Conservation Letters* 5, no. 6 (December 2012): 470–77.

92. Gisela Dütting and David Sogge, “Building Safety Nets in the Global Politic: NGO Collaboration for Solidarity and Sustainability,” *Development* 53, no. 3 (September 2010): 350–55.

national level, it will be interesting to see how they will engage themselves—as part of social movements... at the sub-national level. This may require ways of linking and collaborating quite different from models now in use.”⁹³ Historically, interactions between environmental groups in the Calumet witnessed both competition for funding between the Sierra Club and People for Community Recovery and unification around shared crises, such as landfills or coal-to-gas plants.⁹⁴ The Environmental Justice Alliance of Greater South Chicago similarly demonstrates how organizations with different motivations have been able to cooperate. On the Southeast Side, connecting global and local environmental problems may be key to achieving increased social capital between environmental organizations of different sizes and scopes. The Sierra Club’s success in linking its clean energy concerns to local environmental justice activism sets a powerful precedent for other large environmental NGOs already active, or looking to become active, on the Southeast Side.

Conclusion

Groups like the Southeast Environmental Task Force and People for Community Recovery evolved during the environmental justice boom of the 1980s and ’90s and have continued to represent local environmental interests in pollution, human health, and sustainable economic development over the past several decades. These local groups have historically strong ties to neighborhoods and past conflicts occurred along class and race lines. Today, a number of larger national NGOs are active on the Southeast Side and hope to benefit from increased connections to local residents as potential volunteers and supporters. In turn, smaller local NGOs hope to access broader resources by associating with the NGOs. Large NGOs, like the Sierra Club, have found it beneficial to take on a bargainer or mediator role between grassroots groups and

93. Ibid, 354.

94. Pellow, “Garbage Wars”; Walley, “Exit Zero.”

governments, foundations, and the media. The Sierra Club gained community support for its nationwide initiatives and local groups gained access to legal and grant-writing support. By providing smaller organizations with out-of-reach resources, the large environmental NGOs support and help, rather than dominate and exploit. This bargainer relationship works as long as groups with varying access to power share the same goals.

The bargainer relationship is always contingent on historic circumstances. A future radical shift in the environmental movement that drastically separates the environmental ideologies of large and local groups, like the rise of environmental justice activism and grassroots organizing that occurred during the 1980s, could disrupts collaborations between large and small NGOs. Similarly, if more traditionally conservationist organizations are unable or unwilling to connect their goals to the concerns of local organizations and residents on the Southeast Side, such organizations are unlikely to be an effective bargainer. By connecting organizational goals, large NGOs and Southeast Side environmental groups alike will be more successful in engaging local residents as volunteers and allies. Fortunately, the climate of open-mindedness towards connection and collaboration evident in my interviews with staff members from environmental organizations active in this region cast a hopeful light on the future of interorganizational interactions on the Southeast Side.

Appendix

Guiding Interview Questions

The following questions and themes were discussed in each of the staff interviews. Using an open-ended, qualitative interview format, the wording and order of these questions varied to facilitate the flow of conversation. Additional follow-up questions were asked whenever I felt they were necessary.

- 1. In general, in what ways does your organization try to engage with community members on the Southeast Side (holding public events, educational programs, etc.)?**
 - a. Is this strategy different from your strategy in other parts of the city?
- 2. Does your organization currently track “community engagement” statistics such as numbers of attendees or participants in an event or program?**
 - a. If so, about how long has your organization been recording this kind of information?
 - b. On average, how many people would attend or participate in a typical program?
 - c. What proportion of these people attend more than one event/program or continue to be involved in some way with your organization?

3. What kind of projects is your organization primarily involved in on the Southeast Side (e.g., restoration, preservation, conservation of certain species)?

- a. What role do you see community engagement playing in your organization's interests for the Southeast Side? In other words, how does community outreach help you achieve your organization's more overarching goals?
- b. Do larger environmental issues like climate change factor into your region-specific goals on the Southeast Side?

4. Do you interact with other groups working on the Southeast Side? Do you collaborate with them?

- a. If so, can you describe how you collaborate with these other organizations?
- b. Can you describe any difficulties your organizations have encountered in working with these other organizations?

5. How do you publicize your events and programs?

- a. Is there a particular audience your organization is trying to attract to events (for example, age)?
- b. How often do you hold public events or programs?
- c. Do you have an idea of how participants usually find out about your organization's events?

6. Can you describe any difficulties your organization has had creating and/or maintaining engagement with Southeast Side communities?

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“A Palace for the People”



Claiming Space
through Expressive Culture
in Chicago’s South Shore
Neighborhood

JEANNE LIEBERMAN, AB’16

Introduction

The South Shore Cultural Center stands on sixty-five acres of parkland on Chicago’s lakefront. The building, filled with cascading chandeliers, embossed ceilings, and floor-to-ceiling windows, is set back from the busy intersection of 71st Street and South Shore Drive by a colonnade and a wide archway suspended between a pair of two-story towers with open-air wooden balconies. In a 1979 flyer for the American Dance and Music summer festival the colonnade melts into illustrations of figures and artifacts that wrap around the text, with an image of the clubhouse in the center. The building is a backdrop that opens onto a space filled with activity: faces and bodies of dancers, children, writers, bikers, and golfers connect the Mediterranean-style exterior to an African drum, a tennis player, two painters in Egyptian-style profile, and a bearded saxophone player. The flyer circulated as a part of a fight to save the former clubhouse of a private country club and turn it into cultural center. It places the clubhouse in an aspirational cultural geography, where Black bodies map a claim to space to which they were not yet guaranteed access. The collage of images depicts the lifestyles of many residents in the surrounding neighborhood, but it is also a selective representation

of an “inner-city” community that was not immune to the effects of post-war urban deindustrialization and disinvestment (Taub [1988] 1994, 34).

This essay examines the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club, which was, in its own words, “an affiliation of multi-ethnic individuals and neighborhood-based organizations that united to fight the Chicago Park District wrecking ball aimed at South Shore Country Club” in 1977 and transformed the former club into the South Shore Cultural Center.¹ The coalition’s story shows how a diverse group negotiated differing priorities about the role of the arts in shaping the future of their community to reinvent a club that had practiced racism and elitism. They established a public cultural institution on the South Side at a time when Chicago was experiencing municipal disinvestment. This story illuminates the potential of cultural politics to intervene in urban decline. The coalition’s representations of their community’s cultural and social resources ran counter to the dominant discourse that portrayed postwar urban Black communities as homogenous places of cultural and economic poverty and social disorganization—a portrayal that overlooked Black middle-class neighborhoods (Anderson and Sternberg 2012, 439–40; Beauregard 1993, 172–74). Coalition members worked to identify, preserve, and generate value in their neighborhood based on its unique cultural assets and connections to the vibrant history of Chicago’s South Side.

My analysis is informed by sociologist Diane Grams’s study of art production networks in three Chicago neighborhoods. I take Grams’s work as a starting point for understanding how projects centered on

1. “Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club Park, Inc.,” brochure, 1985, unprocessed papers, Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club Archives, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Woodson Regional Library, Chicago Public Library (hereafter CSSSCCA). Editor’s note: The coalition’s papers were unprocessed in 2015 when the author consulted them. The editor has added folder and box numbers, where listed at www.chipublib.org/fa-coalition-to-save-the-south-shore-country-club-csscca-archives.

expressive culture have responded to changes in urban policy and policy-making discourse in Chicago:

Chicago’s cultural context in the twenty-first century can be understood by looking at the changes that have taken place as Chicago transformed from a modern, industrial city in which the hierarchies of race and ethnicity were structured as ascribed, subordinate statuses and maintained through industrial labor practices, to a postmodern, postindustrial one, in which identity and cultural meanings are no longer “fixed,” but are self-identifications that are asserted and then mobilized as a collective resource. In this context, where culture can be understood as “strategies for action,” race and ethnicity are collective resources for financial, political, and now cultural enfranchisement (2010, 5–6).

This case study asserts the importance of expressive culture—acts of creation and performance consciously concerned with aesthetics, especially music, dance, and visual art—in the transition from an industrial to a postindustrial city. However, my analysis diverges from Grams’s proposal that race in the postindustrial era functions as a voluntary identification. While the coalition did mobilize Black cultural identity as a resource and point of pride, the South Shore Cultural Center’s history also shows that the industrial-postindustrial transition generated new ways for elites to perpetuate racially uneven urban development.

This essay is also in dialogue with growing scholarship on the Black Arts Movement and sociology scholarship of uneven urban development, gentrification, and interdependent flows of cultural and economic capital since the sixties (Deener 2007; Gale 1979; Hackworth 2006; Lloyd [2005] 2010; Sassen 2001; Zukin 1987). Building on the work of sociologist Mary Pattillo and others, I pay close attention to the agency and experiences of the Black middle class as “mediators, conduits, [and] brokers” within existing patterns of resource distribution (Anderson and Sternberg 2012; Grams 2010; Hyra 2006; Moore 2005; Pattillo 1999, 2003, 2005, 2007,

307; Widener 2010). The story of the South Shore Cultural Center illustrates how Black middle-class individuals developed a new approach to urban development focused on culture and allows me to examine how the transition from a deindustrialized to a postindustrial America shifted debates about what expressive culture can do in and for an urban Black neighborhood. The coalition's work was often in tension with the dominant narratives of policy makers, elected officials, and the mainstream news media² about what is possible in urban settings.

The first two sections of the essay ("A Palace for the People" and the Cultural Logic of Uneven Development) weave together a brief history of the club with a conceptual framework for understanding the persistence of racial inequality in urban development (Goldsby 2006). They provide the context of urban politics, development decisions, and popular racial conceptions in which the coalition worked. I examine how the coalition contested the cultural logic of uneven development at a moment when a citywide response to urban deindustrialization was just beginning to emerge and its terms were not yet solidified. Rather than respond directly to negative narratives about Black communities in the dominant discourse, the coalition worked to associate the SSCC³ and the South Shore neighborhood with positive representations of Black culture and Black Chicago as a generative part of a thriving city.

2. Newspapers and television news programs with nationwide and predominantly White audiences. Mainstream print media, particularly newspapers and magazines, gave me access to contemporary perspectives on the coalition's work and is the basis for histories of urban crisis and urban property values by scholars such as Mary Pattillo, Kevin Gotham, and Robert Beauregard, on whom I draw heavily. Rebecca Zorach's work on the Black Arts Movement shows how television news made images an increasingly important source of information about the conditions in American cities after the mid-century.

3. Editor's note: Before 1986 the abbreviation SSCC stands for the South Shore Country Club and afterwards for the South Shore Cultural Center.

The third section (A Coalition to Organize "the Community") outlines the emergence of the coalition, its membership, and its mission. This and later sections (Postwar South Shore, Knowing the Value of a "Lakefront Gem," Claiming Space, A "Community Aesthetic," and "Soulful Summer Saturdays") examine different visions for the SSCC and South Shore by the coalition and external groups, and how these visions changed over time. I pay close attention to rhetorical strategies. Coalition's members articulated an alternative narrative about the material, social, and cultural values in their neighborhood, in part by building on the conceptual and visual vocabulary of the Black Arts Movement a decade earlier (Zorach 2015, 98–100). They also capitalized on jazz—simultaneously identified with Black culture, urbanity, and middle-class lifestyles—to make the vibrancy of South Side history and the possibilities for an auspicious future for their community legible to other South Shore residents, policy makers, and citywide audiences. The coalition's fierce internal debates about the relationship between economics and culture reveal the members' complex stances towards Black empowerment, community development, the arts, and education.

The final section (Cultural Logic of the Postindustrial City) connects the coalition's work and the cultural development of downtown Chicago in following decades.

My research is based on archival documents in the Chicago Public Library and interviews in 2015 and 2017 with former coalition members. Though refracted through hindsight, the interviews contextualize the archive, which often only records the proposals that prevailed after much internal debate within the organization.⁴ Additionally, I wrote this essay while a student at the University of Chicago, which has a long and

4. By creating a linear narrative out of many voices, I am aware that I have imposed my own priorities to make connections to long-term national trends in urban history; at the same time, I frame the history to draw attention to the issues that were important to those who shaped it.

fraught relationship with South Side communities and which was involved in many of the urban redevelopment policies that affected South Shore.

“A Palace for the People”

In 1906 a group of prominent Protestant businessmen commissioned the South Shore Country Club.⁵ These men moved their investments from Washington Park (four miles northwest of South Shore) when it began to change to a working-class Irish and Jewish neighborhood. Called the “jewel in the crown of South Shore” by mid-century sociologists, the club was the eastern anchor of the elegant 71st Street shopping district, “the principal upper-middle-class shopping area for the whole southeast quadrant of the city” (Molotch 1972, 42; Taub [1988] 1994, 31).

Club membership broadened in the first half of the twentieth century as the demographics of Chicago’s elite changed and definitions of whiteness shifted. In the interwar period the club aided the social mobility of the politically connected Irish middle class, introducing them “to the world of cotillions and champagne” (Pacyga and Skerrett 1986, 388). Yet, even as the surrounding South Side changed from predominantly White to predominantly Black, the club excluded Jews until its last years and never admitted Blacks (Molotch 1972; Taub [1988] 1994, 31–42). After WWII a declining industrial economy, redlining, and White flight had led to disinvestment and a decline in commercial life in many nearby areas of the South Side, including North Kenwood, Oakland, Bronzeville, and Woodlawn (Pattillo 2007, 64–66). Club members moved away and ultimately the country club was shuttered, leaving the building vulnerable to demolition.

5. Members included Potter Palmer, Marshall Field, and A. Montgomery Ward (Jennifer O. Schultz, *Friends of the Parks Newsletter*, Fall 1984, box 15, folder 8, CSSSCCA.)

The club closed in 1974 and was purchased by the Chicago Land Commission, which then sold it to the Chicago Park District for \$9 million.⁶ Soon after, the Park District razed smaller structures surrounding the clubhouse, while a handful of formal and informal neighborhood groups attempted to influence the site’s future. The Park District’s July 1977 proposal to the Chicago Plan Commission to demolish the clubhouse galvanized activists, urban planners, and preservationists. A new grassroots organization, the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club Park, formed to mobilize widespread opposition to the demolition at public hearings and quickly expanded its efforts to ensuring community participation in the club’s redevelopment.

A commemorative article about a coalition music festival noted the symbolic significance of the transition of a private country club into a public cultural center: “in its brief, five-year existence, the [coalition] has transformed what had been an architectural metaphor for caste distinctions and ethnic exclusion into an elegant symbol proclaiming the power of community cohesion.”⁷ The coalition’s struggle was more than an effort to save one historic building. The forces that had emptied out the country club were connected to larger forces shaping the surrounding neighborhoods, and American cities at large, during the late twentieth century (Beauregard 1993, 161–81). Many believed that their struggle was an avenue for non-elite residents to affect the trajectory of the deindustrializing city rather than become victims of its transformations. Raynard Hall, the coalition’s vice president, summarized this understanding of the coalition’s work in a speech to a Chicago City Council committee: “South Shore Country Club has always been symbolic. In the past it was a symbol of wealth and power and the exclusiveness those attributes often demand. Now since the Chicago Park District’s decision

6. Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club Archives, www.chipublib.org/fa-coalition-to-save-the-south-shore-country-club-cssscca-archives.

7. Salim Muwakkil, “The Beat Goes On,” *Chicago Nightmoves*, souvenir Jazz Comes Home program issue, 1982, box 25, folder 7, CSSSCCA.

to rehabilitate the facility for public use, the buildings and grounds of South Shore Country Club metaphorically suggest for all to see the potential of victory for the everyday man in the struggle to overcome the problems that beset many urban communities today.”⁸

The Cultural Logic of Uneven Development

The coalition aimed to transform the symbolic meaning of a country club from racial exclusion to inter-racial cooperation and Black pride and to associate the South Shore neighborhood and Black Chicago generally with cultural wealth rather than with cultural poverty or absence. This placed the coalition in a battle of competing representations of Black life in postwar urban America. To better understand the significance of the coalition’s actions, in this section I examine how dominant representations of race worked to naturalize urban segregation and racially uneven development by the private market and government programs, even after the Supreme Court outlawed restrictive covenants in 1948 (Gotham 2002, 3, 65–68).

The cultural logic of uneven development draws on the work of literary scholar Jacqueline Goldsby who uses of the concept of “cultural logic” to “trace how the operations of racism fit into and sustain a historical milieu not as an ever-present norm but as a process that is responsive to historical change in the economic and cultural life of the nation” (2006, 6–7). The cultural logic of uneven development refers to widely accepted rationales or justifications for the unequal distribution of capital and people across urban and suburban space. I use culture in the broadest sense as shared patterns for making meaning out of lived experiences and a shared vocabulary for interpreting the world in which they take place: “culture [is] the terrain on which political struggle unfolds and provid[es]

8. Raynard Hall, “Statement read to the Joint Housing and Development Co-coordinating Committee, April 19, 1978, at Percy Julian High School, by the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club,” box 3, folder 5, CSSCCA.

the language of contention for that struggle” (Hale and Millamán 2006, 285). Using this framework allows me to consider how acts of representation, including expressive culture, facilitate material and demographic inequalities. The cultural logic of uneven development emerges when representations that depict the negative effects of disinvestment on urban Black communities, such as on Chicago’s South and West Sides, come to predominate in the dominant news media and in academic and policy discourse. The repetition of these representations and the lack of representations that emphasize other characteristics of these spaces reinforces narratives that racial inequality is unavoidable, rather than the accumulated product of active decisions (Taub [1988] 1994, 7–9). For example, disinvestment leads to visible decay, which leads to more disinvestment, and so on. This self-reinforcing cycle justifies the claims of policy makers, developers, investors, and reporters. They can assume that many members of the public will not question their (implicit or explicit) assertions that sizable investment in Black neighborhoods is untenable because of a shared belief that “ghettos”—and especially the society and culture of their residents—inevitably lead to “urban decay.” The cultural logic of uneven development defines this dialectical relationship between representations and material conditions, which work together to limit what occurs in certain urban neighborhoods.

Since the early twentieth century, the real estate industry and policy makers have circulated racialized depictions of neighborhood life that linked whiteness to social stability and for many became synonymous with concepts such as home, neighborhood, and homeownership. This discursive strategy accompanied the rise of racially restrictive real estate covenants:

During the first two decades of the twentieth century...social workers, public officials, and other elites began to associate the presence of Blacks living in a particular area with deteriorating neighborhoods, poor schools, high crime, and other negative characteristics...[and] provided ostensibly objective and scientific

evidence to reinforce emerging prejudices and stereotypes that made it appear that Blacks were responsible for the social problems found in their neighborhoods (Gotham 2002, 36).

With regard to Chicago, historian Davarian Baldwin writes that “the Black Belt appeared to constitute a structurally homogenous and socially deviant community primarily because of both the legal and informal modes of racial restrictions on mobility” (2007, 28). Real estate agents helped shaped these perceptions of urban space by associating White neighbors with stable or rising property values and high social status and by associating Black neighbors with the opposite.⁹ The constructed category and privileges of whiteness allowed Whites to achieve social mobility by distancing themselves from Blacks.

After the ban on racially restricted covenants in the post-WWII period, the “the language of maintaining ‘security,’ ‘stability,’ or ‘integrity’ of community space” were euphemisms for the need to maintain racially homogenous White spaces, which smoothed over the incompatibility between White liberal ideals of equal opportunity with the acceptance and perpetuation of segregation (Baldwin 2007, 23–29; Gotham 2002, 47). Under this guise, racially motivated investment and disinvestment continued throughout the postwar years.

From the postwar period through the middle of the seventies, Blacks occupied a growing proportion of neighborhoods in northern cities, while jobs and the White middle class left for the suburbs. Historian Thomas Sugrue writes that “the steady loss of manufacturing jobs in northeastern and midwestern cities occurred at the same time that millions of African Americans migrated to the urban North, driven from the rural South by disruptions in the agricultural economy and lured by the promise of freedom and opportunity denied to them in Jim Crow’s last, desperate days”

9. The real estate industry profited from these associations. Segregation allowed the industry to charge a premium on properties in White neighborhoods and to inflate rents for substandard housing in Black neighborhoods.

([1996] 2005, 46).¹⁰ Urban renewal, including the placement of highways and public housing, encouraged movement of resources and people out of or through, but not into, Black areas of the inner city (Jackson 1985, 219–30; Polikoff 2006).¹¹ The resulting landscapes, visibly marked by disinvestment, functioned in the dominant discourse as “scene and symbol” of the “urban crisis” and the social unrest that threaten the “postwar economic and social order” (Beauregard 1993, 161–81; Ellison [1948] 2014; Jackson 1985, 217–19; Sugrue [1996] 2005, 46).

As urban historian Robert Beauregard writes: “no longer a physical attribute of the city as it had been in an earlier period of the discourse, urban decline became equated with a group whose presence was spatially and morally threatening and whose image dominated popular urban perceptions” (1993, 178). This was particularly true after the race riots in the late sixties. Debates about the future of American cities increasingly stressed the social disorganization and the economic and cultural dimensions of poverty in Black neighborhoods (as well as urban environments at large). In Beauregard’s analysis of national news coverage during the sixties and early seventies, the media associated US cities with “urban crisis,” emphasizing stagnation and material and social decay: “the spatial focal point moved from the metropolis to the ‘ghetto,’” and urban life was equated with “the ghetto” and the “culture of poverty” (1993, 164). Segregation and White flight facilitated these perceptions: “white suburbanites view[ed] the ghetto from a distance [and] saw it as evidence of the moral deficiency and intellectual inferiority of its residents.... As citizenship was redefined by home ownership and patterns of consumption, black people—denied access to credit—found themselves excluded from postwar prosperity” (Berlin 2010, 196).

10. See also Berlin (2010, 194) and Beauregard (1993, 170).

11. The University of Chicago and the Illinois Institute of Technology played a central role in shaping urban renewal policy in Chicago and on a national scale. For a detailed account, see Hirsch ([1983] 1998).

These depictions rendered invisible the growing Black middle class, which remained largely urban, and they obscured the “dominant fact of black political and cultural life in the aftermath of the civil rights and black power periods [which was] the parting of ways between the black middle class and the black poor” (Widener 2010, 225). This “vastly understated the diversity of black life in favor of an emphasis on the pathologies of the inner city” (Berlin 2010, 196) and naturalized private and public disinvestment in Black areas. Relying on the cultural logic of uneven development, landlords, investors, and policy makers justified their decisions as, in the eyes of the White public, a reasonable response to impending deterioration for which they were not responsible (Beauregard 1993, 5–8, 170).

The cultural logic of uneven development was an obstacle to the coalition’s goal of representing South Shore as a culturally generative Black community. An example of how this worked is found in Winston Williams’ coverage of the coalition’s first Jazz Comes Home Festival for the *New York Times*. He wrote that the festival was part of the “stand that many residents have taken against further deterioration of the South Shore community. After changing in the mid-1960’s from a white to a black middle-class area, the community then saw an exodus of blacks, some fleeing an increasing crime rate, to the suburbs.”¹² Williams does not explain the reasons for the rise in crime, physical deterioration, nor middle-class exodus; he focuses instead on what he views as the neighborhood’s trajectory from “blight” to “rediscovery” and “rehabilitation.” He quotes the coalition president, Henry English, who says that “South Shore is being rediscovered as a place to live.”¹³ Williams elaborates that “in recent years there have been many conversions to condominiums and cooperatives,...and new residential construction is planned. Whites

12. Winston Williams, “Chicago Black Community Uses Jazz to Save Symbol of Its Past and Future,” *New York Times*, August 17, 1981.

13. Ibid.

are starting to trickle back into the area. Some, of course, never left. The festival has also attracted new interest. Many of the estimated 85,000 who turned out over the three weekends were from distant parts of town.”¹⁴ Williams’s portrayal reflects the shift in the dominant discourse about cities in the early eighties from “racial unrest and fiscal crisis [to] urban revival” (Beauregard 1993, 219). This prediction of an auspicious future for South Shore replicates the cultural logic of uneven development, which connects whiteness to higher real estate values and social ideals; the article says little about the content of the festival itself and is silent about the rich history of jazz in Black Chicago.

A Coalition to Organize “the Community”

In late 1977 the Park District withdrew its application to demolish the South Shore Country Club. The Chicago Plan Commission named the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club the official representative of the community and mandated a joint planning process, with the participation of five Park District representatives and five coalition representatives, to create a comprehensive plan for the restoration of the SSCC. In 1978 the coalition incorporated as a nonprofit and over the following decade advocated for and oversaw the transformation of the club into a cultural center that would be, as its letterhead proclaimed, a “Palace for the People.” The coalition formed standing committees to research the building’s architectural merits and possibilities, to survey the surrounding neighborhood’s cultural and educational assets, and to find organizations to administer programs. The coalition devised numerous plans for the club, guided by a twenty-one-point master plan for

14. Ibid.

the building's restoration, and brokered a commitment from the Park District to seek \$7 million for implementation.¹⁵

Coalition members included established neighborhood organizations, such as the South Shore Commission and the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference, and historic preservation groups, such as the Chicago Architectural Foundation and the Illinois Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. At first, some of the coalition's members came from outside of South Shore or even outside of the South Side, and there were no residency requirements for participation. However, throughout its existence, a majority of the coalition's approximately thirty board members and eight officers, including those with connections to citywide organizations, lived locally. With limited financial resources, the coalition relied heavily on the social and cultural capital of members who brought varied kinds of expertise, professional credentials, and connections, which were central to the coalition's success in building public and Park District support for the site's restoration.

After the building was saved, the participation of citywide groups interested in architectural preservation waned. These groups valued the clubhouse apart from the immediate community and were mainly interested in preserving a part of Chicago's Euro-American architectural history.¹⁶ The work of imagining programming fell largely to South Shore and Hyde Park residents. They were invested in the building's future as a community space that could influence the surrounding neighborhood's culture and economy, rather than as a marker of past architectural achievement.

15. The clubhouse's Mediterranean style was rare in Chicago; the prominent Chicago architectural firm, Marshall and Fox, had based its design on a club in Mexico City. "Master Plan for Development of Park #429 (formerly South Shore Country Club) and a Statement Describing the Proposed Development," 1979, unprocessed papers, CSSCCA.

16. "South Shore Country Club Park," part of a master plan, 1984, unprocessed papers, CSSCCA.

Many of the coalition's leaders were Black activists in South Side and Chicago-wide progressive politics. Their backgrounds were in civil rights and Black power organizations of the sixties, including the Urban League, the radical student movement at Chicago city colleges, and the Black Panther Party. The coalition's first president was Bob Williams and his reputation as a community organizer and Chicago Urban League leader attracted many early supporters. The White members were often activists who had chosen to remain in South Shore or lived in Hyde Park, an integrated neighborhood to the north of South Shore; some were Jewish and had a further personal motivation to transform a place that had symbolized anti-Semitism as well as racism. They had organizing experience ranging from neighborhood development to antiwar protests. Among those who made the coalition's daily operations possible were Laura Schneider, Polly Silberman, Kathy Henning, and Robert Lammers. Younger coalition members remember their dedication and political savvy; one recalls that they helped set the skeptical tone of the coalition's early efforts to engage the Park District, encouraging other members to "not [believe] a word that the Park District said, always [be] willing to fight the political battle...and not give in to the powers that be.... They were committed to being in charge of what happened in their own community" (Raynard Hall, pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015).

The coalition also attracted a group of younger Black professionals. Raynard Hall, the coalition's long-time vice president of program planning and fifth president, joined at the coalition's inaugural meeting in August 1977: "I approached that meeting as a Black [public relations] professional looking for [paid] work." After a few months he "began to see [him]self as an organizer" who dedicated significant time to the coalition's daily operations as an unpaid volunteer. Hall and another community organizer, Harold Lucas, recruited other young Black professionals to the coalition. They were returning to inner-city neighborhoods from college with "different degrees of social activism," according to Hall. "[We] were returning from all over the country, back to the neighborhoods, and...South Shore was very attractive.... We were coming

home, from college this time, not from the army" (pers. comm. Oct. 3, 2015). While not all coalition members had college degrees were more common among the leadership, a fact that reflected the changing composition of the Black middle class in the seventies and eighties (Pattillo 1999).

Coalition members stressed that "the preservation of the building dictated" its proposed uses (Wyman Winston, pers. comm., Nov. 2, 2015). However, there were still many programming options to consider, including a handful of proposals from competing groups. Most were put forward by the South Shore Center on the Lake, a group that briefly participated in the coalition as an institutional member but quickly parted ways because of their divergent visions. The Center on the Lake's proposals drew upon conventional models for cultural venues, including a suburban-style dinner theater, a conference center, and a museum.¹⁷ In contrast, the coalition's proposals drew heavily upon the assets of the South Side's rich history and contemporary, distinctly Black, urban cultural forms.¹⁸

The coalition claimed to represent "the community" in part by differentiating itself from the Center on the Lake, whose members were considered the "neighborhood elites."¹⁹ The coalition's middle-class leaders

17. South Shore Center on the Lake, "The Third Century American City Living Museum: A Proposal for the Use of the South Shore Country Club," January 1978, unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA.

18. Some parts of the two groups' plans did overlap, because both groups had to make use of the existing clubhouse, tennis courts, and golf course.

19. The Center on the Lake temporarily joined the coalition as part of the "unified community front [that] was so necessary during this crisis period... [but] conflicts arose" and the Center on the Lake eventually withdrew, though a few center board members remained active in the coalition. By 1978 the two organizations were competing for clubhouse access until the coalition became the official community representative in the redevelopment process. Margaret

unified a diverse demographic around a shared commitment to increasing the cultural and economic vitality of their neighborhood. The large numbers of local residents who attended coalition rallies and festivals demonstrated that individuals with differing visions of how that vitality would be manifested could cooperate effectively.²⁰ In her study of Black gentrification in Chicago's North Kenwood–Oakland neighborhood, sociologist Mary Pattillo suggests a definition of "the Black community" that is able to encompass diverse interests and different interpretations of how Black identity and "racial pride and duty" should be expressed (2007, 3).²¹ Pattillo writes that "choosing participation over abdication and involvement over withdrawal, even and especially when the disagreements get heated...is what *constitutes* the black community" (2007, 3). Examining the coalition's work through the lens of this definition reveals the class tensions and incompleteness inherent in all processes of collective representation but also explains the coalition's assertion that they represented "the community." The coalition did fund²² programs largely aligned with Black middle-class preferences, but they also created a flexible structure that would accommodate a wide variety of programs. They stressed that the SSCC should be "multi-ethnic," "multi-racial," and "inter-

Adams, "Briefing Booklet for Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club," 1984, box 7, folder 9, CSSSCC.

20. Particularly relevant in this case is the slippage by the coalition and media between the "South Shore," the "South Side," and "citywide" community when defining who would benefit from a restored SSCC.

21. For the performance of cultural markers of class differences in a mixed-income Black neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, see Pattillo (2003).

22. The coalition received funds from the City of Chicago City Arts, summer youth-programming grants, merchandise (posters, bags) sales, voluntary festival admissions, and private fund-raisers, including a 1984 party at Muhammad Ali's Kenwood mansion called "The Building of the Cultural Now."

generational”²³ and throughout the restoration process held open forums with Park District and elected officials where all community members were invited to voice opinions about the plans for the SSCC and what was of positive value to their community.

Postwar South Shore

Communities on the South Side of Chicago changed from predominantly White to predominately Black from north to south—beginning with Grand Boulevard (a part of “Bronzeville”) and Woodlawn by the end of WWII, Grand Crossing in the fifties, and South Shore in the sixties (Best 2004; Molotch 1972; Taub [1988] 1994, 31–42). By the sixties redlining, disinvestment, and job loss had taken a toll on the commercial life and infrastructure of areas that had been Black middle-class enclaves, such as North Kenwood and Oakland (Pattillo 1999, 27; 2007, 61–70). Many upwardly mobile Black families moved farther south; South Shore became “a mecca” (Carol Adam, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015) for the Black middle class, which was rapidly expanding as a result of “the unprecedented economic growth and prosperity after World War II, along with the social and political pressures of the civil rights movement” (Pattillo 1999, 17). By the late sixties and early seventies lower-income Black families began to move into South Shore, some displaced by Hyde Park urban renewal. Redlining forced South Shore to grapple with increasing “tax delinquencies, crime rates, welfare rates,” absentee landlords, and disinvestment in the 71st Street commercial strip (Taub [1988] 1994, 40).

23. Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club, “Preliminary Planning Document for the South Shore Country Club Park,” 1978, box 3, folder 17, CSSCCA. The South Shore Commission, a community organization, first had the idea to convert the club into a cultural center; in the mid-seventies Carol Adams, organizer, sociologist, and employee of the South Shore Bank’s Neighborhood Institute, and artist Robert Paige had organized two art festivals at the club (Carol Adams, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015).

In the face of these changes, South Shore maintained active community organizations such as the South Shore Commission, a clearing house for middle-class amenities and activities (Moloth 1972, 223–25; Taub [1988] 1994, 32–36). A new anchor organization was established when the South Shore National Bank petitioned the US Comptroller of Currency to approve a routine application to relocate from the racially changing community to downtown in 1972. South Shore residents organized outspoken opposition. The comptroller’s denial of the application and the bank’s sale to Hyde Park investors created the nation’s first community development bank (Taub [1988] 1994, 18–20). Wyman Winston, a member of the coalition and an employee of the bank’s nonprofit subsidiary, the Neighborhood Institute, said that the bank was “the first [financial] institution that didn’t look at African American neighborhoods as neighborhoods of pathology” (pers. comm., Nov. 2, 2015). In an article celebrating the bank’s tenth anniversary, community leaders argued “that the bank has been instrumental in changing South Shore from a community on the way down to one on the rebound,” not because of any “programs started by the bank,” rather because it altered the symbolic landscape of the neighborhood.²⁴ A visible commitment to the neighborhood by a bank—an institution, like a country club, associated by many with conservative, elite interests and values—connote “a certain moral standing in a community [that] is important to outsiders and insiders”; its “mere presence in the neighborhood [made] outsiders believe it [investment in the community] was viable” (Taub [1988] 1994, 12).

Throughout this period the Black Arts Movement was an alternative force on the South Side of Chicago. The Black Arts Movement had emerged in the struggle for Black empowerment in the sixties and had created a network of independent cultural venues in Hyde Park and

24. “South Shore Bank: Looking at 10 Years of Community Service.” *Chicago Journal: The South Side’s Free Newsweekly*, Nov. 30, 1983.

South Shore.²⁵ According to drummer and scholar John Runcie, participating artists, often themselves middle class, “recognized the validity and potential importance of ghetto culture and...sought to interpret, reinforce, validate, and direct this culture,” as part of a rejection of assimilation into the culture of the White middle class (Zorach 2019, 19). The movement encompassed “multiple visions of the politics of black culture” and was propelled by a “vision of community-based cultural politics focused on creative autonomy, collective organization, and the erasure of the border between art and life” (Widener 2010, 2). Many of the iconic works of the Chicago Black Arts Movement during the sixties were a product of community collaboration and institution building to counteract disinvestment in Black neighborhoods. Art historian Rebecca Zorach writes that “positive images,’ whose cultivation [sought] to combat an overtly racist visual culture, was a strongly shared and clearly articulated goal for the Black Arts Movement” (2019, 186).

Historian Ira Berlin considers “Black is Beautiful,” a refrain common in the movements of the sixties, a reflection of “ownership of the inner city” (2010, 197). However, for some in the Black Arts Movement and in the coalition expressive culture was not merely a reflection of ownership but a means for *creating* collective ownership of urban space. Art projects (murals, public sculptures, architectural/historic preservation, outdoor festivals, including those that precede the coalition, such as Everyday Arts and On the Beach) allowed Black residents to “enhance the liveability of [their] own community[ies]” amid disinvestment, deindustrialization, and exploitative real estate practices that removed material and economic resources.²⁶

25. For a more detailed account of the Black Arts Movement, see Zorach (2019). For a description of cultural organization in South Shore between 1981 and 1984, see the South Shore Cultural Council, “The Arts Are Building in South Shore,” report, n.d. (probably 1984), unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA.

26. Sarah Martini, “History of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club,” in a Field Enterprise grant request, 1983, box 7, folder 2, CSSSCCA.

Whereas Chicago’s Black Arts Movement often sought to minimize differences between the Black middle and working classes, the coalition often emphasized the distinctiveness of Black middle-class culture and at times sought to distinguish South Shore from surrounding neighborhoods. Speaking of the coalition’s work, Raynard Hall said that “our vision for South Shore was a middle-class predominantly African American enclave, really. [Although] surrounded by whatever problems the rest of the city was experiencing, we thought we were [going to] be okay” (pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015).

This was reflected in the coalition’s choice to focus much of their programming on jazz, which had come to occupy a specialized ‘high culture’ niche” by the seventies and eighties, with R&B, disco, house and other musical forms more popular among youth and working class African Americans (Zorach 2019, 109). Conflict over a mural at 71st Street and Jeffrey Boulevard provides another example of the diversity of opinions within the South Shore community about what forms of Black cultural expression were desirable. Mitchell Caton and Calvin Jones began work on the mural, *Builders of the Cultural Present*, in 1981.²⁷ Perhaps due to the associations of murals with graffiti and radical politics, a group of residents from the Jackson Park Highlands (a section of South Shore with expensive homes) felt that murals created a “ghetto-like environment,” according to Raynard Hall, then president of the South Shore Cultural Council. Hall recalls,

I found out the history of murals and how important they were, how in China and in Mexico murals were the people’s public expression.... Walgreen’s company [whose building would be

27. Caton and Jones were members of the Chicago Mural Group, now the Chicago Public Art Group, www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2_6_07.htm. For a biography of Caton, see Jeff Huebner, “Wailing Walls, *Chicago Reader*, Feb. 28, 1998.

painted] said, “we’ve been contacted by this other group, and they’re concerned.... We’d like to hear from the community.”... [So] we put together a meeting at the Country Club, of the Jackson Park Highlands group—there was about, I’m going to say generously, six.... We had about fifty people in the room who were associated with the Cultural Council at that time...mostly South Shore residents, but artists. South Shore and Hyde Park, but artists. And we went to the whole presentation and talked about the history of murals and we talked about this specific project, and we heard the objections of the Highlands people.... It got to be a little heated, to the point that I said “you know, the only way to resolve this is to put it to a vote. All those opposed, raise your hands.”... Five or six people raised their hands. “All those in favor of the project please stand up.” And it looked like the entire room stood up.... Walgreens approved the mural project the next day (pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015).

Knowing the Value of a “Lakefront Gem”

The Park District was the main source of opposition to coalition ideas. Coalition members understood that the Park District’s proposed demolition of the “beautiful, ethereal edifices on the Country Club grounds”²⁸ was part of a larger pattern that denied cultural and material assets to Black communities. While no one in power questioned whether the club had a valuable purpose in the past for its wealthy White members, the Park District questioned whether the “grand ballrooms” and atriums could serve a different, but equally valuable purpose for Black residents (Carol Adams, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015). The district assumed that the

28. Martini, “History of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Cultural Center,” in a Field Enterprise grant request, 1983, box 7, folder 2, CSSSCCA.

buildings “were slated for inevitable decay.”²⁹ Harold Lucas, the coalition’s press secretary, summarized the conflict between the coalition and the Park District succinctly: “We know the value of this structure, and we’re not about to let you tear it down, because your perception...is that all Black men need to do is play basketball—so [you think you] can tear it down and put up some basketball hoops” (pers. comm., Nov. 30, 2015).

Like other urbanites, South Shore residents were aware of mainstream ideas that the inner city imperils middle-class values (Beauregard 1993, 209). In general, the coalition constructed positive images of the South Side’s history and cultural production, but on occasion, it had to oppose hegemonic ideas about inner-city neighborhoods directly. In an op-ed about the coalition’s first Jazz Comes Home festival, a coalition board member, Roscoe King, and South Shore Bank executive, Ron Grzywinski, explicitly confronted many readers’ misconceptions: “When the last notes drifted across the lake, the crowds dispersed quietly. There has been no disruption, no violence—only respect for the beauty of the music and of the place.”³⁰

The toll of deindustrialization, disinvestment, and the diversion of resources to the suburbs was evident to coalition members as they moved through their everyday lives, especially in neighborhoods north of South Shore called the “Low End,” which had recently also been middle class (Pattillo 2007, 64–70). This gave a sense of urgency to their work:

The vitality, however, of the business district of 71st Street was then being threatened by the recent abandonment of the multi-story National Tea Company Building, situated at 71st and South Shore Drive. It had held many long time professional services, now removed because of the abandonment. East Woodlawn was a shambles dominated by the massive hulk of the Southmoor

29. Ibid.

30. Roscoe King and Ron Grzywinski, “Jazz Comes Home to South Side,” op-ed, *Chicago Sun-Times*, Aug. 11, 1981.

Hotel at 67th and Stony Island, slowly disintegrating into a demolizing tragedy before the eyes of all travelling south...to South Shore. Children of the area made it all too immediate by frequently stoning buses and trains and playing pranks with the railroad's main switching mechanisms at 67th Street and when armed properly by taking pot shots at the locals. But immediately to the east... and south...this effect was counterbalanced by the beautiful, ethereal grandeur of the Park District Grounds and landscaping with its perfectly integrated edifices.³¹

The excerpt shifts seamlessly from the built to the social environment of South Shore and Woodlawn and back again to the “integrated edifices” of the SSCC as a symbol of hope; it draws attention to the power of the SSCC as a reflection of traditional conceptions of beauty, contrasting the orderliness of the SSCC’s grounds with the perceived abandonment and disorder of its surroundings. The SSCC exposed the public to luxurious ballrooms and a verdant park, which contradicted images of the South Side as enveloped by disinvestment and deterioration—common images on which the cultural logic of uneven development relied. Yet, this excerpt also uses fear of imminent deterioration to push for resources for the community to organize itself and act as custodians of the SSCC’s aesthetic and social value.

The coalition stressed that local artists and musicians could create new value for the site, which would offer an intangible return on the city’s investment, enrich the lives of citizens across the city, and give the local community access to cultural wealth that was rightfully theirs (Geraldine de Haas, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015). The coalition did not frame its argument for reinvestment in the “palatial spaces” and grounds as a remedy to a perceived lack of resources in an inner-city community, but as a way to tap into *existing* resources. It planned to capitalize on the

31. Martini, “History of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Cultural Center,” in a Field Enterprise grant request, 1983, box 7, folder 2, CSSCCA.

cultural resources within the community to enhance the site’s value. By proposing and realizing ambitious cultural and educational programming that responded to the recreational preferences of the Black middle class and integrated South Side audiences, the coalition attempted to demonstrate that Black cultural producers could more fully realize the club’s potential than its previous elite owners. For local activists, the coalition’s model of redevelopment allowed resident musicians and artists, who might lack economic capital, to invest in their community, to interrupt the cycle of disinvestment, and to reclaim the value contained in their neighborhood.

Another potential value of the SSCC was its lakefront location. Advocates stressed that the SSCC was on par with other “lakefront...gems [and] beautiful facilities,” most of which were located on the North Side. The coalition “wanted the Country Club to be one of those. So, in order to position it where we hope to get funding to the level of our vision, we were very careful—all of us—in using language that discussed it as a regional facility” (Raynard Hall, pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015).

Claiming Space

The coalition’s initial task was to make the Park District, the media, and the city aware of the size of the opposition to the demolition. The coalition held frequent rallies in its first few months, filling the SSCC with as many bodies as possible, and held its first event, the Preservation Festival, in 1977. In a creative twist on a community-organizing staple, coalition members drove around South Shore in a big sound truck owned by a local resident known as “Cadillac Jack” to inform the neighborhood about the proposed demolition (Raynard Hall, pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015). The Park District withdrew their application for demolition from the Chicago Plan Commission after an October 1977 rally of over a thousand people.

In a press release for the 1979 American Dance and Music: Chicago Style festival Harold Lucas connected the coalition’s work to a larger

struggle against discrimination by the Park District: “in recent *Sun-Times* articles on the Chicago Park District, information gathered by news media research shows that in the last five years cutbacks of staff in predominantly black communities on the South, Southwest and West-side areas of Chicago have left a state of confusion with no programs for community people who are by now afraid to use these parks.”³² The Park District’s systematic and illegal neglect of parks in Black neighborhoods fueled community outrage at the Park District’s 1977 plan to replace the SSCC’s clubhouse with a gymnasium:

The Park District by that time had such a horrible reputation for how they handled their assets, nobody believed that they would put back anything of equal value. We knew that it would be a concrete block building with toilets that weren’t in use. No one believed the Park District.... Chicago government had intentionally divested minority areas of recreational assets. So people who grew up on the South Side who were used to learning how to skate when they were kids, the Park District wasn’t creating skating rinks anymore in minority areas. When the facility reached a certain level of disrepair, they would shut it down, room by room, toilet by toilet. So if something broke, they just shut it down and you didn’t have access. You had a period—because people quit using them in the late sixties—where the parks basically became the domain of the gangs. And that meant even fewer people were using the parks (Wyman Winston, pers. comm., Nov. 2, 2015).

The Park District’s attitude towards the SSCC changed after a 1982 lawsuit³³ over district racial bias: “the biggest result [of the lawsuit] is that it

32. Harold Lucas, “American Dance and Music: Chicago Style,” June 1979, press release, unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA.

33. In 1982 the US Attorney General sued the Chicago Park District for violating the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act for favoring parks in

took the demolition of the Country Club off the table” (Wyman Winston, pers. comm., Nov. 2, 2015).

The 1979 press release proclaimed that the “3 weekend summer showcase of art, music and dance at South Shore Country Club Park is a demonstration of how cosmopolitan artists and community people can come together, reflecting the ethnic diversity of South Shore/Chicago for a community celebration.”³⁴ Gathering in celebration in a South Side public park was an act of defiance against disinvestment in local public spaces, and the arts program claimed democratic community ownership of the site, based on the unique talents and identities of community members. The wide range of arts (including free jazz, gospel, blues, disco, and modern, square, and tap dancing) contradicted assumptions that South Side communities were culturally impoverished or homogenous.

During the early years, the coalition proposed year-round programs, such as film societies, locally broadcasted television stations, and educational programs, many of which they believed would also contribute to local economic development. Most were never realized for a combination of practical and political reasons. For instance, the Park District failed to heat the building in the winter of 1979–80, a pipe burst, and the district barred indoor programs until restoration was completed in 1985. The closure prevented a coalition agreement with the Illinois Board of

White communities. “U.S. Sues Chicago Park District, Charging Racial Bias in Programs,” *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1982; “US Sues Park District on Bias Charge,” *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 1, 1982; Andrew Malcolm, “Accord is Reached on Chicago Parks,” *New York Times*, May 11, 1983.

34. Lucas, “American Dance and Music: Chicago Style,” June 1979, press release, unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA. Old Town School of Folk Music, Chicago Archives of Blues Traditions, Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, “Gospel Extravaganza,” Joseph Holmes Dance Company, Diamond Square Dancers, Great Senior Tap Dancers, Gus Giordano Dance Company, and Happy Music Inc.–Disco Party performed. “Summer Showcase: 3 Weekends of Art, Music, and Dance,” flyer, 1979, unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA.

Education to use part of the main building for environmental education by local schools.

After 1980, the coalition channeled its energy into summer festivals and a youth training program, which sparked heated disagreement about what art forms and kinds of programs to prioritize. For some, the primary purpose of programs should be to educate audiences about the past and present cultural wealth of the South Side; for others, programs should convince residents and outsiders to invest in South Shore. Musical festivals with nationally recognized artists fulfilled both educational and economical priorities and allowed coalition members to reconcile their different priorities.

A “Community Aesthetic”

Although many changes in South Shore were beyond the control of residents and coalition members, saving the SSCC did allow them to fill an empty space at an anchor location between the 71st Street commercial district and the lakefront. Margaret Adams, a Northeastern Illinois University student who worked with the coalition, described the basis for this model: “in light of what Dr. Carter G. Woodson writes in *Mis-Education of the Negro* the potential of the South Shore Country Club would fall into the area of developing opportunities already present in our community and creating institutions and a social atmosphere that we control.”³⁵ Carol Adams, leader of the South Shore Cultural Council and a supporter of the coalition, discusses her approach to empty spaces, like the shuttered country club: “It started first with the community aesthetic. How do we want to look? Okay. Because at this point, you’re starting to see the vacant stores, for instance, on 71st. People are moving away, the high-end stores, those small stores; they can’t make any money there. They were going to be malls and this and that. So what do we do with

35. Margaret Adams, “Briefing Booklet for Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club,” 1984, box 7, folder 9, CSSCCA.

those spaces? How do we make them look good? How do we keep our community looking a particular way? Also the mural movement came from there” (pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015). Emptiness was not neutral: it communicated a lack of resources and provided reason for credit denials, which lead to further emptiness and invited the dangers associated with “the ghetto.” Filling empty spaces was a key concern for many in the coalition who otherwise had divergent views on cultural politics.

The coalition’s emphasis on community control and use of culture to mobilize people circumvented the limitations of conventional channels of urban politics. The seventies and eighties witnessed the rise of Black voters’ influence in municipal politics and the simultaneous fall in the power of municipalities, whose tax base shrank due to deindustrialization and suburbanization—a process sociologist William Julius Wilson called the “politics of dependency” (1978, 122–43). During this period, artists, such as those in the community mural movement, demonstrated that they could disrupt the cultural logic of both dependency and uneven development by seizing visual control of urban landscapes. With significantly less upfront capital investment than traditional urban development projects, artists’ widely visible and large-scale work chipped away at narratives that naturalized urban decline with images of celebration.

In the coalition’s first three years (1977–80) the urgency of the struggle to preserve a beautiful and valued resource united members from varied political backgrounds. The coalition’s “campaign for cultural and economic self-determination at SSCC Park”³⁶ would allow local residents to decide collectively what was of value to their community by selecting and participating in public cultural events. Should they use their time and funds for a jazz series, classical concerts, and/or gospel music? For many the priority was programs that would “bring large numbers [of people]. We also hoped to raise money...and demonstrate that we, we the community, could develop programming and pay for it” (Raynard

36. Roscoe King, “Campaign for Coalition President,” speech, January 14, 1985, unprocessed papers, CSSCCA.

Hall, Nov. 29, 2017). An example of this eclectic programming was a twelve-day summer festival called “The Renaissance Idea? Chicago ’80,” a reference to the Harlem and Chicago renaissances of the twenties and thirties. There were performances of classical music by local residents and the Lyric Opera Ballet, and a jazz set by Oscar Brown Jr., a prominent figure in the Black Arts Movement; the festival’s twelve themes included Sacred Music: Gregorian to Gospel, Swing Era to Gershwin, and a Historical Pageant of Black Arts.³⁷ Rather than stress working-class Black culture, as had some in the Black Arts Movement during the sixties,³⁸ many coalition programs emphasized the influence of Black culture upon “mainstream” American culture. Such programs as Dance in Chicago: Ragtime to Rock recuperated the historical contributions of Black Chicago to the city’s vitality and reconceptualized Black communities as places where cultural value is created.

Coalition members held a range of perspectives about which programs to support. The most important and enduring debate was the importance of educational programs versus building economic power as the primary strategy for improving conditions in Black neighborhoods. Among the coalition members who stressed education was the prominent jazz musician and producer, Geraldine de Haas. Quoted in a coalition grant, de Haas said that the arts could “affect both the physical and spiritual welfare of the persons in the community” and “provide the young with a continuing vision of their own heritage, the intimate knowledge of tradition and input into the continued direction of [their] development.”³⁹ The ability of the SSCC to educate local residents in

37. “The Renaissance Idea? Chicago ’80,” flyer, 1980, unprocessed papers, CSS-SCCA.

38. For an example of the political segregation of Black art, see Jones (1963). For a historical discussion of related perspectives in Chicago, see Zorach (2019).

39. Martini, “History of the Coalition to Save the South Shore Cultural Center,” in a Field Enterprise grant request, 1983, box 7, folder 2, CSSSCCA.

their history was joined to the salutary benefits of parks: the SSCC would “stimulate and encourage both young and old in the wholesome leisure time use of our parks, and to ensure in every possible way that the time they spend in the parks is mentally and physically satisfying and beneficial.”⁴⁰

Other coalition members, such as Henry English, promoted the SSCC as an anchor for local commercial development. English, president when the coalition produced its first Jazz Comes Home festival in 1981, was quoted extensively in a special issue in *Nightmoves*, which was dedicated to the next annual Jazz Comes Home festival:

“In the area the Country Club was the first facility built and the community was sort of built around the facility,” English said. “That building is a symbolic representation of what has to take place in this community. I see it symbolizing the rebirth of the community.” English said a “restructured, rebuilt, and renovated” South Shore is already underway, partially as a result of last year’s Jazz Comes Home series. The New Apartment nightclub on 75th Street and Mother’s on 79th Street regularly feature live music “since they saw that people will come out to see it,” he said. Now that South Siders are spending more money for entertainment in their own community rather than taking it to other communities, the South Shore will begin to prosper again. “You have to do more than live in a community, you have to invest in it,” English said. “When we go outside our community to spend money—whether on entertainment or on business goods and services—our community loses. Keeping money in our community keeps jobs. It makes good economic sense to keep it all at home. And that after all is how the original patrons of the South Shore Country Club

40. Park District Fall and Winter Program, n.d., unprocessed papers, CSSSCCA.

became wealthy enough to build their exclusive little enclave in the first place.”⁴¹

The coalition’s goal of preserving the grand and luxurious clubhouse reflected a middle-class economic position secure enough to look beyond questions of economic survival—even as that was becoming increasingly precarious for their working-class neighbors (Widener 2010, 248–82; Wilson 1978, 136). In his study of Los Angeles, the historian Daniel Widener connects the rise of public practices of celebration to the economic divergence of Black middle and working classes during the late sixties and early seventies. He speaks of “a ‘practice of celebration’ and an ‘aesthetic of survival’...correspond[ing] to class positions within the African American community that shaped broader sensibility toward understanding the place of African Americans within the urban setting” (2010, 225).

Following the successful fight to save the clubhouse, as the coalition began to focus more on programming, tensions grew among members. By 1982 English and de Haas had parted ways, due in large part to the differences in their goals. De Haas created Jazz Unites in 1981 and began producing separate jazz programs at the SSCC beginning in 1983 (pers. comm. with Henry English, Oct. 27, 2015; Geraldine de Haas, Dec. 5, 2015; and Raynard Hall, Oct. 3, 2015). Similar tensions over the relative merits of culture and economics had arisen in the earlier struggles for civil rights and Black power movement. Widener, who analyzed collaborations among radical Black political organizations and Black artists in the sixties and seventies, writes that the artists who had

their own ideas about black culture, politics, and art forced each group to sharpen its ideological positions, a process that often revealed considerable differences between politically conscious artists and

41. Muwakkil, “The Beat Goes On,” *Chicago Nightmoves*, souvenir Jazz Comes Home program issue, 1982, box 25, folder 7, CSSCCA.

culturally concerned political activists.... Retracing the cultural strategies and programs of black nationalist organizations thus reveals how the attempt to bring black art to black communities created different imperatives for political radicals than for either community-oriented artists or proponents of a cultural war on poverty (2010, 188).

“Soulful Summer Saturdays”

The special issue of *Nightmoves* dedicated to the second Jazz Comes Home festival captures the SSCC’s transition from exclusivity to inclusivity: “Back when the only blacks in the neighborhood were there to clean house or cut grass, the South Shore Country Club was a great white shrine.... It was a very private place for members only who knew they owned exclusive rights to the good life. Things changed about a generation ago. They became as different as day and night. Black and White. Open and closed. Now instead of chamber music or sedate evenings of symphony orchestras, there’s soulful summer Saturdays and Sundays of ‘Jazz Comes Home.’”⁴²

Gone were the wide variety of art forms of past years; the festival was now all jazz. Though not a product of consensus, the decision to focus on jazz was not surprising. Within the Black Arts Movement “jazz became the *primus inter pares* among expressive forms,” which bound together diverse, and at times discordant, views about the evolution and influence of a uniquely Black culture in America (Widener 2010, 252). Despite disagreements about the relative economic and cultural value of various art forms, most coalition members could agree upon jazz, a consciously Black and increasingly middle-class art form (Berlin 2010, 199). And jazz proved profitable: over one hundred thousand people came to hear Count Basie, Muddy Waters, Oscar Brown Jr., Sarah Vaughan, the Staples Singers, Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, and Dizzy Gillespie.

42. Monroe Anderson, “South Shore County Club: More Philosophical than Commercial,” *Chicago Nightmoves*, souvenir Jazz Comes Home program issue, 1982, box 25, folder 7, CSSCCA.

The Coalition built on jazz's long history in Chicago. Since the turn of the twentieth century the South Side of Chicago had attracted jazz musicians who excelled in live performance (Kenney 2004). During the seventies and eighties South Shore was home to the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) and many leading jazz musicians. At the same time, the South Side club scene declined due to the overall effects of redlining as well as discriminatory enforcement of licensing and tax laws. This decreased opportunities to experience live jazz, blues, and R & B (Lewis 2008, 85–95). As historian and musician George Lewis writes:

By 1967, 63rd Street was a musical ghost town, except perhaps for bluesman Arvela Gray's frequent appearances with his steel guitar under the El station at 63rd and Cottage Grove. Concomitantly, music clubs were opening up in nonblack areas of the city, notably the white North Side and western suburbs.... Musicians began to connect this musical outmigration from the South Side with notions of exile and stolen legacies of culture. Speaking to AACM cofounder Philip Cohran, trombonist Martin "Sparx" Alexander put the situation plainly: "Phil, you mentioned about us being 'robbed,' about the music being taken away from us. When I first came to Chicago in the Fifties—around 63rd and Cottage—that was a kind of Mecca. The music was all over. You could walk up and down the street and hear brothers playing everywhere. You didn't need to go in no joint.... They were localized in terms of our community. But something happened" (2008, 87).

Jazz Comes Home sought to rectify this loss as well as "to educate African American people and particularly African American children about the kind of history that we have given to this nation" (Geraldine de Haas, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015):

When the music was beginning to evolve, you had your spirituals,...

then the blues came out of the spirituals,...and then you came into bebop, which was really intricate music,...and that's when jazz became an art form.... It was America's art form, this music that evolved out of one chord or two chord music was now some very intricate music.... This was the art form that was created right here in America.... It came out of the African people, but it was not created in Africa; it was born and evolved right here in this country. The music was America's culture.... All contemporary music is based on one little aspect of the total picture of what jazz is all about (Geraldine de Haas, pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015).

Jazz allowed de Haas to focus on the central role Black people played in American history, not confined to struggling against oppression, but as producers and innovators who created a sophisticated urban art form that grew out of the Great Migration.⁴³ This narrative of successive cultural progress, which culminated in jazz, opposed prevailing assumptions about inner-city obsolescence, industrial decline, and social and cultural disorganization (Beauregard 1993, 173).

De Haas summarized Chicago's jazz scene during the late seventies:

The major artists...were not coming to the South Side. They were mainly performing on the North Side, where they had better salaries and made more money. They just don't come to the South Side, for all the people, to see the greats, the jazz greats, the people who actually helped to make the music. So, you had good jazz people, younger ones coming up, and they played the clubs, there were a few clubs on the South Side that catered to jazz music. But it had

43. De Haas, like others, were spurred to focus on neighborhood development after the city released the 1973 *Chicago 21* plan to revitalize the downtown: "Chicago's substantial black and Latino population began to focus on securing what Bourdieu termed 'legitimate' forms of political and cultural power through establishment of ethnic cultural institutions and ethnic accounts of history" (Grams 2010, 35).

become so divisive, in terms of those people on the South Side trying to make a decent living, because you didn't have the audiences that you used to have, from all over Chicago, coming to the South Side of Chicago. So you didn't have that anymore.... So you know, those people were lost to our community. And all I wanted to do was to talk about the history of the music and the people that it came out of. And a lot of those people now are either performing at other places, on the North Side or in Europe, where they can get a better salary, or anywhere else but in our community. So we didn't get a chance to see them (pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015).

Jazz had the potential to reverse the flow of musicians, audiences, and money out of the South Side. The SSCC's "elegant ballrooms, dining room, ceilings held up by marble columns, and floor-to-ceiling windows looking outward to the lake" befitted the dignity of these performers and signaled the value that the community placed on their cultural heritage (Taub [1988] 1994, 31). De Haas felt that South Shore "was a very nice place. That the Count Basie's and the Duke Ellington's [orchestras] would love to come out to a place like this to perform" (pers. comm., Dec. 3, 2015). As a venue for jazz, the SSCC explicitly broke with representations of Black Chicago as economically and culturally impoverished by making the Black middle class, and Black middle-class culture, visible.

Coalition board member, Roscoe King, and South Shore Bank executive, Ron Grzywinski, declared optimistically in an op-ed in the *Chicago Sun-Times*: Jazz Comes Home "offers strong evidence that the conventional wisdoms of yesterday are not the truths of today." They argued that cultural consumption could create a new investment opportunity: "just as the private sector pays its dues to assure that Chicago has a world-class symphony orchestra, art museum, and opera company, it should acknowledge the special place of jazz music in the cultural heritage of millions of black citizens and assess the business value of a major new tourist attraction outside of downtown." The goal of the festival was to

make "the city's leadership...see that there is vitality and economic opportunity south of Congress St."⁴⁴ As the eighties progressed, coalition documents increasingly used language like this, stressing the SSCC as "a major tourist attraction," able "to enhance and attract businesses to the South Shore community."⁴⁵

The Cultural Logic of the Postindustrial City

In the seventies the coalition emphasized the "multi-ethnic" nature of their proposals, well before the White middle class embraced "multiculturalism" (a usage that strips culture of ethnicity/race) as "a renewed interest in an 'urban lifestyle'" in the eighties (Beauregard 1993, 240–41).⁴⁶ Coalition documents emphasized SSCC's proximity to predominantly Latino residential communities to the south (as well as the integrated Hyde Park neighborhood to the north) and early programs included Latino culture, such as the 1979 South of the Border festival. This emphasis also connected the struggle for funding at the SSCC to the federal lawsuit against the Chicago Park District's discriminatory practices that affected all non-White communities.

The coalition's 1978 preliminary proposal explicitly framing their goal to create a public space for the "celebration of the diversity of cultural, social, and ethnic differences which make urban life rich, exciting,

44. King and Grzywinski, "Jazz Comes Home," *Chicago Sun-Times*, Aug. 11, 1981.

45. "Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club Park, Inc.," brochure, 1985, unprocessed papers, CSSCCA.

46. The coalition's multiethnic festivals reflected a more flexible definition of "community" than later downtown festivals, which created neat boundaries between largely White audiences and ethnic performers.

and nourishing to those of us who live in cities.”⁴⁷ In the eighties the inclusion of Black Chicago in the shifting conceptions of urban culture in America—from a place of perceived cultural pathology to the cosmopolitan, newly valued, postindustrial city—was tenuous.⁴⁸ Jazz allowed the coalition to assert rightful community ownership over the SSSCC while highlighting Black Chicago’s contributions to the city at large: “Chicago is the home of jazz, just as Nashville is the home of country music and Milan is the home of grand opera,” and “Jazz Comes Home represents a rare opportunity for Chicago to build part of its bright future on a unique part of its heritage.”⁴⁹ Through such assertions, the coalition foreshadowed Chicago’s postindustrial urban economic revitalization, which would center around cultural consumption.

The coalition’s model for urban revitalization—built around cultural amenities and tourism, supported and maintained by a public-private partnership—was adopted on a larger scale by White urban boosters later in the eighties. The educational value of arts, though, was replaced by culture as entertainment. This rise of cities as cosmopolitan nodes in a global economy is often depicted as a top-down process (Beauregard 1993; Hackworth 2006; Lloyd [2005] 2010; Sassen 2001). Linked to neoliberalism and an economic response to the urban financial crises of the seventies, “cities...offset declining [industrial] production by increasing consumption” (Hackworth 2006, 80). According to urban planner Robert Beauregard, “through most of the 1980s and 1990s, the discourse on urban decline shrank to insignificance. Revival, revitalization, renaissance, and rediscovery were dominant themes,...an abrupt shift in

47. Coalition to Save the South Shore Country Club, “Preliminary Planning Document for the South Shore Country Club Park,” 1978, box 3, folder 17, CSSSCCA.

48. As the celebration of diversity entered the dominant discourse in the eighties, mainstream urban boosters tended to focus on Latin American and Asian enclaves (Beauregard 1980, 240).

49. King and Grzywinski, “Jazz Comes Home,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, Aug. 11, 1981.

emphasis from the 1970s” (2003, 211). Beauregard quoted the editor of *Builder* magazine from the eighties who described the renovation of downtown buildings for cultural consumption, which would have a “unique urban style [to] rekindle sparks of life in...cities, and, in turn, [become] celebrations of the vibrancy and diversity of city life” (2003, 213). Yet what White commenters characterized as a “rediscovery” and appeared from their vantage point to be an “abrupt shift” was for the coalition, other black middle-class cultural brokers, and their allies connected to their persistent revindication of the generativity of black communities.

In Chicago a cultural policy for the downtown emerged slowly from the political machine:

Though [Mayor Richard J.] Daley...did invest in public art—for instance the Chicago Civic Center, as well as public sculptures by Picasso, Calder, and Chagall—he took a strong stand against the 1960s social movements and their core concerns with more citizen responsive, egalitarian, multicultural, and tolerant politics.... [After Daley’s death], slowly and steadily the picketers outside the 1968 DNC [Democratic National Convention] have been invited into City Hall and their programs pursued.... The [emergent] policies all helped to enliven street life and create a downtown that is more visible to the affluent.... Many included free concerts by top stars in Grant Park, and were much appreciated by low-income Chicagoans. This inaugurated a trend...of using public music festivals to generate allegiance through consumption and leisure for all (Clark and Silver 2013, 30–31).

The institutionalization of cultural policy began under Harold Washington. Chicago’s only Black mayor (1983–87) had been a long-time supporter of the coalition while a state senator (Raynard Hall, pers. comm., Oct. 3, 2015, and Oct. 20, 2015). In 1983 Washington appointed Madeleine Murphy Rabb as executive director of the city’s Office of Fine

Arts,⁵⁰ and a comprehensive cultural plan was part of his reform agenda (Clark and Silver 2013, 32). He strengthened city support for annual festivals featuring Black music in Chicago's downtown Grant Park: the blues festival inaugurated in 1984, the jazz festival inaugurated in 1979 by Geraldine de Haas, and the gospel festival (first held in 1984 in the SSCC and downtown since 1987).⁵¹ By the late eighties the city's official cultural festivals were rarely located in Black neighborhoods.

The City of Chicago was increasingly interested in showcasing the downtown as a place of “attract[ive] ethnic and racial pluralism” (Beauregard 1993, 253). Like the “glimmering new office towers” that proclaimed urban revival (Beauregard 1993, 246–50), most venues for cultural consumption sponsored or subsidized by the city (including jazz clubs) were located downtown or on the predominantly White North Side (Clark and Silver 2013, 31; Kenney 2004). Governing elites siphoned Black cultural capital out of Black neighborhoods, using art forms initially produced through collective processes (1) to create the image of a culturally vibrant, diverse, and “global” city that could compete with New York and Los Angeles for international investment (Clark and Silver 2013, 28); (2) to domesticate the radical political sources of Black art under the banner of multiculturalism (Hale and Millamán 2006, 284); and (3) to claim a multicultural inclusivity for Chicago as a whole

without disavowing policies of disinvestment in the South Side.⁵² This type of multiculturalism provides bounded and staged experiences, which encourage residents to view “the urban landscape as a site of celebratory diversity” without the need for them to interact with one another as neighbors or through quotidian social exchanges (Widener 2010, 254, 247).

The coalition's history is an important example that expands Mary Pattillo's conceptualization of the Black middle class as cultural “brokers” and highlight the innovation that can emerge from that position (2007, 121). They created a rationale and a vocabulary that made postindustrial urban development possible, which was later taken up by predominantly White governing elites with a multicultural agenda centered on the downtown. The coalition's work foreshadowed a full-fledged cultural policy apparatus that popularized cities as “center[s] of creativity or positive action” (Widener 2010, 226–27). The coalition's use of culture for economic recovery anticipated the more widespread rediscovery of the deindustrialized city as culturally and economically vibrant during the eighties and nineties.

When proposals from the margins coalesced with dominant visions for the future of US cities, they were turned on their heads by governing elites. The coalition had used Black culture to oppose the cultural logic of uneven development; elites coopted Black culture for an economically and racially exclusionary downtown with the stark contrasts of today's global cities: pockets of concentrated wealth just a few dozen blocks from streets of vacant storefronts in disinvested neighborhoods (Beauregard 1993, 224).

This process demonstrates the cultural logic of uneven development, and racism at large, and merits further investigation. The scholarship on Black urban populations during the eighties and nineties, which often

50. Madeleine Murphy Rabb “was the first African American and professionally trained artist to head the city's fine arts program.... Rabb succeeded in making the cultural activities of Chicago more accessible, inclusive, and reflective of the city's racially and ethnically diverse arts community.” Madeline Murphy Rabb Papers, Chicago Public Library, www.chipublib.org/fa-madeline-murphy-rabb-papers.

51. Flynn McRoberts, “Gospel Fest Gets City's 'Amen,'” *Chicago Tribune*, June 19, 1988.

52. The relocation of the SSCC festivals demonstrates the continued centrality of race in uneven development: the coalition assumed the risks of testing new large-scale cultural events and the central city reaped the benefits.

diagnoses a deepening “culture of poverty,” does not explore this dynamic. One of the few exceptions, Daniel Widener’s account of Black cultural politics during the rise of “incorporative municipal multiculturalism” in Los Angeles, parallels the coalition’s story in many ways and suggests that the coalition’s legacy upon the wider city is not an isolated occurrence (2010).

Epilogue

The coalition successfully achieved their worthy goal of establishing a regional cultural center in South Shore, which is still used today for events ranging from exhibitions of local visual arts to performances by the South Shore Opera Company. However, its legacy of programming and community participation is mixed. The coalition disbanded in 1986, replaced by an advisory council in the summer of 1986, which “promotes community interest and participation in the activities of the Cultural Center by developing cultural, recreational, social, and educational programs.”⁵³ The Park District now largely dictates when and on what terms members of the surrounding community can give input. Within this structure, a few of the programs initially championed by the coalition have come to fruition in subsequent years, such as a culinary school.⁵⁴

Some coalition activists remain active in advisory council affairs, but many became involved in other projects. Carol Adams and Wyman Winston continued to work for the Neighborhood Institute for some

time on educational programs and affordable housing development in South Shore; Geraldine de Haas organized Jazz Comes Home at the SSCC through her organization, Jazz Unites, until her retirement in

53. “South Shore Cultural Center Advisory Council,” www.facebook.com/pg/SouthShoreCulturalCenterAdvisoryCouncil.

54. See Washburne Culinary & Hospitality Institute, www.washburneculinary.com/facilities/the-parrot-cage.

2013.⁵⁵ Henry English founded the Black United Fund of Illinois and fought for better public schools in South Shore until his death in 2016.⁵⁶ Raynard Hall and Harold Lucas, two of the coalition’s younger members, promote public art and architectural restoration in the Bronzeville neighborhood, which, unlike the SSCC, includes buildings built by Black entrepreneurs in the early twentieth century (Grams 2010).⁵⁷

These coalition members continue to connect Black Chicago’s rich cultural history to the present, and scholars such as Diane Grams, Derek Hyra, Mary Pattillo, and Kesha Moore have begun to study the implications of their work. However, the role of race and the Black middle class in municipal politics and social-movement action that sparked a full-fledged cultural policy apparatus in Chicago and a postindustrial urban revitalization remains to be systematically examined. This essay is a small step in that direction.

55. Jazz Comes Home was cancelled in 2013; efforts to revive it have been unsuccessful. Howard Reich, “Saying Goodbye to Geraldine and Eddie de Haas, with Music,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 2013; Howard Reich, “A Grand Concert for South Shore Jazz Festival,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 14, 2016.

56. Toure Muhammad, “Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Henry L. English,” *Chicago Final Call*, March 22, 2016.

57. “About Us,” Black Metropolis Convention & Tourism Council, bviconline.info/about-us; Bronzecomm, www.bronzecomm.com.

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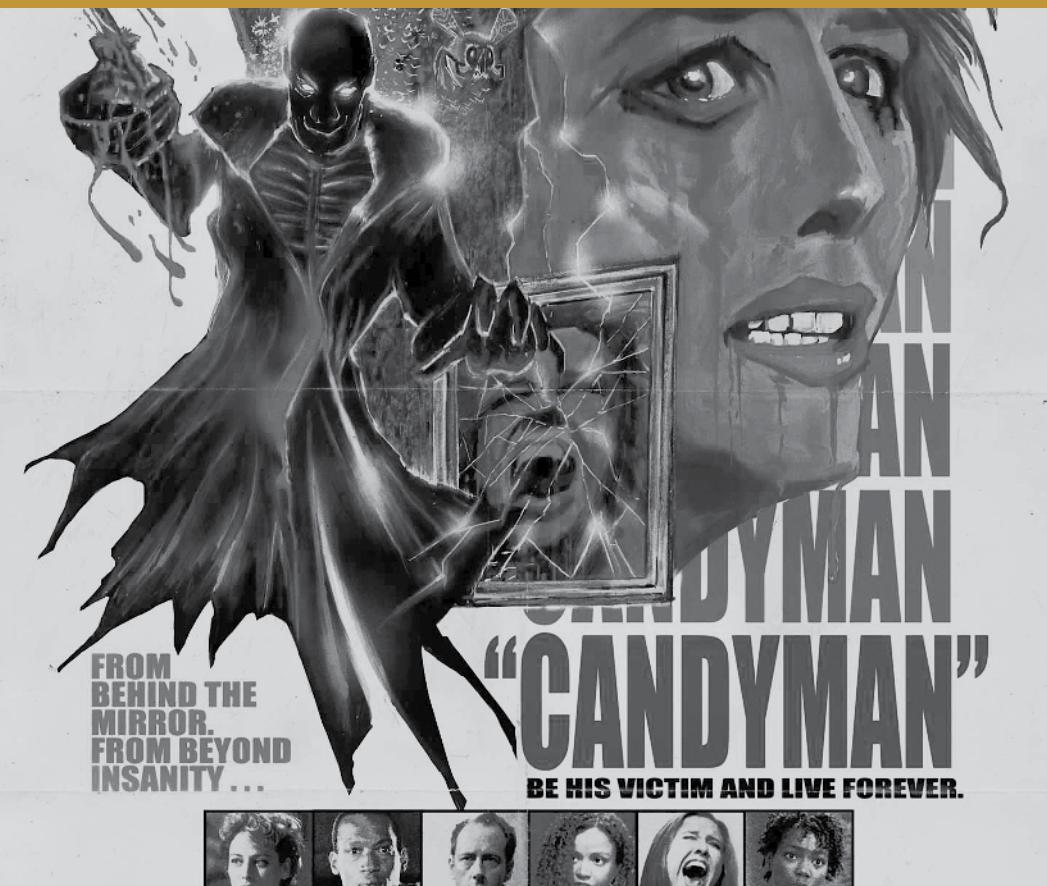
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A Ghost in the Projects



Candyman and the Boundaries of Racialized Fear in Chicago

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Horror is the removal of masks.

—Robert Bloch, author of *Psycho*

These stories are modern, oral folklore. They are the unselfconscious reflection of the fears of urban society.

—Trevor, Helen's husband, in *Candyman*

Introduction

Boogymen, hauntings, taboos, and transgressions: the language of horror unveils nightmares from the hidden recesses of the mind and speaks them into being. The writer Stephen King contends that fear and anxiety find productive outlet in the horror genre: "The ritual outletting of these emotions seems to bring things back to a more stable and constructive state again" (1982, 13). The power of the horrors we "make up" is their ability to "help us cope with the real ones" that exist in our society (King 1982, 13). Tracing roots as deep as the Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh* and Homer's *Odyssey*, horror stories existed long before the emergence of the Western Gothic novel whose prominent early works include Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), generally

considered the first horror novel, and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818) (Dixon 2010, 1; Kawin 2012, 3). The horror genre has continued to proliferate in novels, short stories, oral folklore, urban legends, comics, video games, and television shows. Horror films, since the "inception of the medium" (Dixon 2010, 3), have continued to embody contemporary American fears (Muir 2011, 3). However, many critics overlook horror films and regard them as "garbage" or "nonsense" (Schwarz 2004). This critical neglect has enabled some horror movies to be particularly subversive, with uncensored and more imaginative material (Schwarz 2004).

Concerning the medium of film, "the master of suspense" Alfred Hitchcock notes that cinema is reminiscent of the short story: both are typically experienced in a single sitting and derive their emotional impact from the careful construction of the director or author (1963, 34). Cinema's greatest strength derives from the thoughtful assemblage of visuals, sounds, and references, which, in the director's hands, can become something greater than the reality of its parts, imbued with meaning in and of itself (Sipos 2010, 29). As Hitchcock explained: "Pure cinema is pieces of film assembled. Any individual piece is nothing. But a combination of them creates an idea" (1963, 5). *Mise-en-scène*—the amalgamation of elements (lighting, set design, costumes, props, sounds, space, staging, acting, makeup, and color choices) captured in the camera's frame—forms what the audience understands about a film, the symbolism that can be inferred, and the overall impact of the experience (Sipos 2010, 31–32). Because the camera can take many vantage points, there is an aesthetic value assigned to the frames chosen, creating "a visual perspective that 'comments' on the images inside its borders, and conveys an emotional impact" (Sipos 2010, 71). The horror genre must encompass the techniques of other types of film, plus has the unique task of assembling its parts to frighten viewers. The best horror films capture "our cultural anxieties...our collective fears," conveying an allegorical message that awakens viewers (Philips 2005, 3–5).

American horror films of the 1990s shifted toward "naturalism or

'realism'" and a new interest in contemporary cultural issues (Muir 2011, 9). Previously, most horror films took place in a "could-be anywhere," rather than a "somewhere" location (Briefel and Ngai 1996, 76). Bernard Rose's 1992 film, *Candyman*, takes place in Chicago in the African American housing project of Cabrini-Green Homes. It explores issues of race and urban space when external fear of public-housing projects and internal chaos abounded. Cabrini-Green in the late 1980s and early 1990s was in decline (Heathcott 2012, 371). Reagan-era cuts to the Chicago Housing Authority's budget led to the structural decay of buildings and individual units (Venkatesh 2000, 112–13). The CHA misspent funds (Popkin et al. 2000, 13) and delayed building repairs in order to address gang problems (Venkatesh 2000, 130–13). The area became dangerous for all and fatal for some residents (Popkin et al. 2000, 2). Residents faced racial and socioeconomic segregation from the rest of Chicago. The poorest of the poor, they were concentrated in neighborhoods with limited community resources (Pattillo 2007, 181–83), experienced disproportionate joblessness in the wake of deindustrialization (Wilson ([1987] 2012, 135), and suffered from the absence of social programming, few recreational outlets, limited educational opportunities, and economic instability—all of which created a "social void" that was filled by gangs (Popkin et al. 2000, 2; Venkatesh 2000, 118–19). The city's murder rate tripled between 1965 and 1992, peaking in 1993 and 1994 (Cook and Laub 2002, 2) at more than double what it is today (Stults 2010, 244–47). Victims were predominately black and Hispanic boys and young men (Cook and Laub 2002, 2) in areas of concentrated disadvantage (Stults 2010, 250). Public and government leaders became convinced that only the destruction of Cabrini-Green and other public-housing projects would stop the violence (Petty 2013, 221; Venkatesh 2000, 268).

Candyman depicts Cabrini-Green at this historical moment. It participates in contemporary urban and national discussions about housing projects and subverts audience fears of racial and socioeconomic difference by blaming the decline of public housing on outside forces, and not

the residents. Turbulent urban race relations existed throughout the nation at the time of the film's release, with the Rodney King race riots in Los Angeles occurring on the same day as *Candyman*'s test-release date (Schwarz 2004). The typical horror film in the 1990s was set in a white middle-class suburb and did not portray racial dynamics (Briefel and Ngai 1996, 76; Scrappers Film Group, 2015). Black actors were minor characters, typically killed first. The main purpose of the rare major black characters was to sacrifice their life in order to serve a white protagonist's plot development (Coleman 2011, 11–12). Only a few mainstream horror films used black actors in roles of central importance or addressed race and prejudice, such as in *The People Under the Stairs* (Craven 1991) and *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero 1968). Black monsters were mostly confined to blaxploitation films, campy all-black parodies of classic horror films, such as *Blacula* (Crain 1972), or were tools of racist propaganda, such as *The Birth of a Nation* (Griffith 1915). Bernard Rose's *Candyman* was unorthodox. It pushed boundaries by replacing the white-inhabited haunted house with a black housing project haunted by a compelling and emotionally complex black monster, the Candyman.¹

The story of *Candyman* begins with Helen Lyle (Virginia Madsen), a white University of Illinois at Chicago graduate student of urban legends. She gathers the origin of a myth about a black murderer named Candyman from local students. They tell the story of a promiscuous, suburban, white teenager who recites "Candyman" five times into a mirror on a dare; the hook-handed monster guts her and kidnaps the child she is babysitting.² Helen then learns about the murder of Ruthie Jean, who

1. *Candyman* has two sequels, the acceptable though unremarkable *Candyman 2: Farewell to the Flesh* (Condon 1995) and the largely disowned *Candyman 3: Day of the Dead* (Meyer 1999). I will not address these works at length. Bernard Rose only directed the original film, making it the best indicator of his vision for the franchise.

2. Clive Barker, the writer of the short story on which *Candyman* is based, found the idea for the hook-handed man in *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* (Brunvand 1981), a pivotal book of urban legends (Schwarz 2004). Barker's short story derives from

was killed in her Cabrini-Green apartment by a hook-wielding murderer. The police did not come in time to save her or solve the case, leading residents to attribute the killing to the Candyman. Helen's senior colleague suggests that the Candyman legend stems from the murder of a real black man in the 1890s, who was lynched by a white mob for fathering a child with a white woman. Helen and her best friend Bernadette (Kasi Lemmons), a middle-class black graduate student, meet various residents of Cabrini-Green, including Anne-Marie (Vanessa Williams), a hardworking new mother who was Ruthie Jean's neighbor. Despite Bernadette's warning, Helen returns to Cabrini-Green alone in search of more information on the legend and is knocked unconscious by a gang leader, also named Candyman, a reference to his dealing "candy" or drugs. Believing she has found Ruthie Jean's killer, Helen is surprised by the phantom Candyman (Tony Todd). He has return to contradict the doubts she has raised about his legend. He then goes on a murderous rampage to prove his existence. He kills Anne-Marie's dog, kidnaps Anne-Marie's newborn child, Anthony, and kills Bernadette. Helen is found unconscious near the murder and is institutionalized.

Although Rose raises the possibility that Helen may be a delusional killer, the viewers learn that Candyman is the real culprit after he kills a psychiatrist at the mental institution while Helen is restrained. Helen escapes and returns to Cabrini-Green with the hope of saving Anne-Marie's kidnapped baby. In his lair, Candyman tells Helen that she is his reincarnated long-lost lover and Anthony is their reincarnated child. Candyman attempts to claim them both by trapping them in a community bonfire. Fighting back, Helen emerges from the bonfire and returns

"The Hook," a legend from the late 1950s about a killer who uses a hook to force a parked teen couple to avoid or stop having sex (Brunvand 1981, 48–51). Rose adds the incantation into a mirror of Candyman's name from the urban legend of Bloody Mary, Queen Mary I, in which repeating the murderous queen's name in the mirror summons her behind you (Angel 2015, 254). As a child in the Chicago suburbs in the 1990s, I heard that she would appear "breathing down your neck," just like the Candyman.

the baby to Anne-Marie, before succumbing to her burns. The Cabrini-Green community attend Helen's funeral, placing the Candyman's hook in her grave, as if to recognize his presence. In the final scene, Helen's adulterous husband Trevor (Xander Berkeley) calls her name in the mirror, and the ghostly Helen returns with the Candyman's hook to murder him. During the credits, a graffiti portrait in Candyman's former Cabrini-Green lair depicts Helen as a martyr in the bonfire.

The film's plot is adapted from Clive Barker's 1986 short story, "The Forbidden." Rose shifts the focus from British class concerns (Cherry 2007, 230–31) to American issues of race and urban unease. The short story takes place in the Spector Street Estate (Barker 1999, 77), a slum in an unnamed city (Cherry 2007, 55) that was based on Liverpool (Schwarz 2004). Rose remained faithful to some of the story's details—the protagonist's drinking, her climatic death in a community bonfire—and chose an equivalent "wrong" part of town—Cabrini-Green (Barker 1999, 90, 111, 123; Rose 1992). Both locations are depicted as rundown, foul-smelling, claustrophobic, dark, and avoided by outsiders (Barker 1999, 81; Rose 1992), and both story and film depict a middle-class protagonist who enters as an outsider but grows closer to the community through her pursuit of the Candyman and ultimate death (Barker 1999, 116, 123; Rose 1992). Where Barker uses the horror genre to show that transgressing the class divide in England is "forbidden," Rose uses dialogue and visual boundaries to reveal forbidden racial divides in American society that prevent racial mobility throughout the city.

Scholars have criticized the ending of *Candyman* for glorifying white womanhood (Briefel and Ngai 1996, 88–90; Coleman 2011, 189–191; Halberstam 1995, 5; Thompson 2007, 80). Helen appropriates the Candyman's power to solve a minor marital problem and becomes a venerated martyr to the black community at the expense of the historically more significant story of Candyman's life and death. Replacing Candyman's portrait with Helen's suggests that the plight of black men in the 1890s is interchangeable with that of white women in the 1990s, as long as both suffer a gruesome death. However, an alternate reading becomes

evident if we consider the film's many layers. Candyman's love for a white woman is a deliberate choice of the director. Rose repurposes the loaded cinematic imagery of the black boogeyman attacking the white damsel, such as in *The Birth of a Nation* (Griffith 1915), in order to implicate the racism and social boundaries that historically perpetuated fears around black men, the rape of white women, and miscegenation (Schwarz 2004). The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how *Candyman* strives to explore urban racial division as well as the historical continuation of racism in Chicago.

Focusing on *Candyman*'s strengths, I examine Rose's manipulation of two key tropes of the horror genre, the haunted house and the ghost, to explore issues of racial tension. Rose also nuances horror tropes about women, including domestic unrest, hysteria, and the "final girl"—in which the female lead embodies elements of both the feminine and the masculine and survives long enough to confront the killer (Clover 1987, 201, 204, 221).³ In the limited scope of this paper, I will examine what the unprecedented portrayal of the Candyman as a refined black phantom and the reimaging of Cabrini-Green as a Gothic haunted house disclose about systemic racism and urban racial spatial anxieties in Chicago. Through his examination of haunted—or, socially "forbidden" spaces—Rose prompts viewers to confront the constructed historical divisions of Chicago along racial lines and their devastating effects on the residents of Cabrini-Green, who happen to fall into the haunted space. Rose creates empathy and compassion for the residents, highlighting their perseverance in spite of the isolation, vulnerability, and violence of Cabrini-Green. By showing Candyman's romantic and tragic qualities, the movie takes an unprecedently serious and respectful attitude toward a black character. Murdered in the 1890s over fears of miscegenation

3. For Helen as an empowering women, see "Imperfect Geometry: Identity and Culture in Clive Barker's 'The Forbidden' and Bernard Rose's *Candyman*" (Cherry 2007, 48–66); for the "final girl," see "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film" (Clover 1987, 187–228).

and haunting Helen in response to his lost love, Candyman's monstrous form is the embodiment of racial transgression. His return to haunt Cabrini-Green symbolizes the continuation of racism and its legacy in the present day. However, rather than reproduce the racist idea that crossing racial boundaries is immoral, Candyman's poignant past and his elegant courtship of Helen speak to the fundamental injustice of these racial dynamics. Through the mobilization of the horror tropes of the haunted house and the monster, *Candyman* participates in a dialogue about the history and continuation of systemic racism in America, drawing critical attention to the isolation and decline of public housing in the late twentieth century and fostering empathy for these social and structural issues across racial lines.

The Haunted Housing Project

Urban Dread: Space and Racialized Boundaries in *Candyman*

To expose Chicago's social boundaries, Bernard Rose employs a motif of spatial haunting and dread even before the haunted Cabrini-Green appears on the screen. *Candyman* opens with a steady aerial shot of Congress Parkway, moving westward from Chicago's downtown (Fig. 1). The helicopter-mounted camera traces Chicago's arterial system as the roadways, flowing with cars, meet and separate. Major landmarks, such as the Chicago River, are peripheral in the shot, which increases the viewer's attention when an important landmark does appear in the center of the roadway sequence: the Circle Interchange. A junction of the Eisenhower, Dan Ryan, and Kennedy expressways, this interchange from overhead resembles the heart of the city with the roadway veins and arteries converging and diverging. Rose's choice evokes the history of major roadways in Chicago, which were constructed to form racial boundaries (Heathcott 2012, 368; Wilson 2011, 22), a fact that Bernadette mentions later in the film. In particular, the sequence shows part

of the Dan Ryan, a fourteen-lane highway, constructed in 1961 alongside the Robert Taylor Homes, which separated black and ethnic white neighborhoods on the city's South Side (Hirsch 1983, 263; Petty 2013, 20).

This urban roadway system creates unease in the viewer, similar to other opening roadway scenes in classic horror films, with which Rose would likely have been familiar. The road in *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero 1968) leads a couple to the cemetery where the dead come back to life, and the road in *The Stepfather* (Ruben 1987) leads to the house of a serial killer. The closest introduction to *Candyman* is *The Shining*'s (Kubrick 1980) lengthy overhead shot of a remote roadway with eerie background music, which generates a sense of isolation and foreshadows the father's cabin fever and murderous hallucinations. Nicola Mann suggests that the roads in *Candyman* convey not only tension, but diseased with "overly clogged bodily arteries" (2012, 283).⁴ Rose allows us to peer within the arterial structure of the city with a sense of fear and anticipation of what secrets hide inside and outside of the city's boundaries.

The layering of the title credits mimics the roadways and intensify our focus on divisions and exchanges within the city. The initial credit to Bernard Rose enters the right side of the screen, in-line with the traffic that heads from east to west. Then, the film's title descends from the top of the screen and exits at the bottom, in jarring perpendicular contrast to the first credit. This sets an intersecting grid pattern for the following credits. Philip Glass's music, especially the church-like pipe organ,

4. Mann's observation about the use of space in the opening credits is inaccurate and ineffective. Mann contends that the sequence's "full six minutes" forces us to meditate on Chicago's inner city and acts as "a rallying cry for a reanalysis of this space" (2012, 284); the length of the sequence is actually less than three minutes. She argues that the camera "takes us on a journey from the Kennedy Expressway, to the 'Red' and 'White' buildings of the Cabrini-Green housing project in the city's Near North Side, and onwards to the high-rise condominiums of the glittering Gold Coast," suggesting a tension between the two areas (2012, 283); the camera follows Congress Parkway, capturing neither Cabrini-Green nor the Gold Coast.

intensifies from the first credit to the second, which lends the word “CANDYMAN” a terrific and even supernatural weight as it breaks into the boundary of the screen. Forced to meditate on these limited images and sounds without the presence of a human character for the initial minutes of the film, the viewer develops a feeling of anxiety over the boundaries and intersections of the city.

The camera follows Congress Parkway under the old main post office, and an enraged black male voice yells, “I don’t give a damn why you’re still here!” Perhaps sampled from a speech,⁵ the voice does not belong to Tony Todd or any of the other featured character. Although this enigmatic voice might belong to a Cabrini-Green resident or even some specific Chicagoan, a more helpful reading suggests that this voice introduces the theme of tension over spatial division and belonging, the space of “here.” The harsh divisions of the roadway, this statement of resistance or dissatisfaction with the structural spaces that enforce racial prejudice within Chicago, and Glass’s haunting music encourage the viewer to consider Chicago’s extreme racial and economic segregation with a sense of foreboding.

Nevertheless, why use roads to signify this division, and why Congress Parkway, which is south of the story’s location of terror, Cabrini-Green? The roadway scene ends when the camera reaches Halsted, a north-south street, just beyond the Circle Interchange. The interchange is slightly northeast of the University of Illinois at Chicago and is the source of the university’s original name, the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. Congress Parkway serves as a boundary between the academic, predominately white middle-class students of UIC, like Helen, and the disadvantaged black community of Cabrini-Green. Richard J. Daley, mayor of Chicago from 1955 to 1976, used the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 to build expressway boundaries between black and white neighborhoods, which increased segregation in Chicago (Heath-

5. Incredibly, no research on *Candyman* acknowledges this utterance. I have been unable to locate the phrase in a speech, text, or other film.

cott 2012, 368; Petty 2013, 20; Wilson 2011, 22). The aerial camera shot reinforces this sense of social distance, isolation, and division. Some critics have also aptly suggested that the camera’s perspective is Candyman’s, stalking Helen from afar (Nicholls and Buckingham, 2012).

The roadway scene cuts to a scene of a busy hive of bees, crawling on top of one another, and Candyman’s voice is heard over their buzzing, promising to “shed innocent blood.” The camera zooms into the densely layered bees, penetrates to the interior of their hive, and emerges on the skyline filled with buzzing, agitated bees. The image of the dark mass of bees swarming the John Hancock Center and the rest of the Gold Coast is particularly ominous. The biblical proportions of this plague and the bees’ blackness overtaking the white-coded affluent lakefront is part of a common racial image in American horror films. Black creatures attacking vulnerable whites (particularly beautiful white damsels) include *King Kong* (Cooper and Schoedsack 1933), the *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (Arnold 1954), and *The Birds* (Hitchcock 1963). More contemporary examples include the black blob that attacks the flesh of an attractive white college girl in *Creepshow 2: The Raft* (Gornick 1987) and the hoard of black spiders descending on the vulnerable white woman in the bathtub in *Arachnophobia* (Marshall 1990). The clearest stand-in for racial fears is the black rat Ben in *Willard* (Mann 1971), who, in contrast to the intelligent good-hearted white rat Socrates, leads a murderous uprising of dark rats.⁶

The bees dissipate, the black villain says, “I, came, for you,” and the skyline dissolves into a close-up of Helen’s face (Fig. 2), blending the Gold Coast with her whiteness. Yet, the question remains: for whom has Candyman come? Is the “you” Helen or the viewer? Alternatively, maybe “you” is Chicago. In this way, the film opens up possibilities of unease and urban fears surrounding race for the characters, for us, and for the city itself and the boundaries it creates.

6. The *Willard* remake (Morgan 2003) further emphasizes this racial coding by making Ben an African rat.

This racialized fear not only plagues the city's exterior geography but also invades the characters' private spaces. Helen informs Bernadette that the city built her luxury Lincoln Village condominium as a housing project, just like Cabrini-Green. Helen beckons Bernadette to a window:

Helen: Now take a look at this. Once it [Lincoln Village] was finished the city realized there was no barrier between here and the Gold Coast.

Bernadette: Unlike over there [in Cabrini-Green] where they have the highway and the El train⁷ to keep the ghetto cut off.

Helen: Exactly. So they made some alterations. They covered the cinder block in plaster and they sold the lot off as condos.

Bernadette: How much did you pay for this place?

Helen: Don't ask. (Leads Bernadette to bathroom.) Now, wait'll you see this. Here's the proof. (Removes the bathroom mirror.) The killer, or killers [of Ruthie Jean], we don't know which, smashed their way through the back of this cabinet. See, there's no wall there. It's only a medicine chest separating us from the other apartment.

Helen speculates on the murder of Ruthie Jean by comparing her apartment to Cabrini-Green: "The spectral housing project Helen imagines concealed within her own building posits Cabrini-Green as a Gothic house-within-a-house; cinder blocks hidden under a layer of white plaster" (Briefel and Ngai 1996, 80). In this reading Helen exemplifies gentrification. She disregards the economic difference between her

7. The train did act as a barrier between Cabrini-Green and the Gold Coast, but not the expressway. On the South Side, the Dan Ryan expressway was a barrier between the Robert Taylor Homes and ethnic white neighborhoods, such as Bridgeport.

apartment and Cabrini-Green (Briefel and Ngai 1996, 81) and uses her research project to explore and dominate the area, reminiscent of the private market take over of Cabrini-Green (Bezalel 2014).⁸ Rose's intention may have simply been to acknowledge the city's racist boundaries (Schwarz 2004) and make a reference to the real Ruthie Jean, Ruth McCoy.⁹ The 911 dispatcher did not believe McCoy's story that her attackers entered the apartment through the bathroom medicine cabinet, and the police failed to investigate the scene thoroughly (Bogira 1987). In acknowledging the flaws of public-housing construction this scene of Helen's discovery challenges assumptions circulated about Cabrini-Green and its history; by connecting Helen's apartment to Cabrini-Green apartment, the film questions the constructed otherness of Cabrini-Green and its residents.

The Site of Haunting: The History of Cabrini-Green

Created and funded through the New Deal Housing Act of 1937, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) constructed public housing as temporary housing for soldiers returning from World War II and working-class

8. Chicago History Museum historian Paul Durica suggests that Helen's apartment is a fictionalized Carl Sandburg Village, an urban renewal project that displaced a Puerto Rican community on Clark Street and led to white gentrification ("Cabrini-Green" on the DVD version of *Candyman*).

9. In 1987 Ruth Mae ("Ruthie") McCoy was killed in the Grace Abbott Homes on the West Side when two burglars entered her apartment through her medicine cabinet (Bogira 1987; Bogira 2014; Myles 1987). Steve Bogira's *Chicago Reader* article, "Cause of Death: What Killed Ruthie Mae McCoy: A Bullet in the Chest, or Life in the Projects?" (1990), is nearly identical to the article that Helen reads: "Cause of Death, What Killed Ruthie Jean? Life in the Projects."

two-parent families (Petty 2013, 19, 31, 212).¹⁰ From the late 1930s until the early 1960s Chicago's public housing "by almost any criteria that once could be used to measure a functional community" was successful, in terms of lack of crime, support from community organizations, management and screening techniques, and the quality of housing (Venkatesh 2000, 268–69). National leaders and the public saw CHA as "a model of efficiency and good management" (Popkin et al. 2000, 12). Black Chicagoans initially greeted Cabrini-Green, a CHA project on Chicago's Near North Side that was intended to "forge a kind of 'urban renewal'" (Muir 2011, 222), positively. Early residents found public housing a considerable improvement over deteriorating overpriced South Side tenements (Petty 2013, 18–19, 31). This situation changed with the Housing Act of 1949, which developed public housing near city centers but at the same time encouraged "white flight" to the suburbs by providing mortgages to whites (Freidrichs 2011; Hunt 2009, 101, 107).

CHA's early public housing followed the federal policy of the Neighborhood Composition Rule, which required developments to reflect the current patterns of resident composition in their areas (Petty 2013, 19). As construction continued, *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority* (1969) ruled that intentionally placing housing projects in black neighborhoods preserved "urban racial residential segregation patterns" and violated the Fourteenth Amendment (Pattillo 2007, 181). City planners also strategically placed new public houses, such as Cabrini-Green's tower blocks, to "provide a buffer" to affluent white areas (Heathcott 2012, 368). The Brooke Amendment (1969)¹¹ and deindustrialization in

10. This essay can only sketch the history of Cabrini-Green. For the forces surrounding the creation, decline, and destruction of Cabrini-Green, see *Reclaiming the Inner City: Chicago's Near North Revitalization Confronts Cabrini-Green* (Marciniak 1986).

11. In an attempt to expand public housing's reach to the poorest families (Popkin et al. 2000, 14) the Brooke Amendment indexed public housing rent to family income with a cap of 25 percent (later 30 percent); previously rent was based on maintenance costs (Petty 2013, 31).

the 1970s caused middle- and working-class black families to leave the housing projects as their rent increased and jobs dwindled, which left only the poorest of the poor behind (Popkin et al. 2000, 14–15; Wilson ([1987] 2012, 136). The black population became "hyper-segregated" in terms of "evenness, clustering, exposure, centralization, and concentration" (Massey and Denton 1989, 373, 377). By the 1970s Cabrini-Green was poorer and more overcrowded, with fifteen thousand people in 3,607 units at its peak (Muir 2011, 222). Sociologists argue that the pervasive segregation of housing projects and their mainly black residents concentrated poverty and reduced their political bargaining power (Pattillo 2007, 182–83).

From the 1970s through the 1980s and early 1990s, the federal government, state, and city decreased the CHA's budget (Petty 2013, 20). CHA's rents also dropped as it housed an increasingly poorer population (Popkin et al. 2000, 14). Particularly harmful was the Reagan administration's decrease in federal funding by 87 percent in 1987 "at a time when America's urban poor had become a jobless population for whom subsidized public housing was a last defense against homelessness and abject poverty" (Venkatesh 2000, 112–13). CHA managerial incompetence contributed to the decline of the buildings: the authority claimed a deficit of \$33.5 million in 1982 despite failing to use \$50 million earmarked for repairs (Popkin et al. 2000, 13). The Department of Housing and Urban Development forced CHA Chairman Charles Swibel, "a crony of Mayor Richard J. Daley," to resign for "ample evidence of malfeasance" during his nineteen-year tenure (Popkin et al. 2000, 13). The misuse of funds continued. Chairman Vincent Lane reassigned excessive amounts CHA funds to gang-related crime control in the late 1980s and deferred necessary building maintenance (Petty 2013, 20; Venkatesh 2000, 130–31).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the quality of life for public-housing residents deteriorated on all fronts: ranging from rodent and insect infestations to broken elevators and clogged incinerators to social collapse from failing public schools, vandalism, crack cocaine, gangs, guns, murder, and sexual violence (Cook and Laub 2002, 3, 21; Freidrichs 2011; Hunt

2009, 146; Kirby 2015; Muir 2011, 222; Petty 2013, 20; Popkin et al. 2000, 1; Robinson 1997, 130; Stults 2010, 250). Facing external barriers to the social mobility of jobs and education, some residents joined gangs voluntarily as the best prospect for gaining respect, economic advancement, and social stability (Venkatesh 2000, 164). Others cited external “economic hardships that households suffered in the 1980s: joblessness, poor to nonexistence recreational and educational opportunities, and general social unrest” as their reasons for neglecting or vandalizing their own community (Venkatesh 2000, 118–19). Overwhelmed by drugs and gangs, the once close-knit communities’ internal policing mechanisms began to crumble (Petty 2013, 37), and police, maintenance workers, and vital city services such as ambulances and cabs avoided public housing (Freidrichs 2011; Kotlowitz 1991, 23; Petty 2013, 39, 119). Outsiders became increasingly unwelcome even in times of need, and residents recall that alienation bred a deep-seated rage that was often manifested in misdirected ways (Freidrichs 2011).¹² Residents during the worst periods of decline often feared they would not survive the violence or internalized their degraded and stigmatized status as second-class citizens (Jones and Newman 1997, 36, 39, 95, 199–200). In the decades leading up to *Candyman*, the press portrayed Cabrini-Green as violent, forbidding, and even hellish.¹³ For urban historian Joseph Heathcott news stories circulated in mythic proportions of “good intentions” that turned into nightmares or of projects “doomed to fail” from their inception (2012, 360). It is against this backdrop of social alienation, physical decay, and media stigmatization that the film portrays Cabrini-Green.

12. *Candyman*’s production crew recalls snipers firing on their van despite the filmmakers paying warring gangs for a cease-fire (Schwarz 2004).

13. “Missing Lad Found Stabbed” (*Chicago Defender*, 1975); “Cabrini-Green Area Thieves Prey on Women Drivers in Daylight” (*Chicago Tribune*, 1982); “The Road to Hell” (*Chicago Tribune*, 1985); “In Chicago: Raising Children in a Battle Zone” (*Time*, 1986); and, in the year of *Candyman*’s release, “A Brief Life in the Killing Zone” (*Time*, 1992).

Haunted Houses, Haunted Projects

Rose uses the imagery of the Gothic haunted house to convey the stigma and isolation of Cabrini-Green. His embellished and even surreal depictions of the physical buildings and units of Cabrini-Green as filthy, malodorous, and ugly follow the style of grotesque haunted houses, such as *The Haunting of Hill House* (Jackson [1959] 1984, 101) and *The Amityville Horror* (Anson [1977] 2005, 3, 49, 178). This decay renders the familiar as unfamiliar, or “uncanny,” and therefore disturbing (Freud [1919] 2003, 148). The constructed marks of haunting break down the normal façade of a structure, revealing the unconscious anxiety surrounding a place. In the late 1980s and 1990s Cabrini-Green did decline (Freidrichs 2011; Kotlowitz 1991, 22, 121; Popkin et al. 2000, 11, 15), but *Candyman*’s set design intentionally heightened feelings of abandonment and unease (Scrappers Film Group 2015) (Fig. 3). The designers’ recreations of Cabrini-Green interiors include creepy foreign objects, such as a decaying doll in the bathtub where Ruthie Jean was murdered or a sack of shiny colorfully wrapped candies in Candyman’s lair that have razor blades hidden inside them (Schwarz 2004). These effects evoke a tangible sensation of dread, forcing viewers, even those familiar with the projects, to become increasingly unsettled.

It is interesting to compare Rose’s construction of a haunted Chicago neighborhood to a contemporary film with a similar setting. The boxing drama *Gladiator* (Herrington 1992) depicts a South Side “slum” filled with people playing basketball, walking outside, and talking, much as Alex Kotlowitz notes in *High Rise Stories: Voices from Chicago Public Housing* about the liveliness of the Henry Horner Homes in the late 1980s (2013, 12). In Rose’s vision, Cabrini-Green is a literal ghost town, desolate and nearly lifeless. A small neighborhood boy, who wanders the empty corridors of decaying buildings despite his own admission that it “ain’t safe here,” conveys the vulnerability of residents, particularly children. In the 1990s public-housing children were often victims of wayward bullets, lead poisoning, and other dangers and would have been a potent

symbol to film viewers of the dangers of Cabrini-Green (Popkin et al. 2000, 2, 6–7).

Rose's haunted housing project can be interpreted as rendering visible the dire alienation of the residents and suggesting the broken promise of projects like Cabrini-Green to provide safe, quality housing (Freidrichs 2011; Heathcott 2012, 360; Hunt 2009, 146). Simultaneously, the film has the potential to perpetuate discrimination toward the Cabrini-Green community. To viewers unfamiliar with the real Cabrini-Green, images of derelict corridors, trash-filled lawns, and ubiquitous, enigmatic graffiti could reinforce prejudicial fears (Vale 2013, 241) and justify tearing down high-rise projects, rather than support their renewal, as residents desired (Bezalel 1999; Schwarz 2004).

More successfully, the film challenges Helen and Bernadette's earlier negative judgments of Cabrini-Green. Bernadette "won't even drive past" Cabrini-Green, and Helen says that children are shot there "every day." Bernadette arrives with an arsenal of weapons (two containers of pepper spray and a Taser), and yet the academic duo is not attacked on this trip. In fact, the residents are equally suspicious of the two women. At worst, Helen and Bernadette endure a few remarks from local kids who assume they are undercover cops.¹⁴

It is not until Helen returns uninvited to Cabrini-Green to look for the Candyman that the gang leader, also named Candyman, knock her unconscious for "looking for Candyman." After the attack, police tell Helen that she is "lucky to be alive," suggesting that the gang was only giving her a warning. While the gang's rage could be attributed to Helen snooping around their gang territory, one resident, Anne-Marie, tells Helen and Bernadette that they "don't belong here" and are trespassing by "going through people's apartment and things." Helen's interest in the

14. The film crew was aware of the gang presence and the lack of police control in Cabrini-Green. In a controversial move, Rose paid off gangs and hired gang members to *act* as gang members ("Monster Mania," 2014), which placated threats and avoided turf warfare between buildings (Schwarz 2004).

"entire community" of Cabrini-Green is limited to her thesis on urban legends, and she assumes that they all "attribut[e] the daily horrors of their lives to a mythical figure." Expressing no concern for the residents' real and legitimate fears—some killer, human or superhuman, is murdering residents while the police do nothing—Helen enters Cabrini-Green as an outsider who believes she knows the residents better than they know themselves, thus sparking their resentment.

Anne-Marie defies the preconceived notions of Helen and Bernadette. Despite initial hesitation, she allows them into her welcoming home, which is decorated in warm, rich tones, with feminine pink walls, fruit-patterned curtains, and gold wall ornaments. Her character is emblematic of the families that the production crew met during filming (Schwarz 2004). Her organized, polished apartment evokes the interior lives of the community members and portrays the less publicized, daily lives of residents, who despite the buildings' shortcomings, called the projects their genuine home (Petty 2013, 121–22, 172–73).

Anne-Marie confronts the pair about their research: "What you gonna say? That we bad? Hmm? We steal? We gangbang? We all on drugs, right?" The repetition of "we" suggest the harm caused by outsiders who stereotype all Cabrini-Green residents as criminals, and Anne-Marie's aggravated tone suggest a painful familiarity with these accusations. Anne-Marie continues: "We ain't all like them assholes [the loitering teenagers] downstairs, you know? I just wanna raise my child good." Her words echo those of a former resident of Cabrini-Green, Chandra Bell, a mother and hospice caregiver, who felt many residents were trying to live regular lives despite the gang violence and drugs: "Everybody wasn't doing bad. There was also some good people living there that kept their units up. And I was one of them" (Petty 2013, 171).

Anne-Marie, a working mother who provides for her baby boy, contradicts expectations that housing projects facilitate a "welfare state" of lazy, destructive, and "immoral" poor (Freidrichs 2011). A likeable and responsible character, Anne-Marie suggests that Chicago's fear of the projects and its residents is misplaced and damaging. Contrary to

conservative theorists, such as Charles Murray, who suggest that “welfare dependency” incentivizes joblessness and out-of-wedlock births, sociologists have demonstrated that the root cause of poverty was the sharp decline of urban smokestack industries since the 1970s, which disproportionately affected lower-class black laborers and decreased the pool of “marriageable” (i.e., economically stable) men” (Wilson [1987] 2012, 12, 16–17, 91).

Rose’s haunted-house version of Cabrini-Green stands as a metaphor for real fears and antagonism toward public housing, but Rose shifts blame away from residents to the CHA and the police. The film blames the police for failing to protect black residents from the unwanted Overlord gang and their leader, who nicknames himself “Candyman.” A young boy tells Helen that the only person who protected a disabled child from violent assault was a local “big tough guy.” (It is ambiguous whether the boy’s attacker is the Candyman or the gang leader of the same name.) This scene is reminiscent of the real death of Dolores Wilson’s son at Cabrini-Green in which the police dismissed community leads and refused to further investigate the killing (Petty 2013, 38).

The lack of justice for the black residents contrasts with the swift action of the police after Helen’s attack by gang members. A police officer says they “swept” the high-rises to “flush them all out” and locked down the “whole of Cabrini” to solve her case. This scene evokes the CHA practice of “police busts, sweeps, tactical units, mob action, mass search and seizures, fingerprinting, raids, and other paramilitary techniques” as a method of gang suppression (Venkatesh 2000, 205). While reform efforts by tenants were “met with flat refusals for material and symbolic support” from external organizations (Venkatesh 2000, 202), the CHA’s extreme and brutal policing practice violated residents’ civil rights (Popkin et al. 2000, 16) and created antagonism between police and residents (Venkatesh 2000, 205).

The Black Monster

Cabrini-Green’s Ghost and His Monstrous Lair

The embodiment of the haunted space’s forbidding boundaries is its ghost, arguably the most potent feature of the haunted house and even the horror genre (King 1982, 50, 259). The character of Candyman who haunts Cabrini-Green after being tortured and murdered is similar to the spirits with traumatic pasts (unpunished crimes, economic hardship, or gender conflicts) who populate the Gothic genre (Bailey 1999, 56, 63–66). Candyman is also similar to the “homicidal maniac” commonly found in slasher films such as *Halloween* (Carpenter 1978), *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham 1980), and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (Craven 1984) who punishes white teens’ “sexual activity with death” (Thompson 2007, 61).

His ghostly existence depends on the continuation of his urban legend in the minds of the living, thus necessitating the murders around Cabrini-Green, where his remains were scattered. Cabrini-Green follows the haunted-house archetype in which the house must have a history (King 1982, 167) of some atrocity or “unsavory” historical event (Bailey 1999, 56). In films, such as *Pet Cemetery* (Lambert 1989), *Poltergeist* (Hooper 1982), *The Amityville Horror* (Rosenberg 1979), or *The Shining* (Kubrick 1980), and stories, such as *Po’ Sandy* (Chesnutt [1888] 1996) or *Beloved* (Morrison 1987), the haunted house links past historical atrocities to their lingering effects on the present day. The house might be built on a defiled tribal burial ground or a site associated with witchcraft, multiple murders, or slavery.

Since at least *Beowulf* the monster’s lair marks the most inhospitable, isolated, decayed, or frightening spatial area within the horror genre (Strong 1925). Candyman’s lair fulfills these traditional expectations. In a scene entitled “Looking-Glass,” Helen, like Alice in *Through the Looking-Glass*, enters his lair through the hole behind Ruthie Jean’s mirror. Here the graffiti and the decay are the most startling and extreme—walls contain mysterious and ominous images that tell of Candyman’s gruesome

murder. A full-size portrait of the Candyman, with a gaping mouth is the entrance to his lair (Fig. 4), a scene that was taken from the original short story, “The Forbidden” (Barker 1999). Barker describes a “wide mouth” with “vicious teeth” leading to a “throat” passageway and a room beyond—“a belly” (1999, 84). Helen describes the passageway portrait in surreal, dream-like terms as “potent,” “illusion,” “nightmare,” “facsimile,” and “heroin fugue” (Barker 1999, 84). Horror director Guillermo del Toro suggests that the image of “the woman entering the mouth of the painting” has “such power” that it becomes “almost totemic,” as if there is spiritual power radiating from the image (“The 100 Scariest Movie Moments” [2004] 2013). By emerging through the Candyman’s mouth, Helen is “his voice, his next avenue of ‘being,’” and her haunting and death will enable his urban legend to continue (Muir 2011, 224). The mouth is also a reference to white oppression of black stories and the transmission of the Candyman’s story by word of mouth (Halberstam 1995, 5; Muir 2011, 224). The Candyman “must shed innocent blood” because Helen created doubt around his story, without which he is “nothing.” In his particular logic, the true crime is not his murders, but forgetting the historical circumstances of his story.

The speaking black mouth is a challenge to the authority of whiteness, which whites consumers have counteracted by creating the trope of the edible black body (Tompkins 2012, 9). Depicted in everything from advertisements to stories, such images politically subjugate blacks and fetishize black bodies as objects of white pleasure (Tompkins 2012, 8, 9). Despite the destruction of his body by the white mob, Candyman’s menacing mouth suggests that he can now claim power over the bodies of others through his own voice and his own brand of destruction. Helen crawling out of his mouth evokes Candyman’s orality: he sexualizes her body and exerts power over it.

The Birth of a Black Ghost: Racism as a Haunting Presence

In the original short story, “The Forbidden,” Barker’s Candyman is racially undefined but certainly not black; he has supernatural and grotesque yellowish skin, blue lips, and red eyes (1999, 119) and his patchwork rags speak to the British class divide (Cherry 2007, 57). Rose was committed to exploring race in America in the film and had to “argue very strongly” before Barker gave permission to portray Candyman as an African American (Schwarz 2004).

Candyman, as the ghost of a black man, is the corporeal site of racial tension within Cabrini-Green. An educated and esteemed painter in the 1890s, he is the son of a former slave who amassed a small fortune as an inventor.¹⁵ He falls in love with a white woman and they conceived a child, which sparks fears of miscegenation. Candyman is similar to the figure of the “tragic mulatto,” a character caught between whiteness and blackness (Bogle 2016, 6). Similar to the biracial father in Kate Chopin’s Gothic short story, “Désirée’s Baby” ([1893] 2000), Candyman’s aristocratic behavior, refinement, and romance cross a forbidden threshold into whiteness and enrage the white community.

Rose links the violent death of Candyman to lynching.¹⁶ The mob cuts off Candyman’s hand—a particularly brutal disfigurement of a painter. They lather his body with honey and bees sting him to death. Just as the Candyman’s body was burned on a giant pyre, “lynch mobs not only murdered but also sadistically tortured, mutilated, and burned the bodies of black men” on “funeral pyres” (Freedman 2013, 98–99). In the film, the father of Candyman’s lover heads the angry mob and

15. Rose based the father’s character on an African American inventor. Tony Todd (Candyman) and Kasi Lemmons (Bernadette) stress that films set during Reconstruction focus on the effects of slavery but rarely discuss the rise of talented African Americans (“Filmmaker’s Commentary” on the DVD version of *Candyman*).

16. Historically, interracial sex between a white woman and black man constituted rape (Freedman 2013, 89, 91).

reasserts the white patriarchal order by the “symbolic rape” of a black man’s body (Freedman 2013, 98). Although the majority of the 4,084 documented lynchings occurring in the South, 341 occurred in eight states outside of the South, including Illinois (Equal Justice Initiative 2017, 44). The film suggests a historic or, at the very least, a symbolic continuity between lynching in the South and contemporary racial fears in the North by having Candyman’s ashes scattered on the land that would become Cabrini-Green.

All that remains of the genteel artist is the name Candyman, a reference to his mutilation and murder by honeybees.¹⁷ Rose uses the debasement of Candyman as a symbol of the racialized violence of Reconstruction. By having the Candyman return from the dead to haunt Cabrini-Green, Rose suggests the continued, haunting presence of violence in modern times, perpetuated against blacks (by outsiders and insiders) and the internalization of that fear, violence, and isolation into their communities. Thus, in developing a complex backstory for the Candyman, Rose imbues the monster and his bodily suffering with a history that speaks to America’s legacy of racial hatred.

Sweetly Monstrous: A Romantic Black Phantom

Respected, tragic, and, at key moments, sympathetic, Candyman is classically romantic, with a composed and dignified demeanor. His personality captures the spirit of the man he once was, and his tragic and violent history explains his return. He is unlike earlier black film monsters who terrorized white maidens or sought vengeance against racist whites, such as the “KKK Comeuppance” in *Tales from the Hood* (Cundieff 1995). He is more akin to tragic romantic monsters, such as Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein and Gaston Leroux’s Phantom of the Opera. Similar to Bram Stoker’s Dracula, Candyman can hypnotize women and is obsessed

17. His true name, Daniel Robitaille, is revealed in *Candyman 2: Farewell to the Flesh* (Condon 1995).

with courting woman from beyond the grave (Stoker [1897] 1997, 128–29, 322–28).¹⁸ Author Barker observed about his creation that “there is something perversely sweet about the monstrous” (Schwarz 2004), and part of the Candyman’s allure is that he is both monstrous and seductive (Barker 1999, 119, 121). He notes that before *Candyman* the horror genre lacked complex black villains, whose roles were limited to campy monsters (Schwarz 2004), such as *Blacula* (Crain 1972), *Blackenstein: The Black Frankenstein* (Levey 1973), *Dr. Black, Mr. Hyde* (Crain 1976), or Michael Jackson’s werewolf in *Thriller* (Landis 1983). Rose specifically gave Candyman a “romantic,” “elegant,” and “educated” background, and Tony Todd studied fencing and took waltz lessons with Virginia Madsen (Schwarz 2004). For Todd the Candyman represents a new kind of horror monster, a black monster that commands reverence and respect from horror fans and has assumed a spot among other legendary monsters (2015).

Admittedly, Candyman murders innocent and likeable characters, making him in the eyes of some critics an iteration of the black boogeyman, an archetypal cinematic villain (Coleman 2011, 20). Given his lynching at the hands of a white mob, his violence against other blacks is puzzling. Some critics have argued that his black-on-black violence represents an internalization of violence within the black community, given the contemporary context of community violence and gang warfare in Cabrini-Green (Popkin et al. 2000, 4), but the Candyman’s killings do cross race, gender, and class boundaries.¹⁹ Finally, in the horror genre the tragic monster is both a villain and the hero, with whom the audience simultaneously empathizes and fears (Schwarz 2004). The monstrous is curious, contradictory, captivating, and even familiar.

Candyman’s fine apparel, financial independence, and Gilded Age gentility are a jarring contrast to his decayed and alienated surroundings

18. Bernard Rose hypnotized Virginia Madsen before scenes with Tony Todd (Schwarz 2004), which is also reminiscent of Dracula (“Monster Mania,” 2014).

19. Candyman kills Ruthie Jean (black), Bernadette (black, possibly biracial), a psychiatrist (white), Clara (white), and Helen (white).

and to the other housing-project residents. They wear blue-collar work uniforms and practical winter clothes as markers of the daily grind to survive, and the gang members posture in leather jackets, bright puffy coats, and glittery chains to convey toughness and power. Candyman's genteel appearance symbolizes the economic decline of the residents as much as it reflects his personal torment.

The film's critical scene is the Candyman's poignant romance of Helen. Rose establishes the monster as a person whose sorrows and injustices matter, emphasizing that black suffering is potent and significant. Whereas earlier scenes localized racial tensions in the urban landscape, here Rose depicts the effects of racial hatred in the brutalized black body. Helen enters Candyman's lair with the intention of killing him for kidnapping Anne-Marie's baby. She finds him gently sleeping, a distinctly mortal activity that conveys his vulnerability. She does not scream. He wakes and hypnotizes her, they waltz, and the camera twirls around them while they embrace, suggesting a "romantic fantasy" of Candyman's lost love (Thompson 2007, 75). The romantic fantasy turns tragic as Helen sees Candyman's mutilated hand, covered by a grotesque hook, its phallic form suggestive of white fears of black men as "hypersexualized" (Schwarz 2004). Beneath his fine clothes the Candyman reveals to Helen his bloody and decayed ribcage, swarming with bees, where his heart should be (Fig. 5). Helen faints, and the Candyman grimaces with anguish, looking upwards in utter suffering (Fig. 6). A monster with depth of emotion, the Candyman is terrifying yet also decidedly human.

Mending the Broken Black Family

When Helen is committed to the mental institution for the suspected murder of Bernadette and the kidnapping of the Anne-Marie's baby from Cabrini-Green, there is a brief shot of Candyman hovering over the baby. Initially menacing, the viewer is concerned that he will kill the child with his hook. Instead, Candyman comforts the child, giving

him one of his fingers to suckle. He may be feeding the baby honey from his bees, which would add to the nurturing humanity of this scene (Nicholls and Buckingham 2012).

Later Candyman attempts to reassemble the family stolen from him at his death by murdering Helen and the baby in the community bonfire. In fathering a biracial child, Candyman defied the racial order of his times. He defiantly attempts to reclaim power over the white mob that had tried to steal his social freedom and his family. Despite his horrific homicidal resolve, the film's dramatic emphasis is on Candyman and his loss.

The idea of the black male reasserting himself as the head of the household is particularly important given the social history of Cabrini-Green family life. By the 1960s many Chicago public-housing projects had a nearly 3:1 ratio of children to adults, and in 1965 Cabrini-Green had a 2.09:1 ratio. Citywide the ratio in the same period, 1:2, was reversed. (Hunt 2009, 148). Daniel Moynihan, assistant secretary of labor in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, argued in a seminal text, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, that poor urban black families are matriarchal and disproportionately headed by single mothers, which is "a crushing burden on the Negro male" (1965, 29). He concluded that the broken family structure—a destructive legacy of slavery—was "at the heart of the deterioration of the fabric of Negro society" (Moynihan 1965, 5–14, 30–34). Although the "Moynihan Report" shared similarities with critiques of institutionalized racism by Kenneth Bancroft Clark and Mamie Phipps Clark, E. Franklin Frazier, and Bayard Rustin (Patterson 2010, 49; Wilson ([1987] 2012, 20–21), many scholars and leaders faulted the report for bias against black women (Wilson [1987] 2012, 20–21, 149) and for the "assumed pathologies of black poverty," which helped to stigmatize housing projects further (Greenbaum 2015, 69).

Similar to the argument of the Moynihan Report, institutional racism is the cause of Candyman's fractured family. But where the report looked to Johnson's war on poverty for a solution, the Candyman's solution is radical and gruesome. He will first destroy the broken family structure

in a ritual burning and eliminate the city's segregation of whites and blacks in a idealized family reunion in the afterlife. In this powerful and desperate climax, Candyman's attempt to reclaim his family underscores both his tragedy and that of Cabrini-Green's.

Today, Candyman remains an empowering black male figure in cinema (Todd 2015). Over two decades after he inaugurated the role, Tony Todd notes that black fans have "such an immediacy of understanding in their eyes about what Candyman was, what sort of oppression he had to deal with and sometimes how heroic he was to them" (Cox 2006). Todd sees his character as a black man whose "spirit was so strong, that he refused to die," despite the brutalities inflicted upon him (Schwarz 2004). For Todd the monster speaks to "the dissatisfied, the disenfranchised" and offers them hope (French 1995, 42).

Conclusion

With the intention of "rebuild[ing] people's souls" (Petty 2013, 20), Richard M. Daley, mayor from 1989 to 2011, ushered in the dismantling of high-rise public-housing projects. In 1997, after years of delayed maintenance by the Chicago Housing Authority, nineteen thousand units failed inspections and the federal government mandated demolition within five years. In 2000 the US Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the CHA's 1999 "Plan for Transformation," which promised to replace concentrated public housing with mixed-income properties and a voucher system (Petty 2013, 16, 21). Community groups were alarmed that developers would seize the area for private profit (Petty 2013, 21; Venkatesh 2000, 268).²⁰ Ultimately thousands experienced "displacement, multiple moves, and homelessness" (Petty 2013, 16). Audrey Petty reflected on Cabrini-Green's demolition and expected some-

20. In 1995, when Cabrini-Green was first dismantled, the surrounding two-block radius generated \$6 million in residential sales, in 1999; at the start of the CHA's "Plan for Transformation" sales rose to \$120 million; between 2000 and 2006 sales approached nearly \$1 billion (Petty 2013, 222).

thing "grandiose and purifying—the dropping of a bomb or, as in *Candyman* [...] a giant exorcising bonfire" (2013, 221). Instead, she witnessed the destruction of a home to many, a real place, whose destruction did not hinge on assessing the high-rises' viability, habitability, and potential for transformation but on external political, economic, and social factors (Petty 2013, 221, 268–69).

Haunting is the gift *Candyman* imparts. During the finale the monstrous ghost attempts to lure Helen and the baby into the bonfire: "We shall die together in front of their very eyes and give them something to be haunted by." The film's depictions of spatial divisions in Chicago and a tragic black phantom haunts viewers with a rousing and emotional portrayal of racial boundaries. The legend of a nineteenth-century monster's haunting Cabrini-Green suggests the continuing impact of racism and the vulnerability of African Americans from the time of Jim Crow laws to the isolation of public-housing projects in the 1990s.

Regrettably *Candyman* did not lead viewers to take concrete action to save Cabrini-Green from the wrecker's ball. The film's exploration of race, history, and urban spatial divisions was overshadowed by a cult interest in Gothic romance, charismatic monsters, and urban legends; and it spawned poorly executed sequels and spinoff movies, such as *Urban Legend* (Blanks 1998; "Monster Mania," 2014). Rose failed to see the full potential of his new use of a sympathetic black monster in an urban setting; in the end he reverted to the familiar—the heroic sacrifice of the white heroine and the glorification of white womanhood.

Jordan Peele's hit, *Get Out* (2017), another horror film about an inter-racial relationship, better captures the complexity of black lives in America and the continuation of systemic racism through micro-aggressions and outright violence. Peele acknowledges *Candyman*, *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero 1968), and *The People Under the Stairs* (Craven 1991) as forerunners to *Get Out*, because they took a serious approach to a largely absent discussion of race and racism in mainstream American horror films (Colburn 2017; Gross 2017). *Candyman* helped develop a space in horror films for subversive explorations of race, using the horror

tropes of the monster and the haunted house to engage in a dialogue with the history and continuation of systemic racism in America. The eponymous phantom's opening line, "I came for you," is a threat realized by the film's end. The Candyman and his story set out to haunt viewers on a personal level, by raising discontent with urban racial dynamics and the social alienation of the black urban poor. While imperfect in its message about race, *Candyman* reveals the hidden power of horror to inspire social consciousness, to foster empowerment, to build historic awareness, and to generate empathy. *Candyman*, like its monster, comes for you—and continues to haunt long after the credits roll.

Appendix



Figure 1. Opening credit.



Figure 2. Introductory sequence.

Candyman says, "I, came, for you." The image of Chicago's Gold Coast fades to a close-up of Helen's eyes.



Figure 3. Helen and Bernadette (not in shot) arrive at Cabrini-Green.



Figure 4. Helen emerges through the mouth of Candyman.



Figure 5. Candyman's chest.



Figure 6. Candyman's anguish.

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